

DEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

BY

MAMPAKA LYDIA MOJAPELO

Dissertation presented for the Degree of Doctor of Literature at the University
of Stellenbosch



Promoter: Prof. M.W. Visser

December 2007

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it a any university for a degree.

Signature

Date

ABSTRACT

Definiteness is generally viewed as a morpho-syntactic category. It is grammatically marked by articles in languages such as English, but not all languages have a formal grammatical encoding for this category. The nominal preprefix (NPP) in languages such as Dzamba is not an equivalent to the English article system; however, it displays a close association with definiteness. Northern Sotho is non-articled, and it does not possess the NPP in its grammatical system. As a grammatical category, definiteness is the grammaticalisation of a pragmatic category of identifiability, which is present in all languages. Identifiability, as a means of referent tracing, plays a vital role in communication.

The main aim of this study is to investigate how the phenomenon of definiteness manifests itself in Northern Sotho. The introductory chapter describes the purpose and aim of the study, its theoretical approach and methodology, as well as its organisation. The second chapter presents an overview of the previous major works on definiteness. It begins with the literature on the category in general, and moves on to the literature on definiteness in African Languages. These previous studies agree on the central issues of this category. The speaker utters a definite noun phrase (NP) if he presupposes that the addressee will be in a position to locate and to identify the referent of the NP uniquely or inclusively.

Chapter 3 examines noun phrases that are regarded as definite in Northern Sotho; and the factors that contribute to such a reading. Pragmatic factors, i.e. existential presupposition, transparent contexts and anaphoric reference make major contributions to the interpretation of a noun phrase as definite. Nominal determiners and quantifiers whose semantic content suggests locatability, uniqueness and/or inclusiveness give a noun phrase definite reference. Such determiners and quantifiers include the demonstrative, possessive with locative **gona/ntshe**, the universal quantifier, etc. Proper names and pronouns have unique reference.

Chapter 4 investigates indefinite noun phrases in Northern Sotho. Bare noun phrases in this language such as **mang** (who), **lefeela** (nothing) and **aretse** (unknown thing/place) are incompatible with definiteness. Their semantic content suggests that their referent cannot or should not be uniquely identified. Nominal modifiers such as **-ngwe** (another/different/ a certain), **-fe** (who/which) and **šele** (another/different/strange) are also

incompatible with unique identifiability and they, therefore, accord a noun phrase indefinite reference. Nouns with generic interpretation and nouns in idioms do not uniquely refer to particular individuals.

Chapter 5 looks into the ambiguity of bare noun phrases in Northern Sotho. It examines such a phrase in the subject position, the object position and the complement position of prepositional phrases. Nominal modifiers such as the adjective, the relative and the possessive are incorporated into noun phrases to see how they affect the reading. The question of subject inversion (SI) is also investigated. Lastly opaque contexts are discussed, and the ambiguity created by opacity-creating operators is examined.

The final chapter of the study presents the main findings.

OPSOMMING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge with gratitude the support that I received from the following persons during the course of this study:

- Prof. J.A. du Plessis – University of Stellenbosch.
- Prof. M.W. Visser, Mrs Surena du Plessis and the entire personnel of the Department of African Languages, University of Stellenbosch.
- Mmes. Karien Jordaan and Matseleng Mokhwesana – UNISA.
- My mother, Ngwanaletaga, my children (Makgwathane, Malesa, Ranti and Moshe), my nephew, Moloto and my brother, Thamagana.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Abstract	ii
Opsomming	iv
Aknowledgement	vi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Purpose and aim of study	1
1.2	Theoretical approach and methodology.....	5
1.3	Organisation of study.....	8

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Aim	11
2.2	Overview of the literature on definiteness in general	11
2.2.1	Dahl (1970).....	11
2.2.2	Hawkins (1978).....	12
2.2.3	Heim (1982).....	23
2.2.4	Hawkins (1991).....	29
2.2.5	Enç (1991)	31
2.2.6	Chesterman (1991).....	34
2.2.7	Diesing (1992)	48
2.2.8	Lyons (1999).....	52
2.3	Literature on definiteness in African Languages.....	64
2.3.1	Introduction	64
2.3.2	Bokamba (1971))	64
2.3.3	Ziervogel, Lombard & Mokgokong (1969).....	67
2.3.4	Louwrens (1981).....	68
2.3.5	Louwrens (1983)	71
2.4	Conclusions	75

CHAPTER 3: DEFINITE NOUN PHRASES IN NORTHERN SOTHO

3.1	Aim	76
3.2	Definition of definiteness.....	76
3.2.1	Jackendoff (1972).....	76
3.2.2	Lyons (1999).....	77

3.2.3	Cruse (2000).....	77
3.3	Definiteness in pragmatics.....	78
3.3.1	Aim	78
3.3.2	Pragmatics.....	78
3.3.3	Existential presupposition	82
3.3.4	Transparent contexts	87
3.3.5	Anaphoric reference	88
3.4	Definiteness in syntax and semantics.....	94
3.4.1	Aim	94
3.4.2	Noun phrases with definite determiners.....	95
3.4.3	Proper names	129
3.4.4	Pronouns	133
3.5	Conclusions	145

CHAPTER 4: INDEFINITE NOUN PHRASES IN NORTHERN SOTHO

4.1	Aim	150
4.2	Indefiniteness.....	150
4.2.1	Hawkins (1978).....	150
4.2.2	Chesterman (1991).....	150
4.2.3	Diesing (1992)	151
4.2.4	Lyons (1999).....	151
4.2.5	Cruse (2000).....	151
4.3	Simple indefinites.....	152
4.3.1	Aim	152
4.3.2	bofengfeng	153
4.3.3	lefeela	155
4.3.4	aretse	158
4.3.5	boratapelo	160
4.3.6	šopoding	162
4.3.7	mmenyane	163
4.3.8	nnakotse	165
4.3.9	tsoko and its compounds	167
4.3.10	Nouns with stem -kete	172
4.3.11	Interrogative words mang, eng, kae	174
4.3.12	Coordinated interrogative words mang le mang, eng le eng, kae le kae ..	183

4.3.13	Nouns with -kae	187
4.3.14	semangmang	190
4.3.15	kaekae	194
4.4	Complex indefinites	195
4.4.1	Aim	195
4.4.2	Quantifier mang, mong	196
4.4.3	Quantifier -ngwe	203
4.4.4	Coordinated -ngwe	208
4.4.5	Quantifier -šele	210
4.4.6	Quantifier -fe	214
4.4.7	Coordinated -fe	218
4.4.8	kae	220
4.5	Generics	222
4.5.1	Definition.....	222
4.5.2	Kind-referring NPs	223
4.6	Idioms	225
4.6.1	Definition.....	225
4.6.2	Indefinite NPs	226
4.7	Conclusions	229

CHAPTER 5: AMBIGUITY IN DEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

5.1	Aim	232
5.2	Bare NPs	232
5.2.1	Types of NPs	232
5.2.2	Types of predicates	233
5.2.3	Grammatical functions.....	236
5.2.4	Bare NPs in Northern Sotho	236
5.2.5	Bare Locative NPs in Northern Sotho.....	271
5.3	A Small number	278
5.4	A large number	280
5.5	NPs with nominal modifiers	281
5.5.1	Cardinal numbers	281
5.5.2	Adjectives	282
5.5.3	Descriptive possessive	285
5.5.4	The relative.....	287

5.5.5	Possessive.....	292
5.6	Subject Inversion	295
5.6.1	NP subject of intransitive verb	295
5.6.2	NP subject of transitive verb	297
5.7	Opacity	300
5.7.1	Verbs of propositional attitude	301
5.7.2	Negation	303
5.7.3	Questions	304
5.7.4	Conditionals.....	304
5.7.5	Modals	305
5.7.6	Future	3-5
5.7.7	Past tense versus future tense	306
5.8	Conclusions	307

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1	Aim	310
6.2	Definiteness in Northern Sotho.....	310
6.2.1	Definition.....	310
6.2.2	Definiteness and pragmatics	310
6.2.3	Definiteness in syntax and semantics.....	315
6.3	Indefiniteness in Northern Sotho.....	322
6.3.1	Definition.....	322
6.3.2	Simple indefinites.....	322
6.3.3	Complex indefinites	323
6.3.4	Generics	326
6.3.5	Idioms	327
6.4	Ambiguity in definiteness in Northern Sotho	327
6.4.1	Bare NPs with verb and copulative verb	327
6.4.2	Bare locative NPs with verb and copulative verb	328
6.4.3	Small/large numbers.....	329
6.4.4	Nominal modifiers	329
6.4.5	Subject inversion	331
6.4.6	Opacity	332
6.5	Conclusions	333

BIBLIOGRAPHY	335
---------------------------	------------

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND AIM OF STUDY

The linguistic literature generally views definiteness as a morpho-syntactic category (cf. Bokamba 1971, Chestermann 1991, Hawkins 1978). Definiteness is linguistically marked by different ways in various languages. The phenomenon of definiteness/ indefiniteness is associated with the presence of definite articles such as *the*, or indefinite articles such as *a* in English. Non-articled languages such as Finnish, Hungarian, Russian etc. use a variety of means to express (in)definiteness. Dzamba (a Bantu¹ language) has a nominal preprefix, which is associated with definiteness when present in the noun phrase and with indefiniteness when absent. Lyons (1999) points out that definiteness as a grammatical category is not present in all languages. He views the grammatical category of definiteness as the grammaticalisation of semantic/pragmatic definiteness. Semantic/pragmatic definiteness has to do with whether or not a referent is familiar, and therefore identifiable to the hearer. The pragmatic condition of identifiability is present across languages, whether or not a language is grammatically marked for definiteness.

Lyons (op. cit.) proposes that a typology of languages can be set up as follows with regard to the property of definiteness:

- Type 1: No definiteness
- Type 2: Definiteness is available only in pronominal NPs
- Type 3: Definiteness is available in pronominal and full NPs.

One of the aims of this study is to argue that Northern Sotho is a type 3 language. Northern Sotho has neither articles, like English nor a preprefix, like Dzamba. It will nevertheless be argued in this study that it is a type 3 language with regard to definiteness, by examining the reading of the noun phrase in various syntactic positions.

Two semantic features are generally viewed as correlated with definiteness, i.e. identifiability and inclusiveness. The semantic interpretation of a sentence must include the conditions under which the various noun phrases in the sentence are claimed to possess identifiable referents, i.e. the hearer has to be directed to the referent of the Noun Phrase

(NP) by signalling that he² is in a position to identify it. Pragmatic principles are invoked for a comprehensive investigation of this question (cf. Chestermann 1991, Lyons 1999). In the second place definiteness involves inclusiveness. The reference of a (pro-)nominal is to the totality of the objects or mass in the context which satisfies the description.

A second research problem addressed in the study concerns the definiteness or indefiniteness of the NPs in Northern Sotho, as illustrated in the sentence below:

(1) **[Ngwana] o- utswitše [puku].**

(The/a child stole the/a book.)

The above sentence is ambiguous with regard to definiteness or indefiniteness; hence the role of pragmatics in the resolution of this ambiguity is crucial. The study examines the full range of issues and approaches relating to the phenomena of definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho, including the following aspects, which have been identified in preliminary research on this subject:

- (a) Noun phrases with a noun as head may appear without any indication of definiteness, as shown in the example above.
- (b) Subject or object arguments may be represented by a phonetically empty pro (nominal pro), coindexed with the agreement element of inflection:

(2) **[pro] o_r-a-ja**

(He³ is eating.)

Such missing (i.e. phonetically empty) subjects and objects are generally interpreted as definite.

There are various nominal modifiers in Northern Sotho that accord definite reference to an NP such as the demonstrative, possessive with **gona** and the absolute pronoun in the following examples:

(3) **[ngwana] yo**

(this child)

(4) **[ngwana] wa gona**

(the child in question)

(5) **[bana] bona**

(the children – as for them)

(c) Some bare NPs in Northern Sotho may be incompatible with definiteness, e.g.: Interrogative **mang** (who) and locative **bofengfeng** (some unknown/ unspecified place), as in the following examples:

(6) **O nyaka go roga [mang]?**

/You want to insult who?/

(Whom do you want to insult?)

(7) **Ba re o ile [bofengfeng].**

(They say he went to some unspecified place.)

(d) Indefinite nominal modifiers appear frequently in Northern Sotho, as can be demonstrated in the following examples:

(8) **[batho] ba bangwe**

(certain/other/some people)

(9) **[batho] ba šele**

(different/strange/foreign people)

(10) **[batho] bafe?**

(which people?)

(e) An inverted subject NP may have definite or indefinite reference:

(11) **Go lema [banna].**

(It is (the) men who are ploughing.)

(f) There are various opacity-creating contexts in Northern Sotho, within which an NP may have a definite or indefinite reference. In this case the distinction is mainly between specific and non-specific reference, as in the following contexts with - **nyaka** (want/look for):

- (12) (i) **Ke nyaka [mongatse] --- o o beile kae?**
 (I want/am looking for a/the hat --- where did you put it?)
- (ii) **Ke nyaka [mongatse] --- ge o ka o bona o nthekele.**
 (I want/am looking for a hat --- if you happen to see one buy it for me.)

(g) NPs within the scope of the future tense may give rise to problems in identifiability. The following examples demonstrate how the past tense blocks a non-specific reading whilst the future tense allows both specific and non-specific readings:

- (13) (i) **Ke rekile [koloji] maabane.**
 (I bought a/the car yesterday)
- (ii) **Ke ya go reka [koloji] gosasa.**
 (I am going to buy a/the car tomorrow.)

The past tense sentence in (i) blocks an unspecific reading, i.e. the tense makes it impossible for the speaker not to be aware of the identity of the referent of the NP **koloji**.

In the second place, the present study investigates the semantic features of definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho in order to account for those issues that have been mentioned above.

In addition, the thesis investigates the semantic properties of definiteness with regard to the influence of specificity in definiteness, e.g. an NP within the scope of negation may have no identifiable referent at all. The following example with the negative plus **na le** ('to have') illustrates this point:

- (14) **Mabothe ga a na [ngwana].**
 (Mabothe does not have a child.)

Lastly, the study explores the relation of genericity to definiteness in Northern Sotho, with specific reference to kind-referring NPs, which abstract away from particular definite objects, such as any bare NP (cf. Carlson & Pelletier 1995).

Preliminary study of the traditional (pretheoretical) works on African Languages has revealed that phenomena relating to (in)definiteness have received little attention. Even

more recent studies on African Languages do not afford evidence that this issue has been addressed in depth (cf. Doke 1955, Cole 1975, Louwrens 1991b). The exception is the study by Bokamba (1971), which is rather explanatory in nature and that by Louwrens (1981; 1983). Louwrens (op. cit.) uses the interrogative as diagnostics for definiteness (1983), and 'new vs given' discourse information to account for the syntax of the noun phrase in Northern Sotho (1981). The current study is broader, looking into the bare noun phrase on the one hand and the incorporation of modifiers on the other. The researcher uses varied sampling in an effort to account for the majority of possibilities.

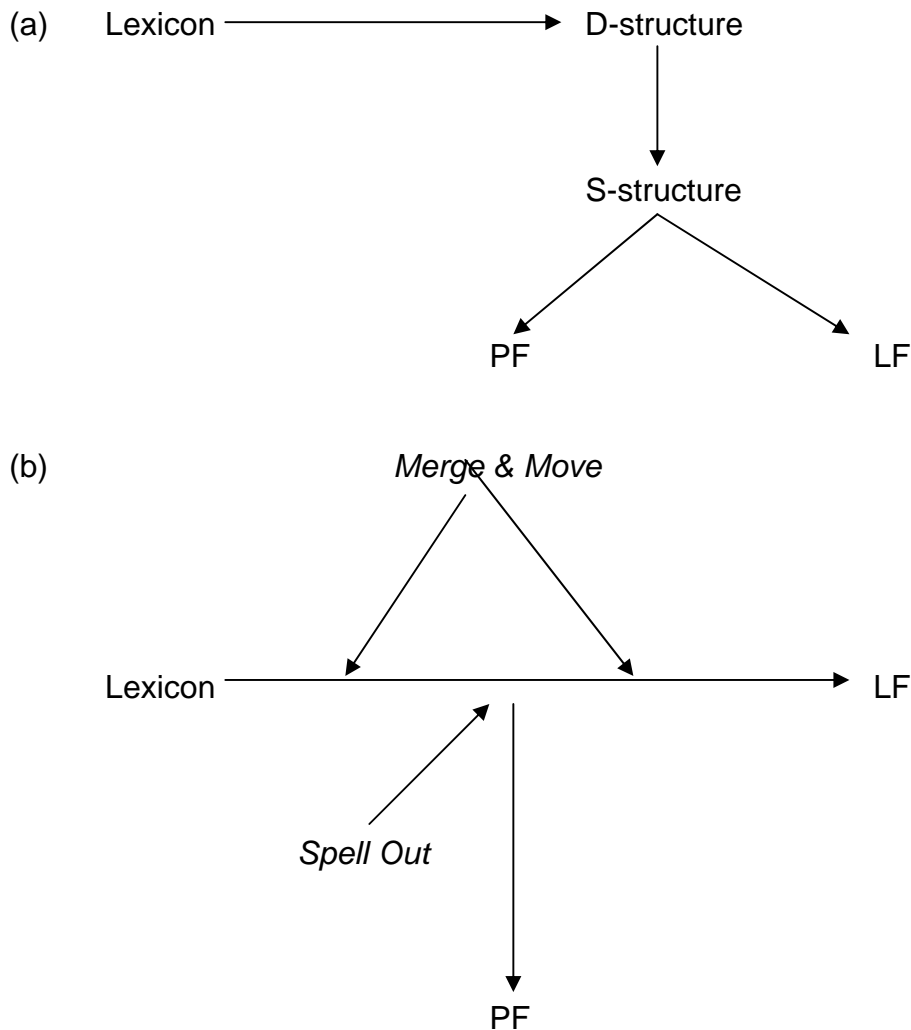
Developments in the current syntactic theory of the minimalist programme have resulted in a renewed interest in the definiteness phenomenon crosslinguistically, specifically as regards the nature and language-specific manifestation of the functional category Determiner Phrase (DP). Since the demonstrative root morpheme (l)a in the African languages also occurs in the inflectional morphology of a range of other nominal modifiers, including the adjective, nominal relative and verbal relative, questions regarding an account of definiteness phenomena for African Languages emerge as salient problems within the minimalist theory. It has also emerged from preliminary study that lexical semantic and pragmatic principles need to be invoked to provide a comprehensive account of (in)definiteness phenomena in Northern Sotho. The study aims at providing new insights into aspects of theory development, in addition to providing a theoretical account for morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of definiteness as a unified phenomenon in Northern Sotho.

1.2 THEORETICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

These issues relating to definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho are accounted for within a theory of syntax in order to posit a probable lexical feature of definiteness. The study focuses on the nominal functional system relating to morphosyntactic realisation of definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho. In addition a framework in terms of a semantic theory of definiteness, according to Lyons (1999), is invoked in conjunction with principles from a theory of lexical semantics. Thirdly a theory of pragmatics is utilised to account for the ambiguity which results from interpretation relating to context. The study therefore focuses on analysing various utterances to account for the realisation of definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho.

Data is collected according to the minimalist syntactic framework. The minimalist programme is a research programme that reduces Government and Binding's (GB) levels of representation from four to two. The deep structure (D-str) and surface structure (S-str) are eliminated and only the phonological form (PF) and logical form (LF) levels of representation are retained. The situation is represented as follows (Abraham, Epstein, Thráinsson & Zwart 1996:5):

Diagram 1



The absence of representation at D-str and S-str as illustrated in (b) above results in recognition of only the Lexicon and two concatenative operations, viz. merge and move. The lexicon is interpreted through the Spell-out operational rule. The theory behind the approach is that Spell-out interprets representations at the interface levels, PF and LF, at any derivational stage. The systems that read representations at PF and LF are the Articulatory-Perceptual (A-P) and the Conceptual-Intentional (C-I) systems, respectively. An entry at PF is legitimised by the A-P system, while the C-I system interprets entries at the LF representation level. Transformational applications in the minimalist programme are

subject to conditions of economy, viz. economy of derivation and economy of representation. Such principles of economy as the Shortest Move, Greed and Procrastinate apply. As such, derivational steps are made as few as possible and irrelevant material is left out at interface representation levels. This results in the situation that every entry at interface level 'must provide a meaningful/ legible input to the syntax-external; cognitive systems, A-P and C-I' (Abraham et al. 1996:15).

During the grammatical function of movement, such as NP-movement in passive constructions and *wh*-movement, the subject NP or the *wh*-constituent moves to the first available position up from its original position. This is how the principle of the Shortest Move applies. The principle of Procrastination requires that movement waits for the operation of the Spell-Out rule and only takes place thereafter. A moved constituent and the one replacing an empty category form a chain, and each member of the chain contains a copy, with the same properties.

The data of NPs and modifiers collected for this study is therefore also read according to the requirements imposed by the two interface levels of representation. NPs are interpreted in the preverbal subject position, the post-verbal object position and in the complement position of prepositional phrases.

The data is analysed and interpreted according to Lyons' (1999) semantics of definiteness and pragmatically according to Mey (2001). According to Lyons the semantics of definiteness involves identifiability and inclusiveness. For a noun phrase to have definite reference, Lyons maintains that either one or both of these two semantic properties will be applicable. A noun phrase in English, for instance, would not necessarily need to contain a definite article; but if the NP expresses identifiability and/or inclusiveness it has definiteness as part of its meaning. With regard to African languages, Lyons points out that definiteness is expressed by an agreement marker somewhere in the sentence. He makes a further reference in this regard specifically to Swahili in which 'the verb shows agreement with the subject, definite or indefinite, and with definite direct objects' (Lyons 1999:87). A noun phrase will be regarded as having definite reference if its referent is familiar to both the speaker and the hearer to such an extent that the hearer is expected to be able to identify it uniquely or inclusively. Lyons suggests that the familiarity of a referent has to do with situational factors or anaphoric co-reference. If the referent of a noun phrase is not expected to be uniquely or inclusively identifiable to the hearer, such an NP is regarded as

having indefinite reference. Lyons' views on definiteness are further discussed in the next chapter.

Mey is of the view that 'pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society' (Mey 2001:6). There are societal considerations that guide how speakers of a language use the language to communicate. Pragmatics is, according to Mey, closely linked to the language user and is not primarily about the language system. To gain a deeper and clearer understanding of an utterance one has to possess an understanding of the context in which the utterance is made, including the social and cultural context of the communicator. If all these are taken into consideration problems of ambiguity in utterances will be resolved because as Mey puts it 'ambiguity exists only in the abstract', i.e. if the user and the context are 'taken away' what remains of a language piece is abstract. Whilst the logical meaning of a lexical item may be known to both discourse participants, it is also important to understand particular social contexts in which such lexical items may or may not be used to achieve certain communicative goals.

My judgements on the (in)definiteness properties of expressions in Northern Sotho are initially made by (i) consultation with a number of first-language speakers of Northern Sotho and (ii) my own opinions, as a first-language speaker of Northern Sotho. Secondly, theoretical concepts and principles from syntactic theory, lexical semantics and pragmatics are invoked in the analysis of the data and in presenting arguments for a theoretical account of (in)definiteness in Northern Sotho. The study employs deductive as well as inductive methods alternately.

1.3 ORGANISATION OF STUDY

This section provides an overview of the present work, which is organised into six chapters. The current chapter is an introduction, providing an exposition of the study as a whole. The chapter addresses the purpose and aim of the thesis, including the research problem and motivation for the research. It also states the theoretical approaches and methodology assumed for the study, viz. the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic approaches. Finally the chapter presents the organisation of the study.

Chapter 2 represents an overview of the literature on definiteness. The literature is presented in the following order: literature on definiteness in general, definiteness in African languages, and in Northern Sotho in particular.

In Chapter 3 the writer investigates noun phrases that are regarded as definite in Northern Sotho. The chapter explores all possible factors that may contribute to the definite reference of a noun phrase, seeing that the language is non-articled. It starts by examining pragmatically determined definiteness. This analysis is inspired by Lyons' (1999) and Cruse's (2000) semantics of definiteness, as well as Mey's (2001) theory of pragmatics. It discusses features that are identified as contributory to the definite interpretation of the noun phrase. The bare noun phrase may appear in any syntactic positions, and could be interpreted as definite due to pragmatic conditions, i.e. existential presupposition, transparent contexts and anaphoric reference. In the second place definiteness in syntax and semantics is investigated, i.e. nominal modifiers that suggest identifiability/inclusiveness may appear with the noun phrase to give it definite reference. These determiners and quantifiers possess other functions in the language, and are not solely intended for indicating definiteness. Both the morphological structure and semantic content of the modifiers are examined. It is then explained how their incorporation renders a noun phrase definite. The issues of pronominals and of proper names are also afforded consideration.

Chapter 4 explores noun phrases that are regarded as indefinite. These are divided into simple and complex indefinites. Simple indefinites comprise noun phrases that are inherently incompatible with the feature of unique identifiability. Such NPs imply indefiniteness on their own, from their semantic content. Secondly, the chapter addresses complex indefinites. Complex indefinites are ordinary bare NPs, but appear with modifiers that are incompatible with definiteness. Such modifiers then disambiguate the NP to make it indefinite. It is then established how genericness relates to the phenomenon of (in)definiteness; with specific reference to kind-referring NPs. The interpretation of noun phrases that appear in idiomatic expressions is also probed.

In Chapter 5 the researcher addresses ambiguity in definiteness. The chapter examines first the Northern Sotho bare noun phrase in various syntactic environments. Grammatical functions of word order, inflection and movement are invoked to see whether and how they influence the reading. Secondly, nominal modifiers that may appear with these NPs are

brought in and their effect observed. The right-dislocated NP in subject inversion is interpreted for (in)definiteness. The issue of specificity is addressed in opaque contexts, where various operators are used to find out if and how they may affect the reading. Such operators may create ambiguity between specificity and non-specificity. It is argued in this chapter that the Northern Sotho NP, subject or object, may be ambiguous with respect to definiteness and indefiniteness.

Chapter 6 contains the summary and conclusions of the study, presenting the main findings of the research. In this chapter the hypothesis that a bare NP in Northern Sotho, subject or object, may be ambiguous between definiteness and indefiniteness is advanced. The writer also indicates the circumstances under which NPs may be only definite or indefinite, as fully discussed in chapters 3 and 4 respectively.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The word Bantu is used in this linguistics study in a purely scientific way - it bears no reference to the South African socio-political connotation.

² For simplicity, the masculine pronoun should also be taken as referring to the feminine.

³ The English translations of Class 1 (3rd person, singular) pronouns and agreement morphemes are in the masculine and should also be taken as referring to the feminine.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 AIM

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the literature on definiteness. The literature on definiteness in general will be presented first, followed by literature on definiteness in African Languages. African Languages that are of interest to this study are from the Bantu family of languages, of which Northern Sotho is a member. Another Bantu language that will be discussed in this study is Dzamba. Dzamba is one of the Bantu languages whose noun structure includes a preprefix, also called an initial vowel. A Northern Sotho noun does not have a preprefix.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON DEFINITENESS IN GENERAL

2.2.1 Dahl (1970)

Dahl (1970) analyses the use of the Russian indefinite *-to* and *-nibud'*, and discusses the issues that guide the choice between these two suffixes. According to Dahl, the Russian indefinite manifests itself in interrogative pronouns and adverbs by suffixation, and the most frequently used are *-to* and *-nibud'*. Whenever these two suffixes are used the noun phrase is interpreted as indefinite. Dahl observes in his investigation that the choice between *-to* and *-nibud'* is informed by the feature [\pm specific]. Where *-to* pronouns are used the noun phrase has the feature [+specific] and *-nibud'* is used for [-specific] interpretations.

Dahl uses the following English ambiguous sentence for illustration:

- (1) She wants to marry someone.

Someone may be a particular person of whom the speaker is aware, even if the hearer is not, or it may not be anyone of whose existence the speaker himself is aware. In Russian, sentence (1) will have the following presentations, according to the two interpretations:

- (2) Ōna xočet vyjti замуŷ za kogo-to [+spec]

- (3) Ôna xočet vyjti zamuž za kogo-nibud' [-spec]

In sentence (2) the speaker knows whom he is talking about, hence the specific interpretation of the noun phrase. In sentence (3) the noun phrase is interpreted as non-specific because the speaker does not refer to anyone in particular. In most declarative sentences *-to* is used and *-nibud'* is not.

According to Dahl this seems to be attributed to the fact that in a declarative sentence the speaker knows or acknowledges the existence of the referent of the noun phrase in question. In cases where it is apparent that the speaker is not referring to anything/ anyone in particular *-nibud'* is appropriate; an example of such a situation is if the sentence is in the future tense. However, rather than tense, Dahl maintains that the interpretation is primarily connected to the speaker's knowledge of the referent of the noun phrase (NP). Boyd and Thorne (as cited in Dahl, 1970) label such sentences as 'predictive sentences', indicated by the symbol PREDICT, whilst declarative sentences are indicated by the symbol STATE. Therefore, the following Russian sentences differ in terms of performatives:

- (4) Ona vyjdet zamuž za kogo-to (She will marry someone)
 (5) Ona vyjdet zamuž za kogo-nibud (She will marry someone)

In sentence (4) the existence of the person she is going to marry is included in the prediction and therefore the interpretation is indicated by STATE. In sentence (5) the existence of a person she is going to marry is not certain/known and therefore the interpretation is indicated by PREDICT.

Russian differentiates between two indefinite suffixes to mark [\pm specific], *-to* for specific and *-nibud'* for non-specific interpretation.

2.2.2 Hawkins (1978)

2.2.2.1 Introduction

Hawkins (1978) discusses views of various linguists who contributed towards the ultimate emerging role of Semantics in grammaticality prediction in Transformational Generative

Grammar, starting from Chomsky's 1957 model which did not take meaning assignment into consideration. The semantic component was ultimately recognised for assigning semantic representations to syntactic structures generated in the syntactic component, and also for participating in grammaticality prediction.

2.2.2.2 Syntactic and semantic causes of ungrammaticality

Hawkins looks into the general causes of rule incompatibility, which give rise to ungrammaticality.

Compatibility of rules

Certain rules may apply together in generating the grammatical sentences of the language and others may not. *Compatibility* is when the outputs of one rule match the inputs of the other, so one rule feeds the other; e.g. *Adverb Preposing & Passive*. *Incompatible* rules do not feed each other and so cannot apply together, e.g. *Reflexive & Passive*.

Depending on the exact formulation of the rules involved, incompatibility can be total or partial.

Hawkins (op. cit.: 67ff) identifies the following as the syntactic oppositions underlying rule incompatibility:

- The Immediate versus Non-Immediate Juxtaposition of Shared Constituents
- Uniquely versus Non-uniquely Substituted Nodes
- Frozen versus Non-frozen Nodes
- The Presence versus Absence of Positively Required Constituents
- The Absence versus Presence of Negatively Specified Conditions

There are also semantic oppositions underlying rule incompatibility. Hawkins maintains that one and the same sentence cannot express, simultaneously, the meanings of the output morphemes of the two rules. There are some semantic concepts that are inherently compatible and combinable, e.g. *progressive aspect* and *tense*. Other concepts are not combinable and, therefore, result in ungrammatical sentences, e.g. *past tense and future adverb*. The surface juxtaposition of semantically incombable notions leads to ungrammaticality.

Hawkins states that the difference between the two is that semantic representation formalises the facts of meaning provided by the semantic judgements of the native speaker, whilst syntactic representation formalises the surface structures of those sentences. Rule Incompatibility is semantic if semantic opposition can be found and if no correlation can be found between Rule Incompatibility and the syntactic environment within which the incompatibility arises. And it is syntactic if semantics can be ruled out as the cause. If both a semantic and a syntactic opposition can be found, then both are at least potentially responsible for rule incompatibility. Hawkins provides the following disparities for illustration:

- '*One meaning and several forms*' rules out the meaning: If A and B are synonymous but one rule can apply to A and not to B, the incompatibility will not be semantic, but will be due to different syntactic ordering forms.
- '*One form: several meanings*' rules out the form: If one rule can apply to the same form with several meanings and the other cannot or can apply to some of the semantic readings, the cause of incompatibility cannot be syntactic.

2.2.2.3 The referential meaning of definiteness

Hawkins focuses on the location theory as well as inclusiveness to define referential meaning in definiteness.

Adequacy of semantic facts

Hawkins states that semantic judgements of grammaticality by a native speaker with regard to the use of (in)definite noun phrases is two-fold, viz. He knows *when* to use a definite article (appropriateness, a pragmatic aspect) and *what* he understands the definite description to mean (both the pragmatic and logical aspect). To obtain understanding from a native speaker's intuition, Hawkins suggests that all of the following must be included when making speech act analysis:

- speech act rules
- appropriate usage rules

- rules linking surface forms to logical meaning

Inadequacies of current theories of the definite article

Hawkins is of the view that Russell's analysis of the English definite is both inaccurate and incomplete. He criticises Russell for the following analysis:

- (1) The king of France is wise;

is an assertion of three propositions, viz.

- (a) There is a king of France. (Existence)
- (b) There is not more than one king of France. (Uniqueness)
- (c) This individual is wise. (Predication)

of which the truth of (1) depends on the truth of all three propositions; and falsity of any of the three propositions falsifies (1).

He finds the analysis inaccurate for putting the three propositions on an equal basis; arguing that according to a native speaker's judgement of logical meaning only (a) and (b) are preconditions for the truth and falsity of (1); they are presuppositions. Proposition (c) is only an assertion depending on the truth and falsity of (1). The incompleteness of the analysis is attributed to neglect of plural and mass nouns, as well as pragmatic aspects of meaning.

On critiquing Christopherson's familiarity theory, Hawkins cites unfamiliar uses of the definite article. The argument is that first-mention of the definite noun phrase in the *immediate situation* needs no prior knowledge of the existence of the referent. It is more like *informing* the hearer of the existence of such a referent, visible or not. When the demonstrative is used instead of the definite article, however, that particular referent has to be in the hearer's field of vision. When first-mention involves the *larger situation* the speaker-hearer shared prior knowledge is required.

Hawkins explains another case of *situational use* whereby the referent can be unknown but visible to the hearer. He postulates that when the speaker presents the referent, it is

possible to use first-mention of the definite article only when the referent is in its context; but when it is in isolation an indefinite article is used. Out of their context, only after first-mention indefinite use, can the definite article be used. So apart from *uniqueness* and *visibility* another factor that calls for the use of the definite article is if the referent occurs in the situation within which it belongs or if it is normally associated with the situation.

Hawkins presents the following usage types of the definite article:

Anaphoric uses

Anaphoric use of the definite description is when an unknown object (singular, plural or mass) or event is presented to the hearer in the form of an indefinite description and then subsequently referred back to in the form of a definite description. It might not be exactly the same NP, but the speaker-hearer (S & H) shared knowledge may make reference to a synonym or associated event successful.

Immediate situation uses

Firstly, the referent of the definite noun phrase may be within the field of vision of both the speaker and the hearer, and as a result the speaker assumes that the hearer will be able to identify it. The demonstrative can be used in this case as well, even if the referent is within the field of vision of the hearer only. In the second instance the referent of the definite NP may not be visible to both the speaker and the hearer. When the interlocutors do not see the object the demonstrative cannot be used. In the latter case the situation of utterance plays a very important disambiguating role. The immediate situation of utterance is not dependent on what is generally predictable or specifically known. The referent may or may not be visible, the hearer may or may not have prior specific or general knowledge of the entity in question to assist him with the location of the referent.

Larger situation uses

Hawkins points out that people of the same place or group may use first mention (non-anaphoric) definite noun phrases for objects that exist in their habitat, e.g. *the pub*, *the Queen*, *the sun*, etc., based on their shared knowledge. In case the context is unable to disambiguate, alternative determiners, e.g. genitive, may be employed.

Associative anaphoric uses

By associative anaphora Hawkins refers to situations where anaphoric use of the definite NP is by association. Hawkins refers to an introductory noun phrase with indefinite article as ‘trigger’, and the subsequent associated definite NP as an ‘associate’. The trigger and the associate may not have the same referent, but may be linked by association. Associative anaphoric use calls for the application of general or specific knowledge. According to Hawkins “overall, the use of the definite article involves a pragmatic strategy which consists in matching a referent with a whole set of objects rather than in identifying an object as such in the world”. (Hawkins op. cit.:129)

In all the above-mentioned uses of the definite article the hearer *identifies* shared sets within which he understands that the referent *exists* and he can *locate* it; i.e. *Set identification + referent location* are characteristic of all uses of the, with different pragmatic abilities of locating.

Some differences between the definite article and the demonstrative

According to Hawkins, uses of both the demonstrative and the definite article require shared knowledge as well as shared situation of utterance. The demonstrative this sometimes overlaps with the with regard to when it can be used (appropriateness conditions; pragmatics) and what it means (both a pragmatic and a logical aspect), but on other occasions it does not. Both strive to make reference unambiguous.

Hawkins points out that whilst demonstratives instruct the hearer to match the linguistic referent with some identifiable object, the definite article instructs the hearer to locate the referent in some situation or S & H shared knowledge. Whilst the definite can: introduce new referents in associative clauses; introduce unknown facts and rumours; occur in larger situation and introductory visible situation uses; the demonstrative cannot. For demonstratives the referent must be visible or known.

The inclusiveness of definite reference

It is *singularity* combined with *set identification* and *referent location* roles of the that makes a total reference *unique*; and when the referent of the definite NP is in *plural* or

mass reference is to the *totality* of those objects or the mass. The + plural/mass noun makes an inclusive claim, equivalent to the universal quantifier all.

Summary of the speech acts and appropriateness conditions of definite reference according to the Location Theory

According to Hawkins' Location Theory when the speaker uses a *definite article* he performs the following *acts*:

- He introduces the referent(s) to the hearer.
- He instructs the hearer to locate the referent in some shared set.
- He refers to the totality of the objects or mass within the set that satisfies the referring expression.

The above-listed acts will only be successful if the following *appropriateness conditions* are fulfilled:

- Set existence conditions
- Set membership conditions
- Set identifiability conditions
- Set composition conditions

Violation of these conditions results in communication breakdown. When the speaker uses the definite article he presupposes that these appropriateness conditions are all met.

2.2.2.4 The semantic contrast between definiteness and indefiniteness

In this section Hawkins addresses the following issues:

- The difference between definite and indefinite articles
- Specific vs. non-specific indefinite reference
- Generic and non-generic uses of both definite and indefinite articles

He states that since there is 'potential for infinite reference', putting a definite article before descriptive predicates is to exclude as irrelevant other possible objects that the same NP

could refer to and to focus the hearer's attention on a very finite number, i.e. placing 'a pragmatic blanket' to cover only those that exist in the shared speaker-hearer sets.

The exclusiveness of indefinite reference

The definite article refers inclusively to *all* (totality) objects satisfying the referring predicate in the speaker-hearer shared set whilst the indefinite article refers to *not-all* (proper subset) objects in the set. With the use of the indefinite article other referents are being excluded from the reference. Definite and indefinite articles also contrast with respect to the *uniqueness* condition. Indefinite reference is *non-unique*.

The speech act and appropriateness conditions of indefinite reference

Hawkins suggests that when using an indefinite article for specific indefinite reference the speaker performs the following speech acts:

- He introduces a referent(s) to the hearer; and
- Refers to a proper subset (not-all) of the potential referents of the referring expression.

The above-mentioned speech acts are subject to the following appropriateness conditions:

- The referent of an indefinite description will not be locatable in a speaker-hearer shared set (as defined for the use of the definite article) if, either:
 - (i) it is not possible for the hearer to understand the reference as excluding at least one object from the class of objects satisfying the referring expression within the shared set; or
 - (ii) the objects in question are not members of any shared set anyway; or
 - (iii) the pragmatics of the remainder of the sentence forces a non-locatable interpretation, even though the referent is at least potentially locatable in a shared set.
- The indefinite referent will be optionally locatable in a shared set if:

- (i) The object referred to is indeed a member of some shared set; and
- (ii) The exclusiveness condition is satisfiable within the shared set; and
- (iii) The pragmatics of the remainder of the sentence does not force a decision on whether the referent is locatable or not.

The logical contrast between definiteness and indefiniteness:

Hawkins points out that both referents of definite and of indefinite noun phrases are locatable in a speaker-hearer shared set (pragmatically) but contrast over exclusiveness (reference to not-all) vs. inclusiveness (reference to all) i.e. logically. Demonstratives on the other hand ensure unambiguous identifiability of the intended referent, indifferent to both inclusiveness and exclusiveness.

Specific and non-specific indefinites

Hawkins differentiates the two as follows:

Specific: the speaker has a particular object in mind.

Non-specific: the speaker does not have any particular object in mind.

The difference between specifics and non-specifics is pragmatic. Addition of the modifier *certain* indicates that the speaker has a particular referent in mind, hence specific.

With regard to *locatability* the exclusiveness condition is a consistent part of the semantics of both specific and non-specific indefinite reference.

Definite and indefinite generics

Hawkins points out that generic interpretation is possible for both singular and plural/mass, definite and indefinite. Generic references are non-specific references in specific contexts. Hawkins labels adjectives such as *numerous*, *extinct* and *rare*; and verbs such as *abound*, *scatter*, *collect* as 'class predicates' because they refer to a whole class or set as opposed to individual objects. Generics behave the same as non-generics in terms of locatability and grammaticality facts, but they differ in respect of the quantity of referents being referred to.

Have, be and set-existential verbs

Hawkins states that the exclusiveness condition on indefinites disappears with the verbs have and be, which have the same inclusiveness condition on their reference as definite descriptions. The following examples illustrate this:

- (1) I have a head.
- (2) I have some hands.
- (3) ?I have a hand.

The third sentence above is odd because a singular noun suggests that the total of objects is only one. Hawkins refers to verbs which function semantically to define existence within a set (including have and be) as set-existential verbs. Indefinite description of set-existential verbs refers inclusively.

2.2.2.5 Ungrammaticalities arising from the semantic contrast between definiteness and indefiniteness

In this section Hawkins poses grammaticality arguments in order to explain the role of semantics in grammaticality prediction.

Only

Hawkins points out that the inclusiveness of only is compatible with the inclusiveness of the, and incompatible with the exclusiveness of a/some. However, semantic compatibility renders sentences grammatical whilst incompatible structures give rise to ungrammatical sentences. The following sentences illustrate:

- (4) The only girl at the party was drunk.
- (5) *An only girl at the party was drunk.

There is, however, one use of only which can co-occur with an indefinite article:

- (6) He is an only child.

Other than being regarded as counter to the analysis Hawkins refers to such examples as a new 'sub-class'.

-est superlatives

- (7) The prettiest girl at the party was Sarah.
- (8) *A prettiest girl at the party was Sarah.

The meaning of superlative is inclusive, and therefore semantically compatible with the definite (i.e. in the genuine superlative reading). There is, however, a new subclass like a *best buy*, *a new course in German*.

On the non-syntactic nature of these articles + modifier co-occurrence restrictions

Hawkins observes that the fact that strings like **a prettiest girl* and **an only girl* are ungrammatical is not based on the syntax since *the prettiest girl* and *the only girl* have identical structures, with the definite and indefinite articles belonging to the same syntactic form class. He attributes the ungrammaticality to semantic incompatibility, i.e. co-occurrence restriction between indefinite article's exclusiveness and the modifier's inclusiveness. Phrases like *an only child* and *a best buy* have a different reading that allows compatibility with exclusiveness.

Associative clauses

Hawkins points out that considering that a mountain will have only one summit it is understandable why **a summit of the mountain* is odd but *the summit of a/the mountain* is not. Other environments that similarly accept only the definite article are: comparatives with only two referents, predicational relatives, expressions of sameness and aforementioned reference.

The syntactic-semantic unity of definites, stressed indefinites, generics and indefinites plus establishing relatives

Hawkins presents the following considerations regarding the role of Semantics in grammaticality prediction:

- There will always exist a logically contradictory proposition within logical structure for every proposition capable of having a truth value;
- There will always exist rules for mapping each contradiction onto surface forms;
- To invoke a logical contradiction in any one case, as the cause of rule incompatibility, is only valid if all instances of that particular contradiction, and also logical contradictions in general, between the semantic sensitivity conditions of particular rules led to rule incompatibility; and
- Incompatible rules produce ungrammatical sentences if they apply together when no other reading can be assigned.

From these four considerations Hawkins concludes that it will not be possible to predict ungrammaticality resulting from rule incompatibility without reference to all the propositions that can be represented in logical structure. Hawkins advocates for increasing recognition of semantics in grammaticality prediction within Transformational Grammar.

2.2.3 Heim (1982)

2.2.3.1 Introduction

Heim identifies the analysis of semantic relations between noun phrases and pronouns as variable binding, as one of the problems that logical semanticists have been dealing with. She focuses on pronominal anaphora to an indefinite antecedent, and she dispels the view that indefinites are existential quantifiers and they do not refer. According to this view reference is not the only function that pronouns have. A pronoun to an indefinite noun phrase does not refer; it is a bound variable. Heim supports a different view that an anaphoric pronoun such as *it* in the following example refers; therefore the indefinite antecedent *a dog* also refers:

- (1) *A dog* came in. *It* lay down under the table.

According to Heim's view such anaphoric pronouns pick up speaker's reference, i.e. what the speaker has in mind. Anaphoric pronouns such as *it* in (1) receive reference through pragmatic factors. Pronouns have a referential reading if speaker's reference is present in the utterance, i.e. if the speaker has a [+specific] referent in mind. An existential reading is attained only when there is no speaker reference in the utterance, i.e. if the speaker has no referent in mind. Indefinite NP with the latter reading will be an existential quantifier and it will have a feature [-specific].

Donkey anaphora

In discussing the indefinite-anaphora relation Heim analyses donkey sentences. Donkey sentences are explained as those sentences that contain an indefinite NP inside an if-clause or a relative clause, and a pronoun which is outside that clause and yet anaphorically related to the indefinite NP. The following sentences illustrate:

- (2) If a man owns *a donkey*, he beats *it*.
- (3) Every man who owns *a donkey* beats *it*.

Firstly, Heim uses the hypothesis that an indefinite in a donkey sentence gets interpreted as a universal quantifier, whose scope extends beyond its clause. Because it is a wide-scope universal it is able to bind a pronoun outside its clause. Secondly, she puts forward the view that pronouns in donkey sentences do not refer at all. They are able to provide subsequent anaphoric reference because the referent has been made salient, either by previous mention or non-linguistically. As far as ambiguity of indefinites is concerned, indefinites in donkey sentences can only be existential quantifiers; they are not referential.

2.2.3.2 Indefinites as variables

Heim explores ways in which the quantificational nature of the indefinite and its role as an anaphoric antecedent can be reconciled; as well as the explanation of donkey sentences in this regard. First Heim looks into Lewis' view on 'quantificational adverbs' (Q-adverbs) in sentences like:

- (4) If a man owns *a donkey* he always beats *it*.
- (5) Sometimes, if a *cat* falls from the fifth floor, *it* survives.

The argument is that in sentences like (4) and (5) above, Q-adverbs are unselective quantifiers, and they bind an unlimited number of variables simultaneously. The indefinite that occurs in the if-clause has a semantic contribution of variable and not quantifier. Heim pursues the idea that the true semantic nature of the indefinite is that of variable; and that this variable reading is the indefinite's only semantic interpretation to the sentence in which it occurs.

Logical forms for English texts with indefinites and quantifiers

The results of Heim's application of construal rules show that for anaphoric reading to be acceptable an indefinite NP must not have the same referential index as any NP to its left; and this she terms the Novelty Condition. A pronoun can only be bound indirectly to a quantifier by virtue of being anaphoric to another NP.

Invisible necessity operators

According to Heim donkey sentences with no overt quantifiers do in fact contain invisible universal quantifiers. The following examples illustrate this point:

- (6) If a donkey kicks John, he beats it.

Heim explains that the universal reading exhibited by the indefinite in (6) is due to an invisible necessity operator that binds the indefinite. In other conditional sentences like this one, indefinite may be bound by overt modal operators such as *must*, *can* and *may*, which have quantificational force. In if-then sentences that lack an overt adverb or modal verb (i.e. bare conditionals) the if-clause is read as a universal quantifier; and it restricts the operator. The truth of the conditional is, therefore, reliant on the connection between the meanings of the antecedent and that of the anaphor.

The behaviour of indefinites with respect to constraints on scope and anaphora

Heim points out that both anaphora and binding are marked by coindexing in logical form, but the coindexing is not the same for both. With binding an operator has to c-command an NP that it binds. With anaphora an operator has to bind both anaphorically related NPs. According to Heim there is a constraint that indefinites do not bind their anaphors. An NP whose determiner is a quantifier can neither bind nor be anaphorically related to anything outside its scope.

With regard to the behaviour of specific indefinites Heim indicates the following factors that increase the availability of a specific reading:

- Descriptive richness of the predicate in the NP;
- The use of modifiers *certain* and *particular* after the indefinite article;
- Left-dislocated, topicalised subject position;
- Co-occurrence with a non-restrictive relative; and
- If indefinite *this* is used instead of the indefinite article.

Heim explains that with specific reading the indefinite is bound by a widest-scope existential quantifier. Specific indefinites are referring expressions like deictic pronouns, except that in the case of specific indefinites the hearer is not expected to be able to identify the referent.

Non-pronominal definites

Heim is of the view that definite descriptions that do not contain any bound variables have unique referents. Definites are able to be anaphorically related to pronouns outside their scope. Heim's argument is that definites and indefinites are alike in every respect except for the feature [\pm Def], as well as their behaviour with regard to rules and principles relating to that feature. Like indefinites, definite descriptions are not quantifying, but they contain free variables.

Apart from Quantifier Indexing and Novelty Condition, another distinguishing factor is that the descriptive content of a definite NP is presupposed whilst that of an indefinite is merely

asserted. Heim points out that the uniqueness requirement is implicit in the felicity conditions of definite descriptions; either unique 'relevant' or unique 'most salient'.

Discourse referents and their lifespan

According to Heim an indefinite NP establishes a 'discourse referent'; and it justifies the occurrence of a coreferential pronoun or a definite NP later in discourse. Anaphoric reference is possible as long as the discourse referent established by the antecedent lives on. In Heim's theory permanent discourse referents get established in the following two cases:

- When a deictic definite is uttered; and
- When an indefinite is uttered that has a wider scope than any quantifier or operator in the sentence of which it is part.

In the case of indefinites Heim points out that since all end up being bound by some operator under the rule of Construal, negation or higher operator interferes with the permanence of a discourse referent. The following table illustrates Heim's analysis of the semantics of indefinites and definites, as illustrated with the following contrasting properties, which affect felicity and truth conditions of the two types of NPs:

Definite NP	Indefinite NP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not undergo construal rule of Operator Indexing - Not subject to Novelty Condition - Presuppose their descriptive content (if any) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undergoes Operator Indexing - Subject to Novelty Condition - Do not presuppose their descriptive content

2.2.3.3 Definiteness in file change semantics

Heim's file change semantics explains the definite-indefinite contrast.

Informative discourse and file keeping

Heim explores the contribution of definite NPs and indefinite NPs in transmitting information from speaker to hearer. She points out that the hearer's task in conversation is to extract and retain the information contained in the speaker's utterance in order to understand; and as Heim metaphorically puts it 'the hearer constructs and updates a file'. At the beginning of a conversation a file is opened. When the speaker utters indefinite noun phrases, the hearer takes cards and gives them numbers. When a definite NP or any anaphoric pronoun is uttered the hearer updates the relevant card in the file. For every indefinite NP the hearer starts a new file card, and for every definite NP he updates an old card.

Heim points out that a file can be evaluated as to whether it corresponds with reality (true) or misrepresents it (false). To establish the truth of a file there has to be sequence of individuals such that the first one fits the description on card 1, the second fits card 2, etc. According to Heim a conversation is a sequence of distinct files beginning with F_0 , F_1 , F_2 , F_3 , etc., which are recordings of information covered by the speaker's utterances. Heim argues that her file change semantics explains better how referents are introduced and eliminated in discourse. Metaphorically, discourse referents are file cards, referential indices are card numbers, and discourse referents' lifespan is the period starting from when a card is added to a file and it ends when the card is eliminated from the file.

Among properties that characterise a speech context in which an utterance occurs Heim identifies 'common ground' or 'speaker's presupposition'. Heim proposes that common ground be understood as the file of that context. Common ground can change from one context to the next in the course of a conversation, through assertions. According to the semantic theory that Heim pursues file change potentials are defined in terms of satisfaction conditions of logical forms.

Novelty and familiarity

Heim explains Christopherson's familiarity theory in terms of file cards as follows:

- Indefinites are novel with both logical form and the file; but
- Definites are novel with respect to logical form and familiar with respect to the file.

According to the file model a referent is made familiar by previous mention and there will be a card for it in the file, with the number of the NP that was mentioned before. With both deictic and anaphoric reference it is presupposed that the referent is already familiar to the hearer perceptually and by previous mention, respectively. Hence a new constraint of Novelty-Familiarity Condition to replace Novelty Condition.

Truth

According to Heim a file is true if, and only if there is a sequence that satisfies it. The Novelty-Familiarity Condition states that definites are familiar with respect to the file and indefinites are novel. As a result any text containing these two types of NPs will differ in their felicity conditions. The truth of an utterance results in the truth of a file; and a false utterance will produce a false file.

Quantification

Heim suggests that both Existential Closure and Quantifier Indexing be eliminated since the two add material that has been rendered redundant in the Novelty-Familiarity Condition. She proposes the Extended Novelty-Familiarity Condition to cover cases such as Hawkins' immediate situation, larger situation and associative anaphoric use, which do not obey the Novelty-Familiarity Condition. Such definites are novel with respect to the file. For such uses of the definite there is no existing card in the file; and they are therefore 'accommodated' and rendered felicitous.

To conclude, Heim argues that her preference of file change semantics is based on the success of files to intervene between linguistic structures and their referents.

2.2.4 Hawkins (1991)

Hawkins' (1991) explanation of the articles starts by reference to the Russellian uniqueness semantics.

The definite article

Following Russell's semantics of the definite article, Hawkins analyses the following sentence as having a three-fold logical translation:

- (1) The professor is drunk.
 - (a) There is a professor (Existence)
 - (b) There is only one professor (Uniqueness)
 - (c) This individual is drunk (Predication)

Hawkins points out that whilst the use of a definite article in (1) entail (a – c), its indefinite counterpart only entails (a & c); the two will differ on the uniqueness claim.

Hawkins identifies the following sets that define pragmatic parameters for uniqueness, hence referents of the definite NP, as P-sets (pragmatic sets):

- Previous discourse set – Entities that the speaker and the hearer have talked about, e.g.: as long as *a professor* was mentioned before, subsequent mention of *the professor* cannot create referential ambiguity through non-uniqueness.
- Physical location – it serves as defining point for immediate and larger situation sets.
 - Immediate situation set: when the referent is visually accessible to both the speaker and the hearer it becomes unique; hence reference is unambiguous.
 - Larger situation set: when the speaker and the hearer are aware of the uniqueness of certain entities in an area due to them both being inhabitants of the area.
- Association set: when uniqueness stems from the speaker and the hearer's general knowledge of associative relationships between entities.

Hawkins proposes that the English definite article carries the implicature of P-membership, i.e. it conventionally implicates that there is some subset of entities, {P}, in the universe of discourse that manifests to the speaker and the hearer on-line and within which definite referents exist and are unique (Hawkins, op. cit.:414). On this account Hawkins points out that Heim's file-change semantics fails to account for the majority of uses of *the*, which

differ from pronouns and demonstratives in not requiring previous mention or perceptibility. Hawkins maintains that uniqueness is achieved differently for different NP types, and that they should all be accounted for.

Hawkins suggests the following conversational implicatures for the articles, which are reformation of Grice's maxim of Quantity (Hawkins, op. cit.:423-424):

Q-principle

Speaker's maxim: Do not provide a statement that is informationally weaker than your knowledge of the world allows, unless providing a stronger statement would contravene the I-principle.

Recipient's corollary: Take it that the speaker made the strongest statement consistent with what he knows.

I-principle

Speaker's maxim: the maxim of *Minimisation*

'Say as little as necessary', i.e. the linguistic information provided by the speaker should be just enough to achieve his communication goal (with the Q-principle in mind).

Recipient's corollary: Amplify the information contained in the speaker's utterance, i.e. find the most specific interpretation that may be intended.

In explaining grammaticality judgements of indefinite noun phrases, Hawkins points out that the indefinite article is an existential quantifier, neutral to uniqueness. Co-occurrence restrictions of *the* and *a* are not syntactically governed, but rather depend on semantics and pragmatics. The nature of the contrast between *the* and *a* centres on uniqueness, a logical factor. Pragmatic principles, therefore, have a direct contribution to a definition of grammatical manifestation of the articles.

2.2.5 Enç (1991)

Enç's (1991) point of departure in clarifying specificity is in reference to the points of view of other scholars. Hellan and Ioup (as cited in Enç', op. cit.) are of the opinion that a noun

phrase is specific when the speaker has an individual in mind as its referent. Partee 's view (as cited in Enç', op. cit.) is that the specific use of indefinites relates to the referential function of definites and non-specific use of indefinite to attributive use of definites. According to Enç the most widespread view is the one that is advocated by Fodor & Sag; that an NP is considered specific if it has wide scope over an operator. The following sentence illustrates the latter view:

- (1) Every woman talked to a child in fifth grade.

Enç points out that (1) is ambiguous depending on the scope of 'every woman' and 'a child in fifth grade', and his explanation is based on the following interpretations:

- (2) (a) For every woman there is a child or other in fifth grade, such that the woman talked to the child.
 (b) There is a child in fifth grade such that every woman talked to him.

According to interpretation (b) NP 'a child in fifth grade' is considered specific because it has wide scope over 'every', whilst interpretation (a) affords 'every woman' wide scope and hence specific interpretation. Similarly, according to the scope relations view, if an indefinite NP has wide scope over other operators such as negation, modals or verbs of prepositional attitude it is considered specific. The first step that Enç takes is to check whether specificity is marked in anyway in languages. He finds that in English, adjectives *certain*, *specific* and *particular* give the NP a specific interpretation. E.g.:

- (3) (a) John wants a *certain* piano which used to belong to a famous pianist.
 (b) Ned must speak to a *particular* congressman who has sworn to vote against this bill.

Indefinites without adjectives such as these ones can be interpreted either as specific or non-specific, i.e. they are unmarked for specificity.

Albeit being wide-spread the 'scope over ...' view receives criticism from Enç, based on his view that it 'undermines the independency of specificity as a semantic phenomenon'

(Enç op. cit.). He suggests an analysis of specificity which is not dependent on scope relations; because:

- NPs with *certain* allow for both narrow and wide scope.
- Other sentences contain specific NPs but they do not have operators.

Another of Enç's concerns is that the semantics of specificity should not be dependent on truth conditions. He argues that the introduction of a specificity element such as *a certain* in a sentence may not alter the truth condition of the sentence. One other point that he raises is that it may also not be correct to base the semantics of specificity on 'specific adjectives' since these adjectives have varying distribution. For example, occurrences of *certain* are limited to indefinite NPs with *a* or null determiner, whilst distributions of *particular* and *specific* extend to indefinite NPs that contain numerals and *some*.

Enç points out that in other languages specificity is marked by case morphology, and NPs without case morphology are non-specific – unless context provides enough information to the contrary. He uses the following Turkish examples for illustration:

- (4) (a) Ali bir piyano-yu kiralamak istiyor.
 Ali one piano-Acc to rent wants.
 (Ali wants to rent a certain piano).
- (b) Ali bir piyano kiralamak istiyor.
 (Ali wants to rent a "non-specific" piano).

Object NPs in Turkish are therefore never ambiguous with respect to specificity since specifics carry accusative case morphology.

Other works that receive attention from Enç are: Heim's file cards, Kamp's referent markers and Kartunen's discourse referents, according to which definites and indefinites are differentiated by the Familiarity-Noveltty Conditions. These conditions put down requirements that all indefinite NPs must be novel i.e. they must introduce referents that were not previously part of the discourse. Definite NPs, on the other hand, must be familiar i.e. they must have antecedents.

Enç points out that the relatedness of definiteness and specificity is based on the fact that they both require their discourse referents to be linked to previously established referents in the discourse. However, they differ in the linking relations. He describes the linking of definites with their antecedents as 'identity relation', and that of specifics with their antecedents as 'inclusion relation'. Enç terms antecedents of definite NPs strong antecedents and those of specifics weak antecedents. This makes all definite NPs, i.e. names, pronouns and definite descriptions, specific because the identity of referents entails inclusion. With regard to the relation between indefiniteness and specificity Enç points out that indefinites can be either specific or non-specific.

2.2.6 Chesterman (1991)

2.2.6.1 Introduction

Chesterman's (1991) approach to definiteness investigates how the hearer realises or infers if something is definite or not. For this purpose he uses his set-theoretical theory. Apart from analysing the English article system, Chesterman also analyses Finnish in order to be in a position to account for the implication of his theory on languages that lack articles.

2.2.6.2 English articles

From his analysis of the English article system Chesterman argues that it consists of five articles, i.e. **the**, **a**, unstressed **some**, **zero** and **null**. Each of these articles imposes a distinct meaning on the NP.

To account for referentials and non-referentials, and also to incorporate generics, Chesterman proposes the following three features for his set-theoretical framework:

- (a) Locatability in a shared set (familiarity)
- (b) Inclusiveness (quantity)
- (c) Extensivity (abstractness & generality)

Chesterman discusses the following major research traditions in an attempt to address the *definite vs. indefinite reference* issue:

The Philosophical tradition

According to this tradition an NP with the definite article has a referent that is assumed by the speaker to be unambiguously identifiable by the hearer. An NP with an indefinite article, on the other hand, has a referent that is assumed by the speaker not to be unambiguously identifiable by the hearer. Chesterman discusses the works of Russell, Strawson and Searle, all of which define definiteness in terms of *existence* and *uniqueness*. The definite/indefinite distinction is viewed as a case of a *known or identifiable referent* against a *new or unknown referent*. Chesterman is of the view that definiteness is not just a matter of reference. On this matter he concedes with the view that both definite and indefinite NPs may be non-referential, and he illustrates with the following sentence:

(1) *The murderer of Smith* must be insane.

In example (1) above *the murderer* is ambiguous between attributive and referential readings.

Transformational tradition

This tradition is mainly based on semantic opposition of definite/ indefinite. This approach is supplemented by \pm count, \pm singular, and even \pm specific. Most research in this tradition deals with the derivation of **the** and **a**. There are claims that the numeral *one* is the source for indefinite **a** and *any* is the source for **generic** indefinites. Chesterman points out that most recently the issue of Definiteness Effects also made reference to these derivational arguments.

Studies that take the articles themselves as the starting point

Christophersen's actualisation theory (as cited in Chesterman, op. cit.) explores the view that articles **the** and **a** are not mutual opposites. **The** is viewed (sic) as an article of familiarity, bringing in the idea of association with previously acquired knowledge; and **a** as an article of unity (and not unfamiliarity) and is therefore neutral with regard to familiarity. According to this theory the use of an article turns a mere idea into something actual and

real, e.g. while *house* is only an idea/a concept, *the house* and *a house* refer to a real, actual house.

Chesterman discusses the English article usage; and the discussion revolves around classes of nouns that may take certain articles; and the circumstances under which a given noun may or must take a given article. Items of interest in this regard are surface articles **the**, **a** and unstressed **some**; and non-surface articles **null** (which occurs with definite singular proper nouns and some singular count nouns) and **zero** (occurring with indefinite mass and plural nouns). For any given NP it has to be determined which articles are possible out of context; and which of those possible articles is/are appropriate in a given context.

Chesterman lists the following referential usage types of **the**:

- anaphoric use;
- immediate situation use;
- larger situation use;
- associative anaphoric use;
- unfamiliar (introductory, first mention) use;
- non-referential use; and
- generic use.

According to Hawkins (as cited in Chesterman, op. cit.), for a referent to be definite it should be locatable in a shared set; or the hearer must be assumed to understand it. Furthermore all referential uses of **the** are regarded as inclusive. Both situational uses *inform* the hearer of the existence of a given referent. For immediate situation use often the referent is visible and larger situation use calls for general knowledge. Uniqueness of a referent may be due to logical meaning, e.g. *the first*, *the last*, *the next*, *the only*, *the same*, *the largest*, *the best*, etc.

To prove the complexity of the issue of definiteness Chesterman sheds light on a number of exceptions to the above-mentioned usage types of **the**:

- Other referential (and generic) uses of **the** are not inclusive:

(2) The Americans have reached the moon.

- The expected **the** may not be used, e.g. in a narrative introductory sequence:

(3) Once upon a time there was a king. This king had three daughters.

- Where **a** or **zero** occurs with the logically unique referent:

(4) I would still like to make a last comment.

- An expected **the** before a singular count noun may be replaced by **null**:

(5) She is now captain of the team.

- **The/null** variation in referentials (fixed phrases wherein **null** is preferred, although **the** would be equally acceptable):

(6) Lunch is ready. / Doctor will see you now.

- **Zero/the** variation:

(7) The discussion/ Discussion of the issue continued for several hours.

- Contexts in which proper nouns take **the** (restrictively qualified singulars, plural names of rivers, canals, seas and oceans):

(8) The young Sibelius,

(9) The Himalayas,

(10) The river Thames,

(11) The Indian Ocean, etc.

- Contexts where **null** is the only alternative, e.g. vocatives and certain structures with post-modifying numerals:

(12) Come along, boy.

(13) Book six.

- When a singular proper name behaves as a common noun and **a** is used instead of **null**:

(14) A second Milton.

- Contexts where **a** and **some**'s referents are locatable in a shared set (and **zero** becomes unacceptable):

(15) John has just bought a computer/some bees.

Chesterman points out that exceptions such as these may either be treated as diversions from the norm; or they may be treated as counter-evidence requiring theory adjustment. For a unified description of the English articles, Chesterman distributes the articles across the three oppositions, i.e. locatability X non-locatability, inclusiveness X exclusiveness and limited extensivity X unlimited extensivity, as in Table 1 below:

Table 1

	LOCATABLE (CONTEXT- BOUND)	INCLUSIVE (CONTEXT- BOUND)	LIMITED EXTENSIVITY (ABSOLUTE)
zero	-	±	-
some	±	-	+
a	±	-	+
the	+	+	+
null	+	+	-

According to Lytle's notation $U = r + r'$ (as cited in Chesterman), U denotes the sum of all potential referents within a given situation of utterance, r : referents that are being referred to and r' : other potential referents. Therefore for inclusive reference and if U is a single member r' will be pragmatically empty whilst for exclusive reference it will not be empty, but will contain other (**a** and **some**) members than the ones being referred to.

Chesterman glosses the distribution of the five articles with respect to the meaning of the NP as follows:

- a (an)** NP: one member of a referent set;
- some** NP: not-all (members) of a referent set;
- the** NP: (pragmatically) all (the members) of a locatable referent set (where 'locatable' means 'locatable in a shared entity set');
- null** NP: a locatable, one-member referent set itself;
- zero** NP: a referent set itself (which must not be a one-member set).

As far as the interpretation of NPs in generic contexts, Chesterman explains his set-theoretical approach as follows:

- **A** marks 'one member of a set' a locatable set:

(16) *An otter* lives almost exclusively on fish.

- **the** indicates 'all (members) of a locatable set':

(17) *The otter* is a dying species.

- The **zero** article 'names' a set , and inclusiveness or exclusiveness is pragmatically determined:

(18) *Insects* have six legs. (extension covers the whole genus)

(19) *Dogs* are friendly creatures. (less than maximum extension)

- Unstressed **some** forces a specific interpretation and is, therefore, excluded for generic interpretation:

(20) Harriet is studying *some horses* – the Polish Arab and the Shagya in particular.

- The **null** article, logically, does not have a separate generic reading because it refers only to a pragmatically unique one-member set.

Another area of syntax that Chesterman discusses is anaphora. Distinction is made [sic] between strict anaphora or co-reference and lexical reference or anaphora of sense. In both types of anaphora the antecedent NP introduces a discourse referent, but anaphoric relations are different. With strict anaphora the pronoun refers to the same member of the referent set as in the following examples:

(21) Oscar found a good reference but he forgot to include it.

On the other hand, anaphora of sense refers to another unspecified member of the same set, as illustrated below.:

(22) Oscar found a good reference, and Joe found one too.

Chesterman points out that in the so-called 'paycheque sentences' and 'donkey sentences', however, it functions like one.

2.2.6.3 Finnish: no articles

Chesterman points out that since there are no articles in Finnish there is no equivalent way (to English) of expressing definiteness. Finnish is a highly agglutinative language, with a complex morphology. Some of the characteristics of Finnish morphology are the following:

(a) Case:

(i) Nominative case (subject) is morphologically unmarked in the singular and takes the ending **-t** in the plural.

(ii) Accusative case (object) has three syntactically determined morphological forms, i.e. (**Ø/-n**; **-t**)

↓	↓
Singular	Plural

(iii) Partitive case has several morphologically determined forms:

- a ~ -ä (singular and plural)
- ta ~ -tä (singular and plural)
- tta ~ -ttä (singular)

The partitive is the main case of the object. A direct object may be partitive if any of the following three reasons applies:

- it is the obligatory object case after a negative verb;
- it is the object of an irresultative verb; and
- it is the object for partial quantity.

Typically, a subject marked with the partitive case is interpreted as existential.

(b) Divisibility:

Chesterman points out that all Finnish NPs are either divisible or non-divisible.

A divisible NP has a conceptually divisible referent, i.e. a sub-part of the same referent may still be designated by the same noun e.g. mass *vesi* (water) and plural counts e.g. *pojat* (boys).

A non-divisible NP's referent is an individual unit which can be multiplied but not divided, and still be designated by the same noun viz. singular proper names and singular count nouns e.g. *poika* (boy).

In Finnish, therefore, only divisible NPs may express the distinction between total and partial quantity. Chesterman observes that this distinction matches English **some** (divisible) vs. **a/an** (non-divisible) divisibility distinction. Attention is drawn to the fact that (sic) other forms are morphologically plural but conceptually non-divisible e.g. *sasket* (scissors), *kasvot* (face).

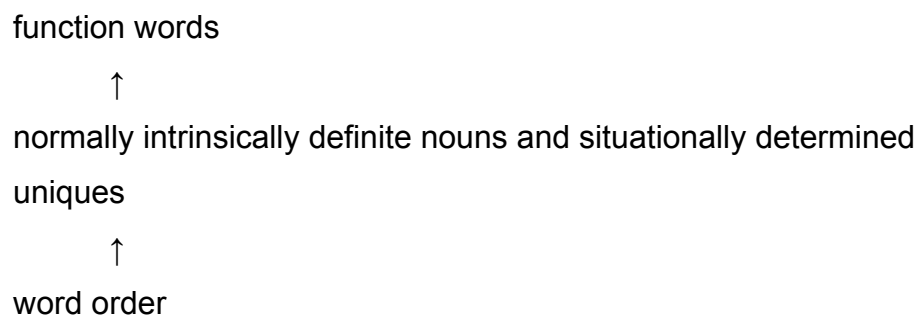
The following structural features are relevant to the understanding of the Finnish situation with regard to definiteness:

- Finnish has no morphologically marked future tense.
- Finnish word order is free to express theme-rheme relations and emphasis because the subject and object are marked by case endings.
- Since there are no articles [\pm Def] is expressed or inferred by a variety of heterogeneous means.

From the points mentioned above, Chesterman concludes that context (both textual and situational) is the main determiner of whether a Finnish noun is interpreted as definite or indefinite.

The earliest research works on Finnish grammar reflect the issue of species. According to these works, nouns whose referents were known or previously mentioned were said to have definite spesies and those that were unknown or not previously mentioned had indefinite spesies. The 'species' issue is marked by contrasting views in relation to how it works for definiteness. Chesterman attributes these vast contrasts to the fact that the concept has been imposed on Finnish grammar from outside.

Chesterman observes the following hierarchy in the Finnish expression of definiteness:



With regard to the status of definiteness in Finnish, Chesterman finds Quantity and Divisibility to be the defining concepts. The views on the two concepts are that divisibility is to be defined in terms of formal tests such as inserting '*kaikki*' (all) if the quantity is total and a corresponding predicate complement if the subject is nominative. Non-divisible plurals are also regarded as quantities.

Case selection in Finnish

Partitive case has the widest range of functions such as marking the object of the irresultative verb (incomplete act) and marking of partial quantity. A known referent with irresultative verb is marked by a function word se. The partitive is, therefore, an indication of indefiniteness and incompleteness. The sense in which indefinites are partitive is purely a quantitative one, i.e. not-all. As such the partitive has nothing to do with the known x unknown distinction of referents.

Oblique case has a tendency of reading as definite more than indefinite, consistent with the generalisation that:

- partitive case is associated with indefiniteness;
- prenominal genitive case is associated with definiteness; and
- relative case/oblique is associated with definiteness.

Stress and Word order

According to Chesterman Finnish stress may be used to differentiate known/ unknown referents. In Finnish all elements that are stressed are new information and have as such indefinite reading; but it is not all new information that is stressed. Given information is unstressed. However, stress itself does not mark definiteness.

As far as the relationship between word order and definiteness is concerned Chesterman makes reference to the 'No Initial Indefinite Constrain' default reading, i.e. 'No Initial Indefinite Constrain' holds unless there is evidence to the contrary. Clause-initial position in Finnish tends to reject new information (in phonologically unmarked sentences). Therefore, clause-initial NP tends to have definite interpretation whilst clause-final NP can freely be definite or indefinite. In Finnish the NP occurs clause-initially, not because it is definite but because it is given information. The following sentence illustrates:

- (23) Rahaa tarvitaan tähän projektiin.
(Money is needed for this project.)

This constraint is therefore concerned with information structure rather than definiteness *per se*.

Partitive subjects in Finnish are normally clause-final, favouring the existential construction. With regard to word order in relation to theme-rheme dichotomy Chesterman maps the situation as follows: Theme appears clause-initially, is unstressed, tends to be given information, is associated with given referents.

Context may provide other means of inferring definiteness other than previous mention. Word order can also be overruled by evidence to the contrary, i.e. according to the 'No Initial Indefinite Constraint' where there is marking by function word or where the NP is situationally known or unique. Examples of such cases are the 'all-new clauses', with no given information to fill the clause-initial slot e.g. newspaper headlines, generics and non-specific subject.

In comparing the syntax of the two languages concerning the relation between definiteness and word order Chesterman observes that existential sentences exclude a clause-final definite NP in both languages.

Function words : **se** (it) – **ne** (they).

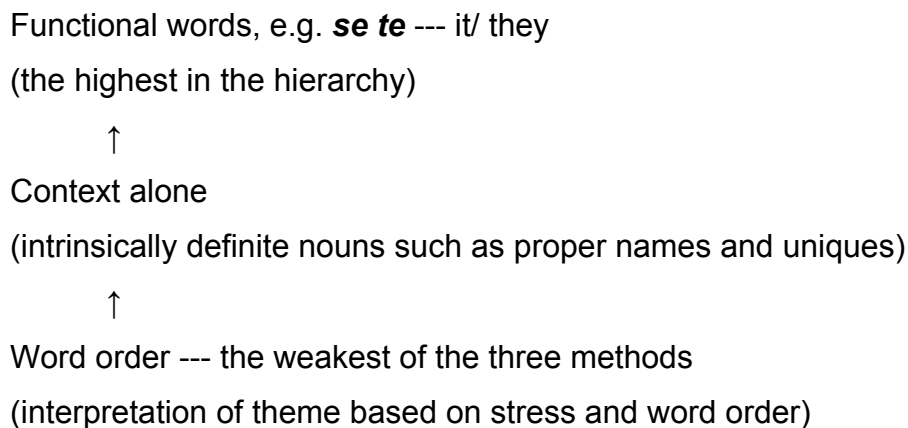
When used anaphorically (both strict & bridging cross-reference) **se** (it) – **ne** (they) may overrule (in)definiteness reading that was inferable from word order. Apart from demonstrative proper **se/ne** is the only pronominal function word in Finnish that marks definite nouns.

When used pronominally **se/ne** is primarily demonstrative in use. Where the demonstrative is inappropriate **se/ne** is not used.

With indefinite NPs there is more variety, e.g. Numeral **yski** (one) marks specific indefinites; indefinite adjectives **eras** and **muuan** (a certain); pronouns **joko** (someone) and **jokin** (something).

The relationship between Quantity and Reference

Chesterman's investigation of the Finnish situation reveals that in Finnish there are no grammatical features whose sole or main function is to indicate definiteness. Referential definiteness in Finnish is dependent on context, quantity being the most defining concept. Even those grammatical devices that have a connection with definiteness do not have an expression of definiteness as their primary function. A given type of NP will be read as referentially definite or indefinite unless circumstances indicate the contrary (default reading). Various means by which definiteness is expressed or inferred in Finnish constitute a hierarchy of referential definiteness as illustrated below:



All rules apply unless the context suggests otherwise. Therefore, the ultimate determinant of definiteness in Finnish is context. Up to this point Chesterman takes the phenomenon of definiteness to be a 'potential semantic universal', and against this background he does a contrastive analysis of the two languages.

2.2.6.4 English and Finnish contrasted

Expression of definiteness in English and Finnish is viewed in the following manner:

- (a) Both descriptions analyse definiteness in terms of components:
 In English the components are extensivity, locatability and inclusiveness.
 In Finnish the components are ±identifiable referent and ±total quantity.
- (b) In addition to definite/ indefinite opposition the following are observed:
 In English the distribution of articles is partly determined by

mass vs. count distinction.

In Finnish the divisible vs. non-divisible opposition as a secondary distinction plays a role in the syntax of nouns. In Finnish this is a pragmatic concept, dependent on context.

- (c) 'Default reading' applies in the following areas:
 English: Inclusiveness of definite NPs.
 Finnish: Identifiability of clause-initial NPs.
- (d) The Exclusive x Inclusive reference in English corresponds with the Partial x Total quantity of divisible nouns in Finnish, whilst Finnish non-divisible nouns are neither total nor partial.
- (e) Some concepts appear to be scalar rather than absolute:
 English: Genericness
 Finnish: Totality

2.2.6.5 Wider perspectives

Finally, Chesterman puts forward a componential analysis, as far as English is concerned. The components are:

- (a) *quantity* (\pm all), which is partly pragmatic and partly semantic;
 (b) *locatability*, which is also partly pragmatic and partly semantic; and
 (c) *extensivity*, which is purely semantic.

Chesterman uses componential analysis to account for the distinction between definites and indefinites, which is traditionally treated as binary. He puts five articles on a scalar representation to show that [\pm Def] as a phenomenon is not binary but more of a continuum:

Most indefinite-----Most definite
 Zero *some* *a* *the* null

Chesterman points out that since no two speakers will have universes of discourse or experiences that are exactly equivalent, pragmatics plays an important role in the interpretation of definite/indefinite referents.

As far as the Finnish situation is concerned Chesterman views the emergence of the scalar representation as different because the expression (or inference) of definiteness does not take place via a well-formed system, but in heterogeneous ways. Other languages that Chesterman makes reference to are: Russian, Polish and Hungarian. Like Finnish, Russian and Polish are non-articled languages. In Russian definiteness is marked on NP object by case viz. accusative (definite) vs. genitive (indefinite). Word order also plays a role in Russian but it can be overruled by context. To ensure definite/indefinite reading Polish uses a variety of methods like word order and pronominal pronouns. Chesterman's observation with regard to Hungarian is that quantity seems to be a matter of degree.

Chesterman is of the opinion that semantically, definiteness overlaps with a variety of syntactic and semantic phenomena such as demonstratives, quantifiers, anaphora, pronominal reference, case, word order, stress, information structure and functional sentence perspective. Of all these (sic), reference seem to be the most closely related to definiteness.

From his comparison of English and Finnish Chesterman concludes that definiteness, as a semantic-pragmatic category, seems to be a universal phenomenon. For English (an articled language) the defining concepts for definiteness are locatability, inclusiveness and extensivity. He maintains that there are five articles, viz. **a/an**, unstressed **some**, **the**, **null** and **zero**; each of which has a distinct way of impacting on the interpretation of the noun phrase. Even with a clear article system, there are default readings and they are pragmatically solved. Finnish is a non-articled language. Chesterman gives the defining concepts for definiteness in Finnish as divisibility and quantity. Finnish definiteness is expressed in a variety of ways, the predominant factor being context, in which familiarity or quantity is present. There are a variety of linguistic devices that assist in inferring pragmatic definiteness in Finnish, viz. **stress** and **word order**, **function words** and **case**. In cases where the expected reading according to these devices fails, pragmatics takes priority.

2.2.7 Diesing (1992)

2.2.7.1 Introduction

Diesing (1992) presents a framework as a proposal for deriving logical representations. With her framework Diesing aims at developing an account of the interface between syntactic theory (Chomsky's Government and Binding) and semantic theory (Kamp-Heim NP interpretation).

2.2.7.2 The syntactic roots of indefinite interpretation

Diesing bases her work on the hypothesis that the subject of a sentence can be base-generated within the verb projection, i.e. the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis. According to this hypothesis the VP-Internal subject raises from [Spec, VP] to [Spec, IP] at S-structure. Subjects are Θ -marked within the VP. Diesing points out that it is at logical form (LF) that a distinction is made between VP-internal subjects and VP-external subjects, with respect to quantification. LF-movement involves Quantifier Raising (QR), which raises quantificational NPs to adjoin to IP, such that an operator (quantificational NP) binds a variable (trace left by QR).

2.2.7.3 Kamp-Heim theory

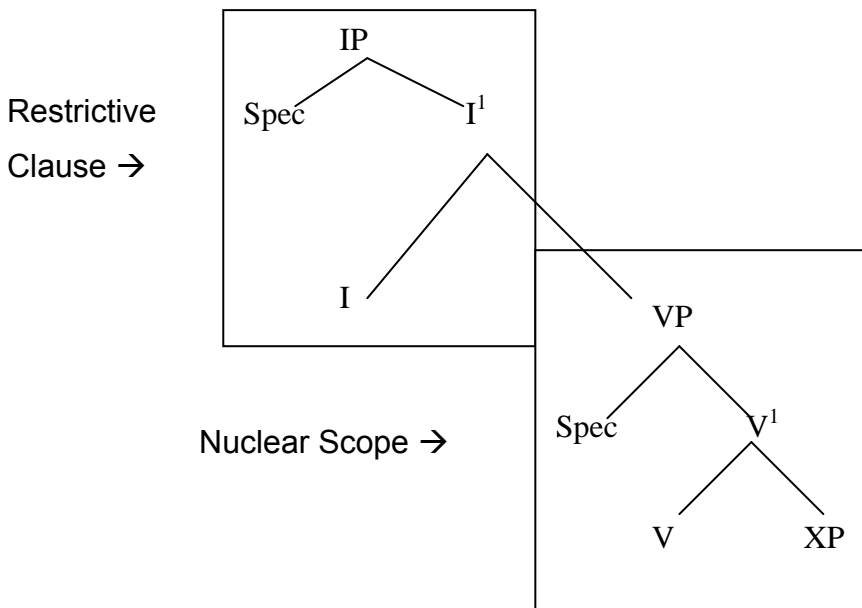
Diesing points out that the Kamp-Heim theory recognises indefinites as variables. They have no quantificational force of their own and they vary quantificational force depending on the context within which they appear. The Kamp-Heim theory of NP-interpretation is formulated in terms of restricted quantification, in which the domain of the quantifier is established by the restrictive clause. Indefinites, as variables, are unselectively bound by abstract operators such as existential closure, or overt operators such as *every*. Diesing uses restrictive clause formation or box splitting to represent a restriction introduced by quantifiers like *every*.

2.2.7.4 Deriving Logical Representations

According to Diesing the Kamp-Heim logical representation consists of an operator, a restrictive clause and a nuclear scope. She explains the link, i.e. the logical representation, between the syntactic representation and the semantic representation through the

Mapping Hypothesis. According to the Mapping Hypothesis the syntactic tree splits into two parts, and the two parts are mapped into the two parts of the logical representation, viz. the restrictive clause and the nuclear scope. The following diagram illustrates this situation:

Diagram 1: Mapping Hypothesis (Tree splitting) (Diesing 1992:9-10)



Material from VP is mapped into the nuclear scope and material from IP is mapped into a restrictive clause. The third part of the logical representation is the operator, i.e. the quantifier itself.

According to Diesing the Mapping Hypothesis establishes from the logical representations that the semantic representations of a sentence, in this case the subject, are rooted in the syntactic representations.

To support her hypothesis Diesing focuses on the interpretation of indefinite subjects. Firstly, she points out that bare plurals, as examples of indefinite NPs without overt determiner, can receive either a generic or an existential reading. For this reason Diesing assumes that there is an abstract generic operator *Gen* that binds variables to produce generic readings. NPs that are bound by existential closure have existential reading.

Diesing is of the view that since different predicate types have different properties that are responsible for the interpretations of subjects, it is necessary to explore the generic/existential reading contrast from predicates. She examines two types of predicates labelled stage-level and individual-level predicates. Stage-level predicates are those that denote temporary states or transitory activities, and they can induce both existential and generic reading. They can appear in nuclear scope or restrictive clause. Individual-level predicates on the other hand allow only generic reading, bound by the generic operator only. They can only appear in restrictive clause. Diesing dispels the idea that VP-internal NPs cannot have generic reading, that generic reading is limited to subjects only. She points out that some transitive verbs like *fear*, *hate* and *loathe* can give the object experiencer generic reading. Verbs that express habitual acts or states also permit generic reading of bare plural objects.

2.2.7.5 Tree splitting and the interpretation of indefinites

Diesing identifies a constrain on indefinites, i.e. non-generic indefinites that lack existential force of their own must be within VP after tree splitting in order to receive existential force from existential closure. Indefinites that have quantificational force form operator-variable structures by introducing a restrictive clause.

Diesing is of the opinion that the classification and distinction of determiners into strong and weak ones is helpful in indefinite interpretation. Weak determiners such as *a*, *some*, *a few*, *many* and numerals can appear with NP subject in *there*-insertion contexts; and they are ambiguous between presuppositional and non-presuppositional reading. Strong determiners such as *the*, *every*, *all* and *most* are ungrammatical in *there*-insertion contexts; and they unambiguously presuppose existence. Strong determiners have wide scope and they always have IP as their scope domain. Weak determiners have narrow scope with only VP as their scope domain.

From her syntactic account of the cardinal/presupposition contrast, Diesing maintains that through the Mapping Hypothesis the following is evident:

- The connection between presuppositionality and QR.
- The connection between [Spec, IP] and presuppositional reading of indefinites.

2.2.7.6 Presupposition, extraction and logical form

Information for distinguishing cardinal and prepositional reading is provided by the determiner in the NP.

As far as these two classes of determiners are treated at logical form, they differ with respect to QR (quantifier-raising). The situation at logical form is as follows:

Strong determiners are raised by QR to adjoin to IP. They are mapped into restrictive clause through the tree-splitting procedure. When the splitting applies they form a tripartite quantificational structure that consists of an operator (quantifier), restrictive clause and nuclear scope. They have quantificational force and therefore function as operators, binding variables that are introduced in the restrictive clause.

Weak quantifiers, on the other hand, are ambiguous. On their cardinal reading they do not induce QR – they remain in VP; and are mapped into the nuclear scope by tree-splitting. They are bound by existential closure. They have no quantificational force and they function as cardinality predicates. On their presuppositional reading weak determiners undergo QR like strong determiners.

Diesing views the cardinal/presupposition contrast as distinguishing specific from non-specific indefinites. Specific indefinites have a presuppositional reading. The following table summarises the distinction:

Table 2

CARDINAL	PRESUPPOSITIONAL
- Do not undergo QR	- Undergo QR
- Form cardinality predicates	- Form operator-variable structure

The position of generic indefinites is different. Generic indefinites have no quantificational force because they have no determiner functioning as an operator. Generic bare plurals on the other hand function syntactically and semantically they resemble presuppositional indefinites.

Another distinction that Diesing draws between strong and weak determiners involves extraction. Weak determiners are viewed as being of the category NP, whilst strong determiners are category determiner phrase (DP). It follows that extraction from a weak NP crosses only one boundary, viz. NP; and extraction from a strong NP crosses two, viz. NP and DP. Diesing argues that extraction cannot take place out of an NP that must raise out of VP before tree splitting.

Diesing views her Mapping Hypothesis (together with the Kamp-Heim theory) as provision for common ground for syntax and semantics in the interpretation of indefinite noun phrases.

2.2.8 Lyons (1999)

2.2.8.1 Simple definites and indefinites

Lyons (1999) explains the distinction between definite and indefinite noun phrases by first addressing what he terms simple definites and simple indefinites. These are NPs whose definiteness and indefiniteness stems from the presence of elements in their structure whose only or main function is to indicate definiteness and indefiniteness such as the English definite article *the* and indefinite article *a*; or Arabic definite prefix *al-* and indefinite suffix *-n*. What makes the definiteness issue complicated, according to Lyons, is the fact that not every NP is lexically marked for (in)definiteness; and that there is no general agreement with regard to the semantics of *a* and *the*, for instance. Lyons uses the following semantic features to clarify the definite-indefinite distinction:

(a) Familiarity

According to the familiarity hypothesis an NP containing *the* is familiar to both the speaker and the hearer. The use of *a*, on the other hand, may indicate that the speaker is familiar with the referent and the hearer is not. Lyons identifies the following factors that contribute to shared familiarity:

- (i) situational use – familiarity of the NP is determined by the physical situation in which the speaker and the addressee are.

- (ii) general knowledge – extra-linguistic general knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer makes the NP familiar.
- (iii) anaphoric use – familiarity of the referent is provided by the linguistic context.
- (iv) bridging cross-reference – a combination of anaphoric use and general knowledge.
- (v) cataphoric/anticipatory anaphoric reference – a definite NP may precede the familiar part of discourse.

(b) Identifiability

Lyons points out that a noun phrase containing a definite article becomes identifiable, either by familiarity or not. A verb may contribute by suggesting that the referent is in the immediate environment, therefore making it easy to work out as in:

(1) Pass me *the hammer*, will you?

(c) Uniqueness and Inclusiveness

According to Lyons the speaker and the hearer may share general knowledge about a particular context, and that knowledge may indicate the uniqueness of the referent of a definite NP. Although uniqueness is largely dependent on context other NPs are inherently unique, and as such incompatible with the indefinite article, e.g. *the sun*. Lyons argues that where the definite article is used with plural count nouns and with mass nouns definiteness stems from inclusiveness. Whilst *the* indicates uniqueness (and inclusiveness) Lyons points out that *a* is neutral with regard to uniqueness, carrying a weaker implication of non-uniqueness. In:

(2) I went to the surgery this afternoon and saw *a doctor*.

a doctor could have been the only one or one of several doctors in the surgery.

On the basis of the aforementioned, Lyons concludes that identifiability and inclusiveness seem to be the main determiners for definiteness. As such for a referent to be definite either of them will be involved independently or they both will be.

2.2.8.2 Complex definites

In the second place Lyons discusses what he terms complex definites, i.e. NPs containing determiners which in addition to the feature [+Def] also have other feature specification(s). The following determiners are contributory to definiteness:

(a) Demonstratives

Lyons is of the opinion that the definiteness of demonstratives is a matter of identifiability and not of inclusiveness. In addition to being [+Def], which is the only feature that pure definites have, demonstratives have a deictic element. Often spatial use of demonstratives is accompanied by pointing, identifiability stemming from extra-linguistic context as well. Demonstratives can also be employed temporally to a referent in the linguistic context. However, when demonstratives assume pronominal role in relative constructions the deictic element does not apply. Demonstratives are not only [+Def]; they have the feature [±Prox] as well.

(b) Proper nouns

Lyons describes proper nouns such as *John* and *Paris* as lacking descriptive semantic content. Like pure definites they are unique, and this uniqueness leads to identifiability. Proper nouns are inherently unique but differ from other inherently unique definites in grammatical structure. Where a proper noun has more than one referent, context plays a major role in affording identifiability.

(c) Possessive

Lyons is of the view that possessive determiners like *my* and 's in *my cousin* and *a woman's drink* render NPs definite. Unlike demonstratives, possessives are not completely incompatible with indefiniteness. A possessive in a predicative position may have both the definite and the indefinite reading, depending on context. Even though they are not necessarily inclusive, unique or identifiable, Lyons' argument is that inalienable and other close possessions are expressed by definite NPs due to limitedness of scope or number to which they belong.

(d) Personal pronouns

When explaining the position of personal pronouns with regard to definiteness, Lyons gives a scenario of complementary distribution between 3rd person personal pronouns and the definite article; and 3rd person personal pronoun and the demonstrative. Whilst English 1st and 2nd person personal pronouns occur both as determiners and as pronouns, 3rd person pronoun can only occur pronominally with the definite article as the determiner counterpart. For these reasons Lyons views personal pronouns as definite.

(e) Universal quantifiers

Lyons points out that determiners *all*, *every* and *each* have inherent meaning of inclusiveness. Although *most* is not as inclusive as the other universal quantifiers are, it behaves like *all*.

With regard to indefinites Lyons' view is that an indefinite article of simple indefinites occurs only with singular count nouns, complemented by *sm* (səm) for plural and mass nouns. *A* and *sm* are indefinite cardinal articles and they can have a specific or non-specific reading. NPs with *a* and *sm* are simple indefinites. Complex indefiniteness is the possibility of definiteness being ruled out by the presence of some determiner other than *a* or *sm*. Cardinality terms *several* and *enough* tend to be compatible with indefiniteness, but in rare cases *several* can appear with the definite article. *Some* (sʌm) and *any* are indefinite determiners which occur pre-nominally and pronominally. Lyons points out that when they appear pronominally they can only relate to an antecedent (linguistic or non-linguistic). Pronominal *some* appears only with plural count nouns and mass nouns whilst *any* takes singulars as well.

Furthermore, Lyons investigates the nature of definiteness by looking into the position of determiners within the NP structure. According to the X-bar theory XP is projected from a head X, which can have a complement or complements as a sister or sisters, respectively. Between X and XP is X¹ with Specifier as sister. According to Lyons, until recently the view was that NP is a maximal (phrasal) projection of the head N with determiners (Det) in specifier position. A recent view is that NP is a phrasal projection of the determiner (Det) and not of N. According to the recent view NP will be projected from N within NP as complement of functional head D. Lyons argues that whichever framework is used the Det

position is occupied by the definite article *the* and definite quantifiers *all*, *both*, *every* and *most*. *All* and *both* may also appear before definite Det(erminers).

Lyons goes on to briefly discuss indication of definiteness beyond the noun phrase, i.e. in tense and in degree modifiers. He points out that in the absence of a time adverbial it is assumed that the hearer can locate the time of event of the past historical as opposed to that of the perfect tense. Deg(ree) modifiers *as*, *so*, *too*, *this/ that* are also viewed by Lyons as being beyond the noun phrase. *This* and *that* can also be within the noun phrase as adjectives. In the following example *this* is Deg in adjectival phrase (AP):

(3) The fish I almost caught was *this* big.

2.2.8.3 Some semantic and pragmatic distinctions

With semantic and pragmatic distinctions Lyons aims to find out whether definiteness is a single category that manifests differently across languages or if it is language-specific. First of all, Lyons addresses the issue of identifiability and uniqueness. He maintains that a noun phrase is definite if its referent is identifiable and/or inclusive. Secondly, he addresses the distinction between anaphoric and non-anaphoric definites. The referent of an anaphoric definite can be located from linguistic context whilst that of a non-anaphoric definite is accessed extra-linguistically through general knowledge, situationally or by association. Deictic and non-deictic definites differ in that deictics relate to spatio-temporal proximity or distance of the referent in the physical environment. Ostension draws the hearer's attention towards the referent. According to this distinction Lyons views the definite article as ostensive but non-deictic whilst the demonstrative is both deictic and ostensive. Demonstratives occur in both anaphoric and situational uses. With regard to specificity and referentiality Lyons advocates that an indefinite noun phrase can be either specific or non-specific. It is specific if the referent is familiar to the speaker but not identifiable to the hearer; and non-specific if the speaker does not refer to a particular entity. Referentiality is, according to Lyons, a matter of pragmatics.

Regarding opacity and scope ambiguities Lyons' opinion is that opacity-creating expressions found in contexts of propositional attitude, negation, questions, conditionals, modals and future tense create ambiguity with regard to specificity. Two different readings are created in these contexts, such that on the non-specific reading the NP is not

substitutable by a co-referential expression. Transparent contexts also have two different readings despite the fact that they are non-opaque, i.e. there is no opacity-creating element. The following sentences illustrate the two readings:

- (4) *A dog* was in here last night.
- (5) *Smith's murderer* is insane.

Example (4) with an indefinite NP has two readings, none of which the hearer is expected to identify the referent. The speaker may have a particular dog in mind (specific) or he may not have any, i.e. the identity of the dog may not be an issue at all (non-specific). Example (5) contains a definite NP, which can either be referential or attributive. According to Lyons the reading is referential if the speaker has a particular individual in mind and he also expects the hearer to be aware of his identity. An attributive reading will mean whoever that is who committed the crime.

The last issue that Lyons discusses on semantic and pragmatic distinctions is genericity. He points out the following issues regarding generic noun phrases:

- they refer to a whole group or class of individuals;
- they apply to mass as well as count nouns;
- they are typically indefinite in some languages and definite in others; and that
- a language can have different types of NPs all capable of generic interpretation.

The type of predicate that appears with the NP determines the interpretation. In general, verbs expressing characteristics have a generic reading and event verbs have a non-generic reading. With regard to English, Lyons points out that definite generics tend to admit exceptions more readily than their indefinite counterparts do. Indefinite singular generics can yield a non-generic interpretation as well, and it is context that disambiguates. The following example illustrates:

- (6) *An Indian* smokes a pipe every night.

Example (6)'s interpretation can either be that it is typical of Indians to smoke a pipe every night (generic), or that a particular Indian that the speaker is aware of smokes a pipe every night (non-generic). Finally, Lyons argues for the definiteness of proper names. He maintains that even though proper nouns are not grammatical definites, they are generic, inclusive, familiar and identifiable. Therefore, proper nouns are semantically and pragmatically definite.

2.2.8.4 Interaction with other grammatical phenomena

Lyons identifies the following grammatical processes that apply where the feature [+Def] is present:

- Object marking: when definiteness is only encoded in the object position.
- Other grammatical categories are encoded together with definiteness on the same formative, e.g. number and gender on the French definite article.
- In other grammatical structures a definiteness element is inherent.

Direct object marking

In order to examine definiteness versus case, Lyons compares languages that are marked for definiteness and those that are not marked. His finding is that even though definiteness is involved in differential marking, it is a matter of agreement and not variation between accusative case and oblique case. This is because in some languages accusative case (or object marker) is restricted to definite objects. In other languages definite indirect objects are identified by being marked by a case form associated with oblique function.

Verb agreement

Lyons points out that verb-subject agreement is not limited to factors such as definiteness and animacy, whilst verb-object agreement is in many languages restricted to definite objects. Direct object agreement is in these languages associated with definiteness. According to Lyons other languages, such as Zulu, have dative clitics, which encode agreement with indirect objects.

Definiteness and animacy

Lyons places pronouns high on the animacy hierarchy, and ranks inanimate nouns low. He points out that the ranking is favoured by grammatical processes such as number marking, object marking and agreement. Categories that rank high are not necessarily morphologically marked; hence their definiteness is a pragmatic issue.

Null and implicit noun phrases

Noun phrase types are distinguished in relation to the binding theory: anaphors must be bound by an antecedent in their domain, personal pronouns may be bound but not in their domain, and referential expressions are not bound.

Pro is a phonologically empty personal pronoun that appears in empty subject position, in null-subject languages. Lyons explains that in most null-subject languages, agreement is with all overt subjects, definite and indefinite. When the argument that triggers agreement is null, it is interpreted as a definite pronoun. Personal pronouns are inherently definite; hence *pro* is definite as well. According to Lyons agreement morpheme on the verb is neutral with regard to definiteness. Therefore, [+Def] is inherent in *pro*, not in agreement.

Traces, i.e. wh-trace (in interrogatives) and NP-trace (in passives), result from topicalisation of objects. Lyons is of the view that because they are bound by antecedents from preceding discourse, traces are anaphoric and therefore familiar. Whether a trace is left by movement of a definite or of an indefinite noun phrase it is treated as a definite. Therefore, traces are inherently definite.

PRO is an empty subject of a non-finite clause, and it is never bound. It does not always have an antecedent; unless it is controlled by the subject or object of a higher clause. According to Lyons, both a controlled PRO and a pragmatically but not grammatically PRO, are definite. They differ from arbitrary PRO, which is not controlled at all. PRO_{arb} can have a non-specific or a generic interpretation, and it is limited to verbs expressing non-events. Because of these possibilities, PRO is not inherently definite.

Next, Lyons deals with an implicit argument, which is only semantically present but not syntactically present; such as agents of passive sentence that do not contain a *by*-phrase.

Such agents are, according to Lyons, only implied but not identified and are therefore indefinite.

The last grammatical phenomenon that Lyons discusses is nominal classifiers. Nominal classifiers occur in many languages as grammatical components affixed to the noun phrase and indicating a noun's semantic class. Noun classifiers do not encode definiteness.

From interaction with various grammatical phenomena it becomes apparent that [+Def] is inherent in some of them whilst in others it is not. It has also been shown that other definite grammatical phenomena are not grammatically marked; hence pragmatically definite. Lyons concludes by suggesting that taking into consideration factors such as familiarity, identifiability and inclusiveness definiteness can be explained as a grammatical category that is based on a pragmatic concept.

2.2.8.5 Definiteness effects

With regard to definiteness effects, Lyons points out the following issues:

- Certain contexts require NP to have a particular value of [+Def];
- Restrictions of this kind are termed definiteness effects, and they provide diagnostics for definiteness;
- Definiteness plays a role in guiding the hearer through the organisation of information in discourse.

According to Lyons discourse structure is about structuring the relationship between a message and its context. The organisation of information is such that many sentences consist of two parts, viz. topic and comment. Topic-comment, theme-rheme, given-new, presupposition-focus pairs are closely related, but not always equivalent. In most cases topic is a noun phrase, point of departure for new information and it is assumed that the hearer is conscious of it. Comment constitutes what is said about topic, and is generally new information. In many languages topic is subject and comment predicate. However there are many situations which may not allow that topic be simply identified by initial position. Those situations are given by Lyons as follows:

- Numerous subject-second languages show the same tendency for subject to be topic.
- It is common for focus to be placed initially, by topicalisation and left-dislocation.
- Topic can be picked out by right-dislocation.

Lyons explains the relationship between information structure and definiteness by pointing out that topic mainly represents given information and is as such definite.

Existential *there* (*thr*) in English is usually followed by an indefinite noun phrase in English. The NP following a presentational verb with *thr* as subject shows definiteness effects. Lyons' view on this matter is that complement NP of the existential verb appears to be indefinite in both languages with grammatical definiteness and those with semantic/pragmatic definiteness. His explanation for this phenomenon is that a definite complement and the existential structure are incompatible because they are both quantificational. Indefinites, on the other hand, are compatible because they are not necessarily quantificational and they provide a variable to bind with the existential. Other definiteness effects that Lyons tests include: the superlative, PP-extraposition and *any* opacity.

2.2.8.6 Defining definiteness

Lyons explains how different theoretical frameworks can be used to define definiteness; and he discusses the following:

Descriptive grammarians define definiteness in terms of the familiarity hypothesis. According to the familiarity hypothesis if a speaker uses a definite article he assumes that the hearer is familiar with the referent of the NP and can therefore identify it. Reference is made to the three stages of familiarity, viz.:

Stage 1: complete unfamiliarity – indefiniteness.

Stage 2: nearly complete familiarity – the use of *the* with common nouns when the referent should be found in the linguistic or non-linguistic context.

Stage 3: complete familiarity – the use of *the* becomes redundant e.g. proper names.

Logical or formal semantic analysis is based on sense-reference distinction. In this regard Lyons refers to the Russellian theory, which is limited to singular definites. According to this theory,

(7) The king of France is bald

Entails the following three propositions:

- There is a king of France [Existential]
- There is only one king of France [Uniqueness]
- This individual is bald.

The existential clause is a presupposition and together with the uniqueness clause they form background assumptions, whilst the third proposition is asserted by the sentence as a whole. It is the definite description in the presupposition that refers, and carries the truth or falsity of the sentence.

The pragmatic tradition recognises the existential as presupposed. A distinguishing characteristic which applies to definites only, and not to indefinites, is unique identifiability. All three traditions embrace inclusiveness, identifiability and uniqueness.

Another theory that Lyons discusses is Hawkin's theory of inclusiveness and location, according to which the use of *the* suggests that the referent is part of a shared set and it can be located. Shared knowledge is also dependent on the hearer's cooperation. Another argument is that the reason modifiers such as *same*, *only* and superlatives take *the*, is because of the inclusive element in their semantics. The use of a definite article indicates existence and uniqueness in a shared set (pragmatic set) and indefinite article is used for non-uniqueness and/or non-membership. With regard to quantification Lyons points out that the universal quantifier distinguishes definites whilst the existential quantifier represents both definites and indefinites.

Lyons further discusses Heim's approach to definiteness, i.e. 'file-change semantics'. According to Heim's theory *the* and *a* are not quantifiers and have no semantic content, their role is to mark NPs as definite and indefinite, respectively. Her file metaphor explains how pieces of information are entered in discourse, indefinites on a new card and with definites an existing card is updated.

The last defining theory that Lyons focuses on is relevance theory, which is a pragmatic framework that studies how utterances are interpreted. An utterance is said to be relevant if the hearer can access information and interpret it as the speaker had intended. To access this information the hearer has to retrieve or construct a conceptual representation; hence the theory is central to human cognition. Accessibility is guaranteed by factors such as immediate situation, anaphoric use and bridging cross-reference.

Lyons' proposal to the issue of definiteness is the concept of grammaticalisation, i.e. a grammatical representation of a semantic/pragmatic category. In languages that are grammatically unmarked for definiteness, there are ways of discourse information which ensure that the hearer is guided to uniquely identify the intended referent. Although it is employed differently, cross-linguistically, definiteness relates directly to identifiability. Lyons' typology of languages with regard to definiteness is as follows:

- Type I: no definiteness
- Type II: definiteness available only in pronominal noun phrases
- Type III: definiteness available in pronominal and full noun phrases

2.2.8.7 Definiteness and noun phrase structure

Lyons points out that until recently the noun phrase was assumed to be projected from the category N, therefore being NP. According to X-bar theory between N and NP would be N^1 , with determiners in specifier position, sister to N^1 . The Specifier c-commands the rest of the phrase and it has a role in the binding of variables by a logical operator. According to the definite constraint, as long as the specifier position is filled, the NP becomes definite. Lyons argues that the definite article is not definite due to any semantics but because it occupies the specifier position.

The DP-hypothesis is a framework that explains why the filling of a particular position induces definiteness. According to the DP-hypothesis a noun phrase is projected from Det. Lyons suggests modification of the DP-hypothesis as follows:

- The free-form definite article is specifier of DP; and
- D is the grammatical category of definiteness.

This modification suggests that D, which is a functional head, is definiteness and DP is definite phrase. Free-form definite articles and other definite determiners are specifiers. Only languages that are marked for definiteness have DP.

2.3 LITERATURE ON DEFINITENESS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

2.3.1 Introduction

The study of works on African Languages, specifically Bantu Languages, reveals that the issue of definiteness has not been dealt with extensively. Bokamba (1971) investigates definiteness and specificity in Dzamba and explains the prevalence of a grammatical feature in relation to the phenomenon. Ziervogel, Lombard and Mokgokong's (1969) contribution in this regard is not in-depth, nor is evidence of extensive investigation displayed. Louwrens (1981, 1983) investigates the syntactic position of noun phrases in Northern Sotho in relation to definiteness, and links the phenomenon to a grammatical element.

2.3.2 Bokamba (1971)

Bokamba (1971) revisits a previously widely held assumption that the nominal pre-prefix (NPP) that occurs in the concordial system of the Bantu languages corresponds with the Indo-European languages' definite article. He does this by exploring the notion of specificity in Dzamba (a Bantu language of the north-western region of Congo-Kinshasa). He also investigates whether specificity relates to the presence or the absence of NPP. The diagnostic environments of the Dzamba NP that Bokamba uses are both the NPsubject and NPobject in the affirmative and negative, in the passive construction, with the demonstrative, in the relative construction and in the topical position.

Bokamba's argument revolves around presuppositions. In his view the noun phrase is specific if the existence of its referent is presupposed. In his investigation Bokamba uses the 4-way contrast [+SPEC]/ [-SPEC] and [+DEF]/ [-DEF], applying it as illustrated in the following example:

- (1) (a) Mo-konzi m_hh_h mo-lamu any_hh_hki ondaku.
(A handsome chief entered the house.)

- (b) Omo-konzi omo-lamu anyɛɛki ondaku.
(The handsome chief entered the house.)

In both illustration sentences above the NPsubject has a specific reading, but only (b) is definite. The NPP is absent in (a) [-DEF, +SPEC] and present in (b) [+DEF, +SPEC]. Bokamba summarises the occurrence of the noun pre-prefix in Dzamba from the diagnostic environments in the form of a table (Bokamba, op. cit.:219):

Table 1

TYPE OF NP's	(C)V-CVCV*	CVCV*
Subj. of Affirmative S	+	+
Subj. of Neg: VP scope	+	+
Subj. of Neg: S scope	-	+
Subj. of Passive -----	+	+
Obj. of Affirmative S	+	+
Obj. of Neg.	+	+
Obj. of Passive	+	+
Subj. NP Dem	+	-
Subj. of Mtx S in Rel.	+	-
Topicalized NP	+	-
Subj. NP in Topic. Const -----	+	-
Obj. NP + Dem	+	-
Obj. NP of Mtx S in Rel.	+	-

In the table above NPs with NPP are presented as (C)V-CVCV and those without NPP as CVCV.

Bokamba's analysis shows that the NPP is present in NPs with [+Def] reading whilst the absence of NPP correlates with [-Def] interpretation. NPs of specific referents that are not definite do not take NPP. Bokamba maintains that even though both [+Def] NPs and [+Spec, -Def] NPs have an element of presupposition only [+Def] NPs take NPP. The situation can be summarised as follows:

A. Unmodified NPs

- Unmodified NP (subject and object) may appear with or without the NPP in the affirmative and in passive constructions.
- With regard to the negative construction the NP (subject & object) may also appear with or without the NPP, in the case where the scope of negation is phrasal, i.e. where only the act in the VP is negated but not the existence of the referent of the NP. E.g.:

- (2) (a) mo-ibi (m_{NP}) tanyɪɪɪki ondaku emba. [-Def, -Spec]
 (a thief (*one) did not enter the house).
- (b) omo-ibi (*m_{NP}) tanyɪɪɪki ondaku emba. [+Def, +Spec]
 (the thief (*one) did not enter the house)

The exception is an NP subject of negation of sentential scope, which never takes NPP, hence it is always indefinite. The following sentences illustrate:

- (3) (a) toonyɪɪɪki nà mo-ibi (m_{NP}) ondaku emba. [-Def, -Spec]
 (no (single) thief entered the house)
- (b) *toonyɪɪɪki nà omo-ibi (m_{NP}) ondaku emba. [+Def, +Spec]
 (Meaningless)

B. Modified NPs

NPs that are used in constructions with modifiers that have inherent identifiability can only be specific and definite; hence they take NPP.

- Demonstratives are inherently definite. NPs (subject and object) with demonstratives always takes NPP, hence are never indefinite.
- NP (subject and object) of the matrix sentence in the relative construction always takes NPP, hence is never indefinite. The Dzamba situation is such that such NPs are always definite, because relativisation in Dzamba involves pronominalisation and definitivisation.
- Topicalised NPs always take NPP, hence are never indefinite. When initial post-verbal NPs are topicalised, they are being brought into focus – the assumption

being that they must have been mentioned before, and they are therefore interpreted as definite. They are ungrammatical without NPP.

In conclusion, Bokamba reiterates that NPPs in Bantu languages are similar but not identical to determiners, specifically the English definite article. Further emphasis is put on the fact that specificity and definiteness are not equivalent or interchangeable; that definiteness in Dzamba is an optional subcategory of specificity. If an NP is not specific it cannot be definite but not *vice versa*.

2.3.3 Ziervogel, Lombard and Mokgokong (1969)

Ziervogel et. al (1969:28) provides a view that since Northern Sotho is non-articled ‘the English equivalent must be determined from context’. Ziervogel points out that as a result, a Northern Sotho sentence ‘**Monna o rêka marôtsê** ... in English can be rendered by “the/a man buys pumpkins” or “the/a man buys the pumpkins” or in the singular “the/a man buys the/a pumpkin (**lerôtsê**)”’. This point of view, however, proves difficult to demonstrate in translations of single sentences, as it is evident throughout Ziervogel’s grammar. Without any context it is not easy to determine which reading is intended. By observation, in the main, throughout the grammar Northern Sotho concrete nouns in the subject position are translated into English as definite. With regard to the object position the translations are variably either definite or indefinite, and there is no clear indication of why a particular reading is preferred. Abstract nouns generally have no articles.

Following the authors’ explanation, NPs in both syntactic positions could be interpreted as either definite or indefinite. The following examples, with their translations, are picked randomly from Ziervogel to illustrate the point observed (relevant NPs have been bracketed and underlined for convenience):

- (1) **[Banna] ba dutše.** (p.34)
(The men are seated.)
- (2) **[Kgomo] e fula bjang.** (p.124)
(The cow eats grass.)
- (3) **[Ngwana] o lonngwe ke [mpša].** (p.41)
(The child has been bitten by a dog.)

- (4) **[Mahloko] a tšofatša [motho].** (p.23)
 (Worries cause a person to grow old.)
- (5) **[Leratorato] le thabiša [basadi].** (p.26)
 (True love pleases the women.)

2.3.4 Louwrens (1981)

Louwrens (1981) analyses the 'given' versus 'new' discourse information to account for certain syntactic phenomena in Northern Sotho. Given information is that which is already known to both discourse participants at the time of utterance and new information is that which is up to the point of mention unknown. New information coincides with indefinite reference and given information with definite reference. Louwrens uses written text to study syntactic positions occupied by noun phrases that represents new information and those that represent known information.

Factors determining nouns' status as given information

Chafe (as cited in Louwrens op. cit.) suggests two main kinds of factors for determining the status of noun phrases, viz. linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. The status of the noun as given is determined linguistically if the NP is coreferential with another in the preceding discourse. Prior mention makes subsequent mention refer uniquely, since the information is already in the consciousness of the addressee.

Extra-linguistic factors include the physical environment in which discourse takes place as well as the discourse participants themselves. Nouns for which the status of given is determined extra-linguistically include:

- (a) Nouns with unique referents

Louwrens points out that when a noun such as **leswielo** (broom) appears out of context it can have many referents. Any object that fits the description is a potential referent. However, nouns such as **legodimo** (the heaven) and **lefase** (the earth) in the following Genesis verse inherently present given information:

(1) **Mathomong Modimo a na a hlola legodimo le lefase.**(In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.)

The status of given for **legodimo** and **lefase** is due to each of the referents being the only one possible.

(b) Generic nouns

According to Louwrens 'generic nouns are nouns which have a specific genus or species as a unique referent'; and they, therefore, also have the status of given. Louwrens illustrates this point as follows:

(2) **Mohlwa o boloka mabjang seolong lehlabula, o bolokela marega e lego mohla o mothata; dinose di boloka todi le matšhita lehlabula, di bolokela marega ...)**

(The termite preserves grass in antheps during summer, saving it for winter which is a difficult time; bees preserve honey and pollen in summer, saving it for winter ...)

Louwrens points out that **mohlwa** and **dinose** have not been mentioned in the text before but they refer to unique referents; hence their status as given information is due to their genericness.

(c) The physical context

Nouns whose referents are observable in the physical environment in which discourse takes place have the status of given.

The markedness of given and new information

Different strategies are used in different languages to formally mark new and given information. A noun in the subject position has compulsory agreement with the verb. According to Louwrens there are two syntactic strategies that are used to mark this distinction in Northern Sotho, viz. verbal agreement and word order. He presents the two as follows:

Verbal agreement:

- In Northern Sotho, only nouns having the status of given information can agree with verbs.
- Agreement between given information and verbs is not, however, compulsory.

Word order:

- In Northern Sotho, given information can appear either in the pre-verbal or in the post-verbal position.
- New information, on the other hand, may exclusively appear in the post-verbal position.

It appears from Louwrens' view on the matter that the basic subject position in Northern Sotho can never accommodate indefinite noun phrases.

Implications of the 'given'/ 'new' distinction for the syntactic category 'subject'

Louwrens points out that when a speaker introduces a new referent in discourse he is prevented from presenting it in the subject position due to the reasons mentioned above. As a result different strategies are employed to indicate that the noun has indefinite reference. In other words, alternative word order will position the NP appropriately. Two syntactic strategies that Louwrens observes in the language are **go**-preposing and passive.

Go-preposing:

The following syntactic positions for NP **basadi** (women) are compared:

- (3) (a) **Basadi ba a bolela.**
 (The women speak.)
- (b) **Go bolela basadi.**
 (There speak women.)

According to Louwrens, when the speaker wants to introduce a logical subject, he would choose sentence structure (b) above. A noun phrase which presents new information is prevented from appearing in the basic subject position. **Go**-preposing is used to indicate that the referent of NP **basadi** is unknown to the addressee. The **go** is also called the indefinite subjectival concord.

Passive:

Passive construction is another strategy that may be used in the language to accommodate a logical subject that is new information. However, Louwrens points out that given information may also appear in the agent position of a passive sentence.

Implications of the 'given'/ 'new' distinction for the syntactic category 'object'

The basic object position in Northern Sotho has no compulsory agreement with the verb. Object NPs presenting new information are, therefore, not prevented from occupying their basic position. The same position may also be occupied by NPs presenting given information. The object may also appear in its basic position while its agreement morpheme appears pre-verbally. In such cases the presence of verbal agreement renders the information presented by the object NP 'given'.

According to Louwrens the subject position, which has compulsory agreement with the verb, does not accommodate new information. Given information, however, may occur without agreement. As such, nouns presenting given information may appear either in the subject position or the object position.

2.3.5 Louwrens (1983)

Assuming that the definite/indefinite opposition is universal, Louwrens (1983) investigates how the phenomenon manifests in Bantu languages, in particular Northern Sotho. He aims to identify linguistic devices for distinguishing definite and indefinite noun phrases in Northern Sotho. For this purpose Louwrens uses interrogative structures.

Firstly, he re-affirms the concept of definiteness. Louwrens states that when the speaker utters a definite NP he presupposes that the hearer will be able to uniquely identify its

referent within a particular context of discourse. Definites have identifiable referents, whilst referents of indefinite noun phrases are not uniquely identifiable within a particular context of discourse. He further clarifies that even in the case of specific indefinites, the referent is not presupposed to be uniquely identifiable by the addressee.

Definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho

Louwrens points out that up until this point there are no formal mechanisms identified for definiteness marking in the grammatical system of Northern Sotho. Northern Sotho does not have definite and indefinite articles. However Louwrens is of the opinion that there has to be a way in which the grammatical system can indicate if a noun is definite or indefinite.

Louwrens' investigation is based on the interrogative **mang?** (who? – singular), used in three different types of questions. He points out that the results that **mang** yields will be applicable to **bomang?** (who? – plural) and **eng?** (what?), since the three occupy the same syntactic environments. **Mang** is a noun of class 1a. Question types 1, 2 and 3 used for definite/indefinite distinction are distinguished as follows:

Type 1

- (1) **Ke mang yo a gatilego mo?**
It is who REL SA trod REL here?
 (Who is it who trod here?)

Type 2

- (2) **Go gatile mang mo?**
There trod who here?
 (Who trod here?)

Type 3

- (3) **Maswi a tšholotšwe ke mang?**
Milk SA was spilled by whom?
 (By whom was the milk spilled?)

According to Louwrens, like all WH-questions, **mang** is a question of *identity*. Because it cannot be expected of the addressee to identify something that does not exist, **mang** presupposes *existence*.

The syntactic difference between question types 1-3:

(a) Agreement

Louwrens points out that in question type 1 the noun **mang** agrees with the verb by means of the subjectival agreement morpheme, i.e. **a**; question types 2 and 3 lack agreement morphology.

(b) Deictic use of the demonstrative

In question type 1 **mang** may be qualified by a deictic demonstrative, and that cannot happen with types 2 and 3.

Type 1

(4) **Ke mang yo/yoo/yola yo a gatilego mo?**

It is who DEM/DEM/DEM REL SA trod REL here?

(Who is this/tha/tat yonder who trod here?)

Type 2

(5) ***Go gatile mang yo/yoo/yola mo?**

There trod who DEM/DEM/DEM here?

(Who is this/tha/tat yonder trod here?)

Type 3

(6) ***Maswi a tšholotšwe ke mang yo/yoo/yola?**

Milk SA was spilled by whom DEM/DEM/DEM?

(By this/ tha/ tat yonder whom was the milk spilled?)

Louwrens observes from the situations illustrated above that deictic use of the demonstrative can only appear with **mang** in constructions where **mang** has agreement with the verb. He supports his assumption of intrinsic relationship between agreement and the demonstrative by illustrating that declarative sentences with objectival agreement are more acceptable with the demonstrative than without, e.g.:

- (7) (a) ?**Moruti o ba thušitše bakgekolo.**
Preacher SA OA helped old women.
 (The preacher helped the old women.)
- (b) **Moruti o ba thušitše bakgekolo ba.**
Preacher SA OA helped old women DEM
 (The preacher helped these old women.)

The demonstrative and definite descriptions have an important commonality of *unique identification of referents*. Since the demonstrative is not acceptable in all three question types, Louwrens is of the view that **mang** has definite reference in question type 1, and indefinite reference in question types 2 and 3. For this reason he takes question type 1 to be based on a presupposition that the addressee will be able to make unique identification of the referent. For question types 2 and 3 the speaker is doubtful as to whether the addressee will be able to make unique identification of the referent.

The conclusion that Louwrens reaches is that **mang** in question type 1 has definite reference because of the following reasons:

- It appears with the identifying copulative **ke**, which suggests presupposition of the existence of a uniquely identifiable referent.
- It can appear with the deictic demonstrative, which also presupposes the existence of a uniquely identifiable referent.
- Only in question type 1 does subjectival agreement appear with **mang**.

Based on the above-mentioned assumptions, Louwrens suggests three possible ways of making formal definite-indefinite distinction in Northern Sotho, viz. syntactic position, verbal agreement and demonstratives. These three areas revealed that indefinite descriptions are not allowed in the subject position, and they can therefore never agree with the verb by means of subjectival agreement. Indefinites are restricted to the post

verbal position. Syntactic environments that accept indefinites readily include subject inversion and the passive. Nouns in prepositional phrases, on the other hand, can have either of the two readings depending on context.

According to Louwrens, the subject position is an exclusive definite position. Only definites can agree with the verb by means of subjectival agreement morpheme. Only definites can appear with the demonstratives. Louwrens, however, acknowledges the intricacy of the linguistic devices that he uses for definite-indefinite distinction; and points out that verbal agreement serves only partially as a criterion for this distinction.

2.4 CONCLUSIONS

From the views of various linguists it becomes evident that not all languages are grammatically encoded for definiteness. Some languages such as English and German have definite and indefinite articles. Finnish, Russian, Dzamba and Northern Sotho are examples of non-articled languages. Grammatical marking of definiteness, where it occurs, is representative of the universal pragmatic category of identity. Pragmatic definiteness is present in all languages and it manifests in different ways.

The nominal structure of Dzamba has a preprefix. Though not an equivalent of articles, according to Bokamba, the presence of a preprefix in a Dzamba noun phrase is indicative of definite reference. The noun phrase with indefinite reference does not have a preprefix. Northern Sotho has neither articles nor a preprefix. As far as the Northern Sotho situation is concerned, there are two views. Ziervogel's view is that due to the non-articled nature of the language, definiteness in Northern Sotho can only be determined from context. Louwrens, on the other hand, identifies linguistic elements and environments that are available in Northern Sotho to indicate whether or not a noun phrase is definite. According to Louwrens the subject position accepts only definites whilst both definites and indefinites may appear post-verbally. Only definite noun phrases have agreement with the verb. Thirdly, the demonstrative cannot appear in noun phrases with indefinite reference.

CHAPTER THREE

DEFINITE NOUN PHRASES IN NORTHERN SOTHO

3.1 AIM

The aim of this chapter is to consider the expressions of definiteness in Northern Sotho, i.e. the identifiability of a referent. The specific intention will thus be to focus on this question: how can we identify a referent in Northern Sotho so that the hearer may be able to distinguish it from other referents? This problem will be dealt with in two ways:

In the first place, pragmatically determined definitions will be considered. This issue is of considerable importance in Northern Sotho because the language contains no lexical item such as the articles in English to focus solely on definiteness vs. indefiniteness. For this purpose it will be necessary to consider the bare NP in Northern Sotho within specific contexts, i.e. within existential presupposition, transparent contexts and anaphoric reference.

In the second place, the definiteness of noun phrases will be considered within syntax and semantics. Three issues will dominate this investigation, i.e. the role of definite determiners, pronouns and proper names.

3.2 DEFINITION OF DEFINITENESS

Various attempts at defining definiteness have been made within the literature: see i.a. chapter 2 for an overview of this issue. In this section attention will be focussed on one central issue of definiteness, i.e. the possibility of the identifiability of a referent. Three definitions will be considered below:

3.2.1 Jackendoff (1972)

According to Jackendoff (1972) the definite article induces inherent presupposition, i.e. information assumed by the speaker to be shared by him and the hearer. Based on the shared information, the speaker presupposes that the hearer will be able to make a unique identification of the referent of a definite noun phrase within a particular discourse. Jackendoff cites common knowledge and anaphoric reference as enabling factors for

unique identification. Common knowledge provides unique identification of *the sun* and *the moon*, for instance. Similarly, common knowledge of members of the same family may provide unique identification of the referent of *the dog* in: *Have you fed the dog?* The definite article or a pronoun may be used anaphorically, coreferential to a noun phrase that was mentioned earlier in discourse. The referent of an anaphoric NP is uniquely identifiable. Jackendoff points out that proper names have the same effect, since they imply the existence of an identifiable referent.

3.2.2 Lyons (1999)

Lyons views the grammatical category of definiteness as the grammaticalisation of the semantic/pragmatic category of identifiability. Definite reference has to do with the speaker's presupposition that the hearer is familiar with the referent of a noun phrase, to such an extent that he can identify it uniquely or inclusively.

Definiteness may be pragmatically determined, and the pragmatic factors that contribute to definiteness may be situational or anaphoric. The referent of a definite noun phrase may be identifiable because it is located in the immediate physical environment, in the broader situation, or because both the speaker and the hearer may have common general knowledge of the referent's uniqueness. Anaphoric factors involve accessing information that makes possible the unique identifiability of the referent from previous discourse. Other lexical items in a language, specifically nominal modifiers, may interact with the noun phrase in order to contribute to definite reference. The semantics of the nominal modifier may guide the hearer to unique identification of the referent. Lyons terms definiteness that involves incorporation of nominal modifiers complex definiteness.

3.2.3 Cruse (2000)

Cruse lists the following distinguishing features of definite reference:

- (a) The speaker provides information that distinguishes the target of definite reference from other potential referents.
- (b) The intention of the speaker is that the target should be uniquely identifiable to the hearer.

- (c) The utterance is such that the hearer recognises the speaker's intention to refer to a unique entity.

The identity of the referent of a definite noun phrase is crucial for communication. Cruse points out that certain factors contribute to definite reference and inference; and that there is a cognitively ordered search that the hearer undertakes upon hearing a definite noun phrase. The ordered search for the referent is made in the following domains:

- i. Immediate previous mention
- ii. Immediate situation
- iii. Broader situation
- iv. General knowledge.

Cruse emphasises that a definite interpretation does not only have to do with the speaker's familiarity with the referent of the noun phrase and the unique identifiability thereof. It also has to do with the speaker's effort to take the hearer along the same path of awareness so that the act of reference is 'fully consummated' (Searle's analogy in Cruse 2000:307).

3.3. DEFINITENESS IN PRAGMATICS

3.3.1 Aim

The aim of this section is directed at the possible definite reference of bare NPs in Northern Sotho, i.e. NPs without any determiner. It is necessary to focus on such NPs because they may be identifiable within specific pragmatic contexts. Northern Sotho has no recourse to articles such as **the/a** in English or other lexical items or morphemes which focus solely on definiteness/indefiniteness. A specific context of utterance must be used in identifying a referent as definite. Three such pragmatic contexts will be considered, i.e. existential presupposition, transparent contexts, and anaphoric reference.

3.3.2 Pragmatics

Three issues will be briefly considered within the field of pragmatics, i.e. what pragmatics is, how context within pragmatics is to be defined, and lastly, what is to be understood within the terms 'presupposition' and 'entailment'.

3.3.2.1 Definition of pragmatics

The definitions proposed by the following researchers on pragmatics will be considered below: Mey (2001), Thomas (1995), Yule (1996):

Mey (2001:6-8)

Mey developed a component and perspective view on pragmatics:

Component view: the grammar of a language consists of several components such as phonology, semantics, syntax, but also a pragmatic component which includes the pragmatic functions that can be assigned to language such as presupposition, implicature, deixis, etc.

Perspective view: ‘a pragmatic perspective will focus on the societal factors that make a certain language use more or less acceptable in contrast to other, perhaps abstractly equivalent but pragmatically radically different (because mostly unacceptable) uses’ (Mey 2001:8).

Thomas (1995:22)

According to Thomas pragmatics is to be defined as meaning in interaction. ‘This reflects the view that meaning is not something which is inherent in the words alone, nor is it produced by the speaker alone, nor by the hearer alone. Making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of an utterance (physical, social, linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance.’

Yule (1996:3)

For Yule pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. The areas with which pragmatics is concerned are the following: Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning, of contextual meaning, of how more becomes communicated than said (inference), and of the expression of relative distance (deixis).

3.3.2.2 Context

Context is a term in pragmatics which refers to features of the external world which may influence or help to explain a specific utterance:

Yule (1996:21-22)

The physical environment or context has a powerful impact on how referring expressions are to be interpreted. Reference is not simply a relationship between the meaning of a word or phrase and an object or person in the world. It is a social act in which the speaker assumes that the word or phrase chosen to identify an object or person will be interpreted as the speaker intended.

Mey (2001:39-45)

According to Mey 'context is a dynamic, not a static concept: it is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible' (Mey 2001:39).

Thomas (1995:9)

Thomas suggests that 'in order to understand an utterance, we not only have to assign sense to words, but also to assign reference (i.e. to determine in context who or what is being referred to).' For example: **ke-a-mo-tseba** (I know him): the sense of every morpheme in this word is clear, but one is unable to understand what the speaker means: who does the speaker refer to, who is the **mo**?

3.3.2.3 Presupposition and entailment

A presupposition is a term which refers to something which is considered to be probable or to be taken to be true in advance and without proof. An entailment is contrasted with a presupposition because of a difference in consequences following from the utterances being true or false. Consider the views of Yule and Jackendoff below:

Yule (1996:25-30)

A presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance. Speakers, not sentences, have presuppositions.

An entailment is something that logically follows from what is asserted in the utterance. Sentences, not speakers, have entailments.

Potential presuppositions: They can only become actual presuppositions in the contexts of speakers.

Existential presuppositions: These are assumed to be present in possessive constructions (e.g. 'your car', presupposes 'you have a car') and more generally in any definite noun phrase. Holding this presupposition, the speaker is assumed to be committed to the existence of the entities named, e.g. a cat, the King of x, etc.

Jackendoff (1972:229-278)

Jackendoff's definition of definiteness concentrates firstly on the presupposition derived by focus assignment. According to him, '...we will use "focus of sentence" to denote the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker not to be shared by him and the hearer, and "presupposition of a sentence" to denote the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker to be shared by him and the hearer' (Jackendoff 1972:230).

Focus assignment: In a sentence with a determined semantic representation there may be semantic material that has specific focus in the surface structure (Jackendoff 1972: 247) e.g.:

- a. JOHN likes Bill.
- b. John LIKES Bill.
- c. John likes BILL.

The words with capital letters are focused. A presupposition derived by focus assignment is **focal presupposition**. A sentence may contain presuppositions introduced by other

elements of the sentence, such as factive verbs: they are **inherent presuppositions**. Another example of inherent presupposition is that induced by the definite article. Definite noun phrases presuppose that they describe an entity uniquely identifiable within the bounds of the discourse (Jackendoff 1972:277).

3.3.3 Existential presupposition

When a speaker utters a definite noun phrase X he presupposes that X exists. Yule (1996:27) points out that existential presupposition is present in possessive constructions as well as in all definite noun phrases. The referents of definite noun phrases are therefore presupposed to exist. Situational contexts and the general knowledge that the discourse participants share lay the ground for existential presupposition.

3.3.3.1 Situational contexts

Situational contexts are contexts that function as bases for the speaker's presuppositions that the hearer will be able to make a unique identification of the referent of a definite noun phrase. Within a particular situation a referent may be accessible and identified as the only one relevant to the description of the noun phrase. Situational contexts afford participants an assurance that their interaction is linked to and supported by the environment in which discourse takes place.

(a) Immediate situation

An utterance may suggest that the referent of a noun phrase is locatable in the immediate physical environment. The referent may be accessible by vision or by other senses within the immediate physical context or through common knowledge within a certain group. In such cases a noun phrase may be able to refer uniquely. Uniqueness in a particular situation may be illustrated in a number of ways. This kind of definite reference may also be noticeable in warning signs, notices or messages.

(i) Notices, warnings, messages

Written notices, warnings and messages containing noun phrases are often found in contexts where the identifiability of the referent cannot be questioned. Lyons' (1999:9)

example (20) is also applicable in Northern Sotho, as illustrated in example (1) below. The warning is usually found on domestic gates and is often translated into other languages as well. The warning presupposes the existence of a dog in the vicinity.

- (1) **[Hlokomela [mpša].**
(Beware of the dog.)

In order to alert a person who is going to walk where an electrical wire is placed on the ground/floor so that he will not trip and fall or cause an electrical accident as a result, (2) may be uttered. On hearing the utterance the addressee infers that there is an electric wire in the immediate environment.

- (2) **O bone [thapo ya mohlagase].**
(Beware of/mind the electric wire.)

The immediate situation renders the noun phrases in (1) and (2) definite.

- (ii) Common knowledge within a certain group

A particular group of people will be aware of matters that do not need to be spelt out. It may be common knowledge to members of a family that there is a dog in the family. In such a context **mpša** (dog) in example (3) will refer to a unique entity, the only one in this particular context of utterance. If the family owns more than one dog, example (4) will be understood as referring inclusively to all the dogs of the family.

- (3) **O šale o efa [mpša].**
(You should remain feeding the dog.)
(4) **O šale o efa [dimpša].**
(You should remain feeding the dogs.)

- (iii) Physical context

Hypothetically, if at a dinner table a speaker who has difficulty with taste or appetite, does not enjoy most of the food and says:

- (5) **E re ke kwe gore [lefodi] le bjang.**
 (Let me check how the pumpkin tastes.),

the hearer will infer the NP **lefodi** to be the pumpkin in the immediate physical situation, on the table.

A verb selected by the speaker may also suggest that the referent is within the hearer's reach, and therefore uniquely identifiable. Example (6), an adaptation of Lyons, (op. cit.:6) example (14), is a typical utterance with unique reference at a dinner table.

- (6) **Nneeletše [swikiri]/[letswai]/[maswi].**
 (Pass me the sugar/the salt/the milk.)

Even if the referent is not within reach, some verbs may contribute by suggesting that the referent is in the immediate physical context and therefore prompt the hearer to look around, locate and identify it. The hearer may have no prior knowledge of the existence of such a referent in a particular physical environment. The following examples illustrate this point:

- (7) **Mphe [lehlotlo] ke tloge.**
 (Give me the walking stick for me to go.)
- (8) **Mphe [lefielo] ke mo latswe ka lona.**
 (Give me the broom for me to whip him with.)

A verb may also suggest the unique identifiability of the referent in the immediate physical context as in the following example:

- (9) **Bula/tswalela [lebatl].**
 (Open/close the door.)

Example (9) has definite reference in the immediate physical context if there is only one door open or closed. Relevance relating to uniqueness is attained in a context where it makes sense for just one door to be closed or opened. Example (10) illustrates uniqueness in a particular situation:

- (10) **Re sa tšo boa moketeng, Pholo. [Moswaramarapo] a tla a re bolaiša dithapa.**

(We are just back from a/the wedding, Pholo. The programme director made us laugh.)

The hearer's prior knowledge concerning the physical context of weddings, coupled with a previously mentioned associated NP make **moswaramarapo** (programme director) easily inferable as definite. The NP **moswaramarapo** can only be inferred as being the programme director of the wedding celebration that the speaker had attended.

There is nothing basically inherently unique about the noun phrases in (1) – (10). The physical environment in which discourse takes place, and/or prior knowledge shared by discourse participants contributes to familiarity. Hence the unique identifiability of the referents.

(b) **Broader situation**

The speaker and the hearer may be aware of the existence of the referent of a noun phrase within the relevant broader situation. In such cases the first mention of the full noun phrase without further description will have definite reference, due to both participants' scope of familiarity. The referent may be a unique entity at the time of the utterance, in a particular village, town, and country or even internationally. For instance, in the context of a small village **[holo]** (hall) may have unique reference, as demonstrated by example (11):

- (11) **Ledimo le tšere hlaka ya [holo].**

(The storm blew away the roof of the hall.)

The noun phrase **holo** (hall) is not unique in itself, but within the context of a small village it is.

- (12) **Ge le feditše go hlagola le iše dinotlelo [mošate].**

(After eradicating weeds you should take the keys to the royal house.)

In example (12) as well, there can be only one royal house in a particular village. Both **holo** (hall) and **mošate** (royal house) are unique within a given broader situation.

Similarly, if some day between the 31st March and 2nd April 2005 a speaker had uttered (13) it would also have had definite reference:

- (13) **A re rapeleleng [mopapa].**
(Let us pray for the pope.)

During the period stipulated above the pope's health had deteriorated and he did not wish to be taken to the hospital again – the news was all over. **[Mopapa]** (The pope) has unique identifiability in the broader situation. The hearer does not have to know the referent personally. Familiarity may stem from the referent being known to exist or by announcements, and by its being known to be the only one at a given time.

3.3.3.2 General knowledge

Other NPs are inherently unique. The participants' shared general knowledge about the universe renders such nouns definite. Mention of the NPs in the following examples does not provoke Wh-questions because there can be only one or one collection in the universe. The plural in example (17) indicates inclusivity; i.e. there is no suggestion in the utterance that any member of the set is being excluded.

- (14) **[Ngwedi] e be e le wa letopanta maabane.**
(The moon was very bright yesterday.)
- (15) **Mathomong Modimo ó hlodile [lexodimo] le [lefase] ¹.**
(Genesi 1:1)
(In the beginning God created heaven and earth.)
- (16) **O se ke wa lebelela [letšatši] thwii, le tla go bolaiša mahlo.**
(Do not look directly at the sun; it will damage your eyes.)
- (17) **Ke kgale re sa bone [dinaledi] ka baka la maru a.**
(It is long that we have not been seeing the stars because of these clouds.)

All the examples above demonstrate that definiteness can be pragmatically determined in Northern Sotho. The physical environment and general knowledge equip the speaker with relevant contexts to express definiteness. The shared environment and knowledge assist the addressee to infer it, as is intended.

3.3.4 Transparent contexts

Transparent contexts are non-opaque contexts, in which there is no question of scope ambiguity (Lyons 1999:170). When uttering a definite noun phrase the speaker's intention is targeted at a particular entity and he expects the hearer to interpret it as intended. The speaker presupposes the existence of the referent. Without any ambiguity-creating operator the NP in such contexts may be ambiguous between referential and attributive readings. The following examples illustrate two possible interpretations of definite noun phrases in transparent contexts:

(18) **Taxi ye e a nanya; afa le boditše [basadi] gore le tseleng?**

(This taxi is slow; did you tell the wives that you are on the way?)

(19) **Bona gore leihlo le le bjang! O ka hwetša a bethilwe ke [monna].**

(Have a look at how this eye is! She has probably been hit by the husband.)

In example (18) the speaker, one of the taxi commuters, may be sympathising with fellow commuters in a slow taxi that will obviously arrive late at night. The commuters may have been away from home for some time, e.g. migrant workers. The NP **basadi** in this regard is definite by virtue of referring to the men's wives. The NP can have two functions, viz. a referential one and an attributive one. It has a referential function if the speaker refers to particular women that the hearer(s) can identify. If, on the other hand, the speaker himself is not aware of the identity of any wives that the men may have, and is merely basing his utterance on a possibility, the NP will have an attributive function. The noun phrase with attributive function is 'purely quantificational', referring to no particular individual. The same interpretational ambiguity applies to the NP **monna** in example (19). Suppose AgrS-a refers to a referent that is visually accessible to both the speaker and the hearer, and is a woman. **Monna** is rendered definite by being the woman's husband. If the speaker is referring to a particular individual who is uniquely identifiable to both himself and the hearer, for instance if they both know that the woman has a husband, the noun phrase exercises a referential function. If, on the other hand, the speaker's intention is directed to no particular individual, the NP is said to have an attributive function.

3.3.5 Anaphoric reference

Anaphoric reference consists of the kind of reference where a word/expression is used to refer to the one mentioned before, in a text or conversation. There are various ways of making anaphoric reference, viz. strict anaphora, inference, cataphora and ellipsis. Strict anaphora is the kind of reference where the antecedent and the anaphor are the same noun, with the first being indefinite and the next definite. Inference is also called anaphora of association or bridging cross-reference (Lyons 1999:4). In inference there is no linguistic connection between the antecedent and the anaphor; it is inferred by general knowledge. Cataphora is also called anticipatory anaphoric reference (Lyons op. cit.). In this kind of anaphora the anaphor comes before the antecedent. Ellipsis is also known as zero anaphora. In the case of ellipsis there is no linguistic representation of the anaphor; it is only understood and is able to pick up the antecedent.

The first mention of a noun is generally associated with indefiniteness. It normally requires an explicit noun phrase mention. The addressee is being introduced to the referent of the noun phrase. This is best explained by Heim's (1982) file-change semantics, which uses the analogy that when a speaker utters a noun phrase for the first time he is opening a file, and with the next related or second mention he is updating the file. On subsequent mentions the addressee is already familiar with the referent from previous discourse. The speaker or writer makes co-references presupposing that the addressee will be able to identify the referent uniquely or inclusively. Section 3.3 will only pay attention to bare NPs. The employment of nominal modifiers and pronouns for the same purpose will be dealt with fully under 3.4 below.

3.3.5.1 Anaphor

Anaphora is a phenomenon in which a noun phrase is used to refer to an entity that was mentioned earlier in the same discourse. The initial NP is called the antecedent and the subsequent one constitutes the anaphor. In Northern Sotho repetition of the same noun phrase for anaphoric reference, i.e. strict anaphora, is unnecessary (unless there is a specific pragmatic requirement) since it may lead to ambiguity or misinterpretation of reference. Pronominals are particularly known to refer anaphorically. Alternatively a determiner or quantifier may be included in the noun phrase. The latter two forms of

reference (pronominals and determiners) are generally used in Northern Sotho and they refer unambiguously.

However, if the antecedent is a conjoined noun phrase and the anaphor is supposed to refer to only one part of it, explicit mention of the noun would be necessary. E.g.:

(20) **Go thwe kgalekgale go kile gwa ba le [monna le mosadi]. Ba dula thitong ya thaba. [Mosadi] a na le hlogo ye kgolo...**

(It is said that long long ago there was once a man and a woman. They lived at the foot of a mountain. The woman had a big head...)

The above example illustrates that in cases like this, explicit mention of the noun [**mosadi**] (woman) becomes necessary for anaphoric reference. An agreement morpheme with [pro] will not suffice since the two nouns share a class and hence the same agreement morpheme. Agreement morphology does not possess any features to distinguish between femininity and masculinity. It would therefore be unclear, for instance, regarding which of the two possessed a big head. As a requirement of the principles of relevance (Sperber & Wilson 1986) the processing effort should be as minimal as possible. In the case of (20) [**mosadi**] is understood to be the same one mentioned before. The same applies to (21):

(21) A: **Go be go šetše go na le [mokgalabje, basadi ba babedi le bana ba mmalwa] ge ke fihla.**

B: **Wa tseba [mokgalabje]?**

(A: There were already an old man, two women and several children when I arrived.

B: Did you recognise the old man?)

NP [**mokgalabje**] (old man) is singled out for anaphoric reference.

The anaphor may be a different linguistic element, referring to the same entity as the antecedent. The two words/expressions may be synonymous, or one may be descriptive of the other or of the character of the entity being referred to. The following extract illustrates:

- (22) **Ge khonsata e etšwa, [Samuel] a be a šetše a bone Selina yo le yena a bego a mo letetše. Kgang ya bona ga ya ka ya ya kgole ka ge Selina le yena a be a di letetše. [Mošemane] a mo swara a mo phelea ka leleme. Mafelelong ba dumelelana ka gore ba tla tsoga ba sepela mmogo go ya Gauteng.**

(Motuku 1968: 3)

(By the time the concert was over Samuel had already seen Selina who was also waiting for him. Their talk did not take long since Selina had been waiting in anticipation. The boy won her over with his charming words. In the end they agreed to go together to Gauteng the following day.)

The background of the story is that a group of young men called 'Button Brothers' from Gauteng (Johannesburg) had travelled to Mangaung (Bloemfontein) for a musical performance. Samuel Nemadzivhanayo, a member of this group, was a trumpet player. He was handsome. In the audience there was a young lady called Selina, who was a domestic worker, an extremely beautiful woman. During the course of the concert they spotted one another. What makes the common noun **mošemane** (boy) definite in this case is the fact that it is co-referenced to the NP Samuel. Co-reference is attainable from the linguistic context.

Later in the same story the author relates one of Selina's major falls. Selina's mother was evil and she taught her daughter her wicked ways of acquiring money. At one stage when Selina was back home in Lesotho she gave birth to a baby boy who died when he was only three months old. Selina's mother convinced her that instead of a burial the dead infant should be deboned, dried and his hollow skin be used as a bag for transporting dagga. Selina would carry the 'dagga bag' as if she was taking a baby to a doctor. From pages 9 to 12 of the book, the author explains Selina's journey, from loading the drug at home until the police arrested her in Virginia. After explaining what had happened to the child's body and how it was going to be used, the author uses a number of nouns to refer back to that hollow body and the reader can make a connection between all the nouns and the entity being referred to. The noun phrases are: **phasela yela** (that parcel), **sebeba** (the medicine bag) – p.9; **sebebeng** (in the medicine bag), **thuri ya gagwe** (her zombi), **phasela ya gagwe** (her parcel) – p.10; **setholwane sa gagwe** (her zombi), **bošula** (the evil/unpleasantness) – p.11; **phasela** (the parcel), **nkokoi** (the phantom) – p.12. For the pragmatic reasons of communicating the intensity of the appalling evil in the story, the

author opted for the style of using various full noun phrases anaphorically (some of which are modified) instead of pronouns. It should be noted that whilst the demonstrative contributes to a definite reading of the NP the possessive does not necessarily do so. Therefore, the definiteness of all these noun phrases stems mainly from anaphoric co-reference. Different as these lexical items are, they successfully pick up on the already established referent.

3.3.5.2 Associative anaphor

Anaphora of association is also referred to as inference or bridging cross-reference (Lyons op. cit.), and calls for general knowledge as well. The anaphor is not the same noun phrase as the antecedent, nor do they refer to the same entity. Reference is being made to a different entity that is somehow connected to the antecedent. The speaker presupposes that the hearer's general knowledge will afford him a relevant association between the two noun phrases or referents. The following sentence illustrates this matter:

- (23) **Bjalo ka ge o šetše o badile [Kgorong ya mošate le Megokgo ya bjoko], o ka ahlaahla setaele sa [mongwadi].**

(As you have already read Kgorong ya mošate and Megokgo ya bjoko, you may analyse the author's style.)

The speaker utters (23) on the premise that the hearer's general knowledge will inform him that since **Kgorong ya mošate** and **Megokgo ya bjoko** are books, they have a writer or writers. A further item of knowledge called for, which is a little narrower than the last-mentioned, is that both are books by the same author. From this background the hearer knows exactly whose style of writing he is supposed to analyse. NP [**Kgorong ya mošate le Megokgo ya bjoko**] provides a trigger that makes familiar [**mongwadi**] (author). NP [**mongwadi**] in (23) is for these reasons definite. The same kind of association is found in the following example:

- (24) **Maabane ke ile ka lebanwa ke [taxi] ke se ka ikemišetša, le tšhelete ke se nayo. Ge re le tseleng [mootledi] a mpotša ka setraeke sa baotledi ba dipese.**

(Yesterday I was faced with boarding a taxi without prior preparation; I didn't even have money. While we were on the way the driver informed me about the bus drivers' strike.)

In (24), as well, the speaker's assumption is that the hearer will know that taxis have drivers. What informs the speaker in choosing this particular noun phrase **mootledi** (driver) for definite reference is the presupposition that the hearer's knowledge of the real world coupled with logic will equip him with enough grounds for inferring that it is the same driver of the taxi who informed the speaker about the strike. The anaphor and the antecedent are different noun phrases referring to different but related entities. On hearing the noun **mootledi** (driver) the hearer's cognition takes him back to the preceding discourse and he makes an implicit association with the antecedent **taxi**.

Implicit anaphoric co-reference can also be made to an antecedent referring to a different entity bearing the same description. E.g.:

(25) **O be o sa letšwe ka [seatla] eupša ka [sa mohu yoo]. Sona se be se ripilwe sejabaneng, moletši a itia ka sona.**

(Matsepe 1968:47)

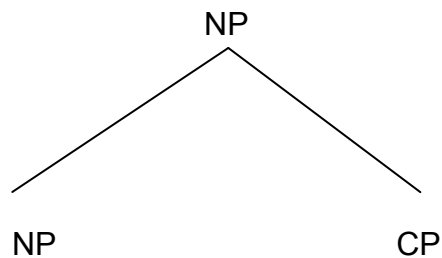
(It was not beaten by hand, but by (that) of the deceased. It was cut at the elbow; the beater was beating with it.)

The preceding text leading to (25) is a description of a drum that was beaten at a divining event. It is said that the drum was made from a person's bones, covered with the same skin that used to cover the bones. Nothing more is added about the person whose bones and skin were used. Example (25) is the sentence that follows the description, and constitutes the beginning of the description of how the drum was beaten. It is expected that the drummer would use his hand to beat the drum, but that is not the case. NP **seatla** (hand) appears once where it refers to a hand in general, as an instrument for beating a drum. In this instance it would be expected to refer to the drummer's hand. On the second mention only the possessive appears pronominally, without the subject, and reference is not to the expected hand as suggested by the antecedent, but rather to a different entity bearing the same description.

3.3.5.3 Cataphora

Cataphoric reference is also known as anticipatory anaphoric reference. It is the kind of reference where the anaphor comes before the antecedent, and which appears in the form of complementation. The noun phrase is followed by genitive *a*, and the complementiser phrase. The latter is the infinitive **go** or the **gore** clause, as illustrated by diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1



The following examples offer illustrations of cataphoric reference:

- (26) **[Taba] [ya] [gore ke kgale le tsebana] ga e bohlokwa.**
 (The fact that you knew each other for a long time is not important.)

The NP that comes first becomes definite due to the following material that says precisely 'which'. In (26) it is the following piece of information that supplies the element of uniqueness to NP **[taba]**, which would otherwise have been interpreted either as definite or indefinite. The same argument applies to (27) – (29):

- (27) **Re be re letile ka [kholofelo] [ya] [go tlo fetša beke re ipshina ka magapu].**
 (We were waiting with the hope of enjoying watermelons for a week.)
- (28) **O tla re fa ge e le [nako] [ya] [go ja].**
 (You will give it to us when it is time to eat.)
- (29) **Ke na le [nnete] [ya] [gore mokgonyana o šetše a fihlile].**
 (I am certain that the son-in-law has already arrived.)

The definite reading of the first noun phrase, i.e. **taba**, **kholofelo**, **nako** and **nnete**, is due to the information contained in the following linguistic context, viz. the complementiser phrase following the genitive **a**.

Anaphoric reference is one way of making definite reference, either explicitly or implicitly. The main foundation of this kind of reference is linguistic context, though general knowledge also plays a part.

The noun phrase in Northern Sotho does not contain any articles to indicate definiteness or indefiniteness. Pragmatic definiteness is inferred through familiarity. The identity of the referent may be inferred from non-linguistic contexts, as in 3.3.3 – 3.3.4. Non-linguistic contexts include familiarity by being inherently unique or by being the only one fitting the description in the context of the utterance. There may also be an explicit or implicit linguistic contextual basis for anaphoric reference, as illustrated in 3.3.5. All these bases of familiarity enable the hearer to select a unique referent or a unique set of referents in terms of the relevant information supplied by the speaker within a particular speech situation. Definiteness is successfully inferable from bare NPs in Northern Sotho because the main determiner is the context of utterance.

3.4. DEFINITENESS IN SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS

3.4.1 Aim

It has been established in the previous section that pragmatic factors do play a role in the interpretation of a noun phrase as definite. This section aims at proceeding beyond the bare noun phrase. Various nominal modifiers that may appear in a noun phrase are examined, as well as the syntactic positions that they may assume and the way in which their semantic content influences the reading of the noun phrase. Lyons (1999) terms noun phrases which contain linguistic elements that in addition to the feature [+Def] also possess other feature specifications, complex definite noun phrases. The modifiers under examination here include determiners and quantifiers. The status of proper names and pronouns in relation to definiteness also receives attention.

3.4.2 Noun phrases with definite determiners

A determiner is defined as a linguistic element ‘whose function it is to enter into the structure of referring expressions and to determine their reference as definite rather than non-definite’ (Lyons 1977b: 454). A determiner answers the ‘which’ of reference. In Northern Sotho, the linguistic element that satisfies this criterion is the demonstrative. Demonstratives are deictic expressions.

3.4.2.1 Demonstratives

Demonstratives are **place deictics**. They add an element of identifiability to the noun phrase, thereby guiding the hearer to locate the referent in the physical or non-physical environment. Whilst a noun phrase on its own may be ambiguous, the inclusion of the demonstrative in its structure makes its reference precise. The demonstrative will be treated in this study under the types: noun + demonstrative, locative noun + locative demonstrative, and noun + demonstrative copulative. The first two types are structurally the same and will be treated first, whilst the demonstrative-copulative, with a different structure, will be dealt with separately.

The Northern Sotho demonstrative has three basic positions according to structure, syntactic position and meaning.

(a) Noun + demonstrative; locative noun + locative demonstrative

Structure

The basic structure is that of position 1a, which consists of a prefix and the root. The demonstrative prefix exhibits agreement with the head noun and the root is **a**. There is also position 1b, which has a suffix **-no** with variant **-khwi**. Position 2 has the suffix **-o** with variants **-uwe** and **-we**. The suffix of position 3 is **-la/-le**. The morphological structure of the demonstrative in Northern Sotho is as follows:

Pos. 1a:	AF	+	DEM ^{Root}	
Pos. 1b:	AF	+	DEM ^{Root}	+ AF (-no/-khwi)
Pos. 2:	AF	+	DEM ^{Root}	+ AF (-o/-uwe/-we)

Pos. 3: AF + DEM^{Root} + AF (-la/-le)

The prefixes vary according to the nominal classes. The full range of Northern Sotho demonstratives according to the noun classes and positions is given in table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Demonstrative

Class	Noun	Pos. 1a	Pos. 1b	Pos. 2	Pos. 3
1	Motho	yo	yokhwi	yoo	yola
2	Batho	ba	bakhwi	bao	bale(la)
3	Mohlare	wo	wokhwi	woo	wola
4	Mehlare	ye	yekhwi	yeo	yela
5	Letsogo	le	lekhwi	leo	lela
6	Matsogo	a	akhwi	ao	ale(la)
7	Sediba	se	sekhwi	seo	sela
8	Didiba	tše	tšekhwi	tšeo	tšela
9	Nku	ye	yekhwi	yeo	yela
10	Dinku	tše	tšekhwi	tšeo	tšela
14	Bogobe	bjo	bjokhwi	bjoo	bjola
15	Go aga	mo	mokhwi	moo	mola
16	Fase	mo/fa	mokhwi/fakhwi	moo/fao	mola/fale(la)
17	Godimo	mo/fa	mokhwi/fakhwi	moo/fao	mola/fale(la)
18	Morago	mo/fa	mokhwi/fakhwi	moo/fao	mola/fale(la)

Syntactic positions

Syntactically, the demonstrative may appear in specific positions. It can appear in apposition to a noun as a modifier or with an empty pro. If the demonstrative occurs in a locative class, such a demonstrative may also serve as a locative adverb. As a nominal modifier the demonstrative can appear before or after the noun it co-occurs with. The most common order is for the demonstrative to follow the noun, but pragmatic considerations may require that the positions be reversed. Examples (30) - (34) illustrate the occurrence of the demonstrative as a nominal modifier:

(30) **Mphe [puku [yeo]].**

(Give me that book --- nearer to the hearer than to the speaker.)

- (31) **[Yeo] puku] ke ya mang?**
(Whose book is that? --- nearer to the hearer than to the speaker.)
- (32) **[Maswi [a] a reng a tšhologa?**
(Why is this milk spilling? --- by default: further from the speaker than position 1b and further from the hearer than position 2, but nearer to both than position 3.)
- (33) **[Maswi [akhwi] a a fiša.**
(This milk is hot --- nearer to the speaker than position 1a.)
- (34) **Ke tla bofa ka [yela [thapo].**
(I will tie with that rope --- over there/yonder, remote from both the speaker and the hearer.)

The demonstrative may appear with an empty pro if the identity of the referent is already established. In such a case the head noun may be omitted, as is illustrated in (35) - (39).

- (35) **Mphe [yeo].**
(Give me that (one) --- nearer to the hearer than to the speaker.)
- (36) [Yeo] ke ya mang?
(Whose is that? --- nearer to the hearer than to the speaker.)
- (37) **[A] a reng a tšhologa?**
(Why is this (one)/are these (ones) spilling? --- (cf. (32))
- (38) **[Akhwi] a a fiša.**
(This (one) is/these (ones) are hot --- nearer to the speaker than position 1a.)
- (39) **Ke tla bofa ka [yela].**
(I will tie with that (one) --- over there/yonder, remote from both the speaker and the hearer.)

Demonstratives of locative classes 16 – 18 may also serve as locational adverbs; another alternative for position 3 is **kua** (there). They may also appear with NPs where the head is a locative noun. The following examples illustrate the occurrence of locative noun + locative demonstrative and locative demonstrative without an overt head:

- (40) **Ge le boa le tla hwetša tšhelete [mo].**
(When you return, you will find (the) money here.)

- (41) **Ge le boa le tla hwetša tšhelete [kua [tafoleng].**
 (When you return, you will find (the) money there on the table.)
- (42) **Mmee [fa], ke tla mo tšea.**
 (Put him here, I will take him.)
- (43) **Mmee [fao [mpeteng], ke tla mo tšea.**
 (Put him there on the bed, I will take him.)

Meaning

The primary function of the demonstrative is deixis. The term 'deixis' has its origin in Greek *deiknunai* 'to show' and *deiktos* 'capable of proof' (*Collins English Dictionary*, 21st Century Edition). Words or expressions whose function in a language it is 'to show' or 'to point at' are called deictic expressions. They forge a relation between an object in the physical context and a linguistic element. The interpretation of each noun phrase containing a demonstrative is spatio-temporally determined. It is dependent on where the participants were, and the actual time of utterance.

According to Yule (1996:9) deixis is 'a form of referring that is tied to the speaker's context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being "near speaker" versus "away from speaker".' Yule distinguishes between person, spatial and temporal deixis. Thomas (1995:9) views deictic expressions as those that 'derive part of their meaning from the context of utterance', and distinguishes place, time, person, discourse and social deictics. Mey (2001:57) explains deictic elements as 'the chief linguistic means of expressing indexical relationship'; and distinguishes person, place and time deixis. Mey and Yule's types of deixis correlate, i.e. person, spatial/place and time/temporal deixis. Thomas splits their person deixis into person and social deixis, and adds discourse deixis as well. Person deictic expressions are those referring to the speaker, the addressee and the third person, i.e. grammatical person. Temporal deictic expressions are words and expressions denoting time, and spatial deictic expressions are demonstratives. All these types of deictic expressions are dependent on the context of utterance for correct interpretation. For instance, it is only possible to know where **mo** (here) is if you know where the speaker was positioned at the time of utterance. The same applies to the understanding of **nna** (I), **wena** (you), **maabane** (yesterday), etc.

The demonstrative is a determiner used to point at a particular physical location occupied by the referent of a noun phrase at the time of an utterance. The deictic opposition is expressed by the semantic feature [\pm Prox]. The referent is either proximal or distal, relative to some deictic centre. Diessel (1999) points out that in discourse, the speaker is generally regarded as the deictic centre. Often the utterance of a demonstrative is accompanied by some gestures for the purpose of a clear indication of which entity is/entities are being referred to. Examples (30) – (43) illustrate a deictic use of the demonstrative. Preposing the demonstrative in (31) and (34) has the pragmatic function of focussing on the demonstrative, i.e. on the physical position or location occupied by the object in question rather than on the object itself, hence place deictic.

The demonstrative prefix in Northern Sotho indicates the class of the noun for which it is a determiner. The root **a** possesses the feature of definiteness. Because of its root (which is, by definition, the core) the demonstrative is inherently definite. The suffixes have the feature of proximity. There is basically a three-way contrast in terms of proximity, viz. near the speaker, near the hearer and far from both participants. Position 1a is grammatically unmarked for proximity; its proximity status is derived indirectly through comparison with the other positions. The suffix **-no/-khwi** of position 1b is an indication that the referent is nearer to the speaker than the one occupied by the unmarked 1a. **-o/-uwe/-we** indicates that the position of the referent is nearer to the addressee than it is to the speaker. Position 3 uses the suffix **-la/-le** for a position remote from both the speaker and the addressee.

The demonstrative can function non-deictically, in order to keep track of discourse referents. In ongoing discourse the demonstrative is used to pick out referents and highlight their status as 'known'. When a full noun phrase needs to be repeated the demonstrative occurs in apposition with its head for the purpose of disambiguation. There is a relationship between the choice of a demonstrative position and the proximity or remoteness in terms of 'location' in discourse. Both positions 2 and 3 may be used for this purpose. For example, in the context where the speaker has been relating a story to the addressee and **monna** (man) was mentioned, to keep track of events the addressee may ask:

(44) **Bjale [monna [yoo]] a feletša kae?**

(Where did the man end up --- the man mentioned earlier.)

The use of a 2nd position demonstrative in (44) is not deictic, but referral. The position is relatively proximal and it signals to the addressee that the referent is locatable from recent previous discourse. For an NP that had been inactive in the discourse long enough, a distal demonstrative is preferred. E.g.:

(45) **[Mosadi [yola]] yena?**

(And the woman? --- mentioned relatively long ago.)

The occurrence of position 3 affix in (45) is an indication that **mosadi** (woman) is locatable further back in the discourse. Example (46) below also exhibits the referral function of the demonstrative:

(46) **Mathomong ge ba thoma go tseba phoofolo yeo, ba e tsebile e šoma polaseng ya motsoko ...**

(Phala 1995: 45)

(In the beginning when they began to know that animal they knew it working at a/the tobacco farm...)

However, the referent in (46) is a person. On the basis of the character outline with which the above author had familiarised the reader earlier in the discourse the reader finds NP **phoofolo** (animal) unambiguously co-referencing to a man mentioned earlier. There was no mention of a real animal, which could cause misinterpretation of reference.

The demonstrative as anaphor may also refer to a situation. In this regard classes 9 and 10 are preferred, consistent with the nouns **taba** – **ditaba** (news/issue(s)). For instance, example (47) is an utterance following after the narrator had deviated from the topic under discussion for some time. He deviated in order to relate to the reader how in the olden days a king was identified in a war by way of his dress; and goes on to explain how in the worst-case scenario of the monarch having to be killed the task was to be carried out without shedding blood. Before switching back to the main topic of discussion the narrator says:

(47) **Banabešo, [tše] a re di tlogeleng.²**

(Matsepe 1968:66)

(My siblings – my people – let us leave those (i.e. issues)).

There is no overt noun phrase belonging to class 10 which serves as anaphor to the demonstrative **tšeo** (those). **Tšeo** (those) is co-referenced to the situation involving the issues the narrator had deviated to. Another similar instance characteristic of the author's style of deviating and switching back to the topic is demonstrated by example (48):

(48) **[Tšeo] re di kwele.**

(Matsepe 1968:80)

(We have heard about those (i.e. issues)).

Pronominal demonstratives as exhibited in (47) and (48) are referred to as sentential pronouns.

The foregoing discussion offers a full account of the demonstrative in relation to definiteness. The demonstrative is characterised by the feature [\pm Prox]. Primarily, its function is to locate the entity being referred to relative to some reference point in the extralinguistic context. There may be more than one entity fitting the description given by the NP, but an accompanying pointing or directing gesture may be used to indicate which. When using a demonstrative the speaker wishes to focus the hearer's attention on the object or the location he is referring to. The other use is non-deictic; its function is to activate shared knowledge. In both uses the demonstrative is a 'matching constraint' (Hawkins 1978:154), matching the linguistic element with the thing or place talked about. By using the demonstrative the speaker/writer, in a way, instructs the addressee to 'match the linguistic element with some identifiable object [sic]', visible in the physical environment or known on the basis of previous discourse.

(b) **Noun + Demonstrative Copulative**

Like the demonstrative, the demonstrative copulative prefix exhibits agreement with the head noun. The basic structure of the demonstrative copulative is that of position 1a, which consists of the root **še** plus AgrS, and has no suffix. The root of class 7 takes the form **se** and not **še**. Position 1b has a suffix **-no** with variant **-khwī**. Position 2 has the suffix **-o** with variants **-uwe** and **-we**, while the suffix of position 3 is **-la/-le**. The morphological structure of the demonstrative copulative in Northern Sotho is as follows:

Pos. 1a:	DEM ^{Root}	+	AgrS	
Pos. 1b:	DEM ^{Root}	+	AgrS	+ AF (-no/-khwi)
Pos. 2:	DEM ^{Root}	+	AgrS	+ AF (-o/-uwe/-we)
Pos. 3:	DEM ^{Root}	+	AgrS	+ AF (-la/-le)

In cases where AgrS is a vowel **e** or **o** only, the vowel of the root is omitted and only the consonant combines with agreement morphology. The Northern Sotho demonstrative copulatives according to noun classes and positions are given in table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Demonstrative copulative

Class	Noun	Pos. 1a	Pos. 1b	Pos. 2	Pos. 3
1	Motho	šo	šokhwi	šoo	šole(la)
2	Batho	šeba	šebakhwi	šebao	šebale(la)
3	Mohlare	šo	šokhwi	šoo	šole(la)
4	Mehlare	še	šekhwi	šeo	šele(la)
5	Letsogo	šele	šelexhwi	šeleo	šelele(la)
6	Matsogo	šea	šeakhwi	šeao	šeale(la)
7	Sediba	sese	sesekhwi	seseo	sesele(la)
8	Didiba	šedi	šedikhwi	šedio	šedile(la)
9	Nku	še	šekhwi	šeo	šele(la)
10	Dinku	šedi	šedikhwi	šedio	šedile(la)
14	Bogobe	šebo	šebokhwi	šeboo	šebile(la)
15	Go aga	šemo/šefa	šemokhwi/ šefakhwi	šemoo/ šefao	šemola/ šefale(la)
16	Fase	šemo/šefa	šemokhwi/ šefakhwi	šemoo/ šefao	šemola/ šefale(la)
17	Godimo	šemo/šefa	šemokhwi/ šefakhwi	šemoo/ šefao	šemola/ šefale(la)
18	Morago	šemo/šefa	šemokhwi/ šefakhwi	šemoo/ šefao	šemola/ šefale(la)

There is no demonstrative copulative for 1st and 2nd person singular and plural. The semantically corresponding form consists of AgrS + locative demonstrative of position 1a.

Syntactic positions

The demonstrative copulative can appear with or without the head noun. When it appears with the head noun, the demonstrative copulative appears either before or after the noun, depending on where the speaker wishes to place the emphasis. The two may be separated by descriptive clauses, but only if the head noun precedes the demonstrative copulative.

Examples (49) - (53) illustrate the appearance of the demonstrative copulative with the head noun:

(49) **[Bogobe [šebo], Ramogolo.**

(Here is porridge, Uncle.)

(50) **[Šeao [maswi]; ke kgale le re seleka.**

(There is the milk; you have been irritating us for too long.)

(51) **[Šefa] [felwana [mola] ke bego ke lla ka gona re fihlile.**

(Here it is – the place I was complaining about, we have arrived.)

(52) ***[Šefa] ke bego ke lla ka gona re fihlile [felwana [mola].**

(53) **[Felwana [mola] ke bego ke lla ka gona [šefa] re fihlile.**

(The place I was complaining about – here it is, we have arrived.)

The demonstrative copulative can also appear without the head noun, referring anaphorically to the previously mentioned NP in a different clause of the same discourse. The absolute pronoun may follow the demonstrative copulative so as to attain the same effect, as illustrated below:

(54) A: **[Bašemane] bale ba go seleka ba kae?**

(Where are those naughty boys?)

B: **[Šeba].**

Or

[Šeba [bona].

(Here they are.)

(55) A: **Ke kgale ke rile bana ba go fe [di]jo; ga ke tsebe gore ga ba na ditsebe na.**

(It is long ago that I asked (the) children to give you food, I don't know if they have ears.)

B: **Ga o ba tshepe na? [Šedikhwi] ke bile ke a ja.**

Or

Ga o ba tshepe na? [Šedikhwi [tšona] ke bile ke a ja.

(Don't you trust them? Here it is, I am already eating.)

Meaning

The demonstrative copulative bears the semantic content of both the demonstrative and the copulative. The demonstrative copulative identifies the locality of the referent. Like the demonstrative, different suffixes indicate to the hearer the position in which the referent is located, relative to the position of the speaker and the hearer. Similar suffixes have similar meanings, for the demonstrative and for the demonstrative copulative. A particular demonstrative copulative may also be accompanied by gestures to complement its meaning.

Temporal deixis involves words such as **maabane** (yesterday), **išago** (next year), **lenyaga/monngwaga** (this year), etc., which are adverbs rather than nouns. The following examples illustrate the point:

(56) **Pula e re nela gabotse [lenyaga], mabele a [išago] a tla šiiša.**

(It rains well for us this year; next year's crop will be plenty.)

(57) **O botše mmago gore khiba yela e tla be e lokile [gohlwagosasa].**

(Tell your mother that the apron will be ready the day after tomorrow.)

(58) **Ke sa le kgole le gae; diDVD tšela ke tla go adima tšona [mantšibua].**

(I am still far from home; those DVDs I will lend to you tonight.)

(59) **[Maloba] ke ipshinne ka marula ga gaboPheladi.**

(The day before yesterday I enjoyed *marula* at Pheladi's home.)

In the case of the demonstrative and the demonstrative copulative, in order to know precisely where the referent is located the hearer must know the physical position of the speaker at the time of utterance. Likewise, knowing the time or period of utterance helps the hearer in identifying the time expressed by the temporal deictic. Since temporal deixis

deals with adverbs and not nouns, it is of no particular interest to this study and will therefore not be entertained any further.

Another form of deixis is **person deixis**, which deals with grammatical person, viz. 1st person, 2nd person and 3rd person. Since person deixis involves pronouns it is dealt with separately. The occurrence of such pronouns is discussed under the absolute pronoun, possessive pronoun, pro-AgrS and pro-AgrO.

3.4.2.2 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are nominal modifiers. When certain quantifiers occur within a noun phrase they introduce an element of uniqueness or inclusiveness. These elements are identified by, among others, Lyons (1999) as semantic components for defining definiteness.

3.4.2.2.1 Absolute pronoun

A Northern Sotho absolute pronoun is basically a nominal modifier. When a noun has been mentioned before and unnecessary repetition is avoided, the absolute pronoun may appear without its head noun so as to refer anaphorically. The absolute pronoun can also appear on its own even if the corresponding full noun phrase has not been mentioned before. In the latter case the identity of the referent would be a 'given' e.g. if the referent is a participant in discourse. The latter occurrence relates to person deixis.

Structure

Morphologically the absolute pronoun consists of a prefix, which resembles subjectival agreement, the root **ô** (with exception of 1st person, 2nd person and Class 1) and the suffix **-na**. Unlike the demonstrative, the absolute pronoun is unmarked for proximity. When the absolute pronoun is formed the vowel of the prefix is dropped. Where the consonant of the prefix is incompatible with the root vowel the prefix undergoes the normal morpho-phonological changes. Where the prefix is the vowel only, it changes into the corresponding semi-vowel. It is not clear, however, how the prefix of class 1 became **y**.

The full distribution of absolute pronouns according to persons and noun classes is given in tables 3.3 & 3.4 below:

Table 3.3: Absolute pronoun (1st p., 2nd p. & Class 1)

Person/ Class	Absolute pronoun	Analysis
1.p.s	nna	
1.p.p	rena	*re + e + na > r + e + na
2.p.s	wêna	*o + ê + na > w + ê + na
2.p.p	lena	*le + e + na > l + e + na
Cl. 1	yêna	*o + ê + na > y + ê + na

Note that the absolute pronoun for the 1st person singular **nna** (l) has the same suffix as the rest, but the prefix and the root seem to have collapsed into one. There is also no clear derivational relationship between **n-** and agreement **ke**.

Table 3.4: Absolute pronoun (Classes 2-18)

Class	Noun	Absolute pronoun	Analysis
2	Bakgalabje	bôna	*ba + ô + na > b + ô + na
3	Molomo	wôna	*o + ô + na > w + ô + na
4	Melomo	yôna	*e + ô + na > y + ô + na
5	Leleme	lôna	*le + ô + na > l + ô + na
6	Maleme	ôna	*a + ô + na > Ø + ô + na
7	Seledu	sôna	*se + ô + na > s + ô + na
8	Diledu	tšôna	*di + ô + na > tš + ô + na
9	Pukuntšu	yôna	*e + ô + na > y + ô + na
10	Dipukuntšu	tšôna	*di + ô + na > tš + ô + na
14	Boroko	bjôna	*bo + ô + na > bj + ô + na
15	Go ja	gôna	*go + ô + na > g + ô + na
16	Felo	gôna	*go + ô + na > g + ô + na
17	Godimo	gôna	*go + ô + na > g + ô + na
18	Moseo	gôna	*go + ô + na > g + ô + na

It should be noted that the circumflex is usually not used in the practical orthography, but for the purpose of accuracy and differentiation it becomes necessary, especially with respect to the roots in table 3.3.

Syntactic positions

The absolute pronoun can appear with its head noun prenominally or post-nominally positioned for emphasis. It appears prenominally for the purpose of specifying emphasis.

E.g.:

(60) **Ke bjetše [sona [semelana] se ke se rekilego.**

(I planted (it) the seedling that I bought --- and no other plant.)

Post-nominally the absolute pronoun has the function of contrasting emphasis. E.g.:

(61) **[Semelana [sona]] ke tla se tsentsha ka karatsheng.**

(The seedling --- on the contrary --- I will take (it) into the garage.)

As far as the object position is concerned, the absolute pronoun can only appear prenominally.

(62) (a) **Bana ba rata [ona [matshidi].**

((The) children like (specifically) the sour plums.)

(b) ***Bana ba rata [matshidi] ona].**

In examples (60), (61) and (62) (a) the absolute pronoun appears in apposition to a noun to which it is co-referenced. As a nominal quantifier the absolute pronoun possesses definite reference.

The absolute pronoun can also appear without its head noun. In this case the referent of the noun will already be known to the addressee and, therefore, it is unnecessary to repeat the noun. If there is another potential referent of the same noun class in the previous discourse, such that unambiguity is threatened, a full noun phrase is used. The following example illustrates the occurrence of the absolute pronoun without a head noun:

(63) **Ditamati di wetše [yena].**

((The) tomatoes fell onto him.)

Example (63) can be uttered if a person (male or female) has been mentioned earlier in the discourse and **yena** (him/her) is used for anaphoric reference.

The situation with ditransitive verbs is as follows:

- (64) (a) **Ramathabatha o fa [mokgalabje] [lehlotlo].**
 (Ramathabatha gives an/the old man a/the walking stick.)
- (b) **Ramathabatha o [mo] fa [lona].**
 (Ramathabatha gives it to him.)
- (c) **Ramathabatha o [le] fa [yena].**
 (Ramathabatha gives it to him.)
- (65) (a) **Rakgadi o kukiša [bana] [pitša].**
 ((My) aunt makes/helps (the) children carry a/the pot.)
- (b) **Rakgadi o [ba] kukiša [yona].**
 ((My) aunt makes/helps them carry it.)
- (c) **Rakgadi o [e] kukiša [bona].**
 ((My) aunt makes/helps them carry it.)

The absolute pronoun may appear without its head either as a direct or indirect internal argument; but it may never appear pronominally in both positions in the same sentence. If both referents are familiar to the hearer, the other argument will appear before the verb stem as an object clitic.

Meaning

The absolute pronoun denotes something specific, from all possible instances, and it possesses grammatical person, number and gender. When it appears with the head noun it furnishes a meaning of specifying emphasis as in (60) and (62a), and of contrasting emphasis in (61). On its own it is used to refer to a familiar referent as illustrated by example (63). In (63) the full noun phrase is assumed to be accessible as an antecedent. However, in the case of the 1st and the 2nd person singular, prior mention of a full noun phrase is not necessary. The hearer and the speaker are participants in the discourse and are, therefore, known. With regard to the plural counterparts, it may be necessary to indicate the identity of other members.

The grammatical category of number is sometimes overridden by pragmatic considerations. In the Northwestern, Northeastern and Polokwane and surrounding areas dialect clusters³, absolute pronouns of 2nd person plural and class 2 are used to refer to singular persons as a form of respect or in formal interactions. E.g.:

- (66) **Koko, [dieta tša [lena] šedi.**
 (Grandmother, here are your shoes).
- (67) **Ke e file [bona].**
 (I gave it to him.)

Lena in (66) is a plural grammatical form; it is literally ‘your’ (pl.). The sentence will still be correct even if the shoes belong to the addressee only. The same applies to (67), with **bona** being a grammatically plural ‘them’. The utterance will still be correct even if the speaker gave the object to a single person. This form is recognised in the standard language and exposure to formal education has seen it used even by people of dialects other than the ones mentioned above. Failure to observe this formal/respect form of address or reference should however not be viewed as disrespect or inappropriate.

3.4.2.2.2 Universal quantifier -ohle/ka moka

-ohle and **ka moka** have the same meaning, that of universal quantification, but use different morphology.

Structure

(a) **-ohle** appears with a prefixal morpheme that resembles subjectival agreement with its head noun. With regard to the way the prefix combines with the root, the quantifier **-ohle** behaves like the absolute pronoun. Different views exist regarding whether **-ohle** is a single unit (root, or stem without any commitment regarding morphological analysis) or is further analysable into root **-o-** and suffix **-hle** (cf. Ziervogel, Lombard & Mokgokong 1969: 60; Lombard 1985:90; Poulos & Louwrens 1994: 79; Du Plessis & Visser 1996: 289). In all the sources mentioned, except Lombard 1985, **-ohle** is viewed as a stem.

The structure of the universal quantifier **-ohle** is illustrated by using classes 2 and 5 in table 3.5 below:

Table 3.5: Universal quantifier

Class	Noun	Quantifier	With noun
2	batho	*ba- + -o- + -hle > bohle	batho bohle
5	lenao	*le- + -o- + -hle > lohle	lenao lohle

batho bohle (all the people)

lenao lohle (the whole foot)

- (b) **Ka moka**, on the other hand, is a prepositional phrase that never exhibits any agreement with its head.

(68) **Batho ka moka**

(All the people)

(69) **Lenao ka moka**

(The whole foot)

Syntactic positions

Both forms may appear before or after the noun to convey the same meaning, with focus on the preposed element. Other words within the same clause may appear between the head noun and the inclusive quantifier. E.g.:

- (70) (a) **[Ka moka] bana] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (b) **[Bohle] bana] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (c) **[Ka moka] ba a tseba [bana] gore ke gorogile.**
 (d) **[Bohle] ba a tseba [bana] gore ke gorogile.**
 (e) ***[Ka moka] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile [bana].**
 (f) ***[Bohle] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile [bana].**
 (All the children know that I have arrived.)
- (71) (a) **[Bana] ka moka] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (b) **[Bana] bohle] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (c) **[Bana] ba a tseba [ka moka] gore ke gorogile**
 (d) **[Bana] ba a tseba [bohle] gore ke gorogile.**

- (e) ***[Bana] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile [ka moka].**
 (f) ***[Bana] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile [bohle].**
 (All the children know that I have arrived.)

- (72) (a) **[Maswi [ka moka] a tšhologile.**
 (b) **[Ka moka [maswi] a tšhologile.**
 (c) **[Maswi] a tšhologile [ka moka].**
 (All the milk is spilled.)

- (73) (a) **[Seatla [sohle] se rurugile.**
 (b) **[Sohle [seatla] se rurugile.**
 (c) **[Seatla] se rurugile [sohle].**
 (The whole hand is swollen.)

Both forms can appear without the head noun, if the noun is familiar. E.g.:

- (74) (a) **[Ka moka] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (b) **[Bohle] ba a tseba gore ke gorogile.**
 (c) **Ba a tseba [ka moka] gore ke gorogile.**
 (d) **Ba a tseba [bohle] gore ke gorogile.**
 (All/Everyone knows that I have arrived.)

Meaning

The semantics of **-ohle** and **ka moka** basically indicate universal quantification, in terms of 'how many' or 'how much'. They refer to all members of a set or to an entity in totality. However, the interpretation of **ka moka** or **bohle** in (70) – (74) is pragmatic and not absolute. The inclusiveness is limited to a particular set of referents known to the speaker and the hearer. **-ohle/ka moka** is considered definite because of the feature of inclusiveness. With regard to single count nouns, reference is made to a totality of the entity or a bigger proportion thereof. When used with plural count nouns and mass nouns the interpretation is that of inclusiveness, the totality of all members of a given set.

Another interpretation of **ka moka** that is worth mentioning, but that can never be alternated with **-ohle**, is its use with proper names. It is a sort of exclamation used for the reaffirmation of common ground. The following example is extracted from a live

conversation (overheard between two employees of a local Spar supermarket on 15 October 1999):

- (75) A: **Ba re Nyerere o hlokagetše.**
 B: **[Nyerere [ka moka]?**
 A: **[Nyerere [ka moka].**
 (A: They say that Nyerere has passed away.
 B: The Nyerere?
 A: The Nyerere.)

It should be noted that even if Nyerere is a surname and is possibly shared by thousands of people, it is not a South African surname. The assumed possible basis of familiarity is the mass media. It is therefore understandable that A should assume that B would be able to make a positive unique identification. Nyerere being a surname and the name of a prominent political leader, B's mind was open to numerous possibilities. It might as well have been a nickname or a codename of someone, where A was under the impression that B was aware of this. The referent that saliently appeals to B's familiarity base is the former president of Tanzania. But to ascertain common ground, B had to find out which Nyerere is being referred to. To ask 'ofe?' (which one?) as if there are a number of shared known Nyereres would not be appropriate in the situation. A typical way of verifying common ground in Northern Sotho is as illustrated in the dialogue in (75). The interpretation of **ka moka** in (75) is different from (70) – (74). It is not 'all', because Nyerere is not a plural noun. It can also not be 'the whole of him' because of the verb that appears with the proper name. It means 'are you referring to the same Nyerere that I think you are referring to?' From the point where A concedes, whichever way the conversation goes, the participants have established and agreed on a shared identifiable entity – Julius Kambarage Nyerere – the first president of Tanzania after the collapse of British colonial rule. Even with this usage **ka moka** verifies and confirms unique identifiability.

Quantifier **-ohle** can never have this interpretation.

The quantifiers **-ohle** and **ka moka** are understood within a given context and reference is pragmatically restricted to unique and inclusive identifiability within a shared set.

3.4.2.2.3 Emphasisers

(a) Co-ordinated -ngwe

Quantifier **-ngwe** joined by conjunct **le** is used as an emphasiser in Northern Sotho.

Structure

-ngwe always agrees with its head. The agreement element comprises position 1 demonstrative + class prefix, as the following examples illustrate:

(76) **Mošemane yo mongwe le yo mongwe ...**

(Every boy...)

(77) **Segotlane se sengwe le se sengwe ...**

(Every toddler...)

Syntactic positions

Co-ordinated **-ngwe** can appear with or without the head noun. In (76) and (77) above it appears with its head. In (78) co-ordinated **-ngwe** appears without an overt head noun. In (79) - (81) as well it appears on its own, but the demonstrative part of the agreement is omitted.

(78) **Go lapa ka ge e le ga [yo mongwe le yo mongwe], a re go hwa lentšu, a fihla sethobolong a itšhela ka molora mmele ka moka, moriri le wona wa šala o sehlefetše mo nkego ke wa ngwale.**

(Matsepe 1968:11)

(As everyone would be tired, after losing her voice she went to the dumping site and spread her whole body with ash, even the hair was as grey as that of a girl initiate.)

(79) **Mongwe le mongwe ---**

(Everybody/Everyone ---)

(80) **Sengwe le sengwe ---**

(Everything ---)

- (81) **Nngwe le nngwe**
(Everything ---)

Meaning

Co-ordinated **-ngwe** means 'each (and every)/everyone/everybody/everything'. It conveys the meaning of universal quantification. Similar to **-ohle** and **ka moka**, it is the context of utterance that determines the actual quantificational interpretation. When used without its head the agreement element will be relevant to whether it is a person or thing being referred to, of which the hearer is already aware. It is inclusive of every member within a given set, and therefore definite.

However, this linguistic element has another interpretation equivalent to the English 'anyone', which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

- (b) **Co-ordinated mang**

Structure

Co-ordinated **mang** never agrees with its head. E.g.:

- (82) **Motho mang le mang.**
(Each/every person.)

Syntactic positions

The occurrence of **mang le mang** is limited to a singular noun of the persons' class, **motho** (person). E.g.:

- (83) **[Motho] mang le mang] yo a nyorilweng a tle.**
(Each/Every person who is thirsty should come.)

It can also be used without its head to convey the same meaning:

- (84) **[Mang le mang] yo a nyorilweng a tle.**
(Everyone who is thirsty should come.)

Meaning

Mang le mang has the meaning of each person/everyone/everybody. It is definite by virtue of the feature of inclusiveness. Similar to co-ordinated **-ngwe**, given a different context **mang le mang** can also mean ‘anybody’ as in ‘every Tom, Dick & Harry’. The latter interpretation is dealt with in chapter 4 of this study.

(c) Reflexive emphasiser

Structure

The reflexive emphasiser takes the following form:

(i) **ka + bo + N** (absolute pronoun). E.g.:

(85) Class 1: **ka boyena < ka + bo + yena**

(86) Class 7: **ka bosona < ka + bo + sona**

Syntactic positions

This type of emphasiser may co-occur with its head. Depending on the part that carries emphasis, the emphasiser may come before or after the noun. Other words in the same clause may separate the two. The following examples illustrate this:

(87) (a) **[Monna] ka boyena] a ka se apeelee bana.**

(b) **[Ka boyena [monna] a ka se apeelee bana.**

(The man himself will not cook for (the) children.)

(88) **[Monna] a ka se apeelee bana [ka boyena].**

(The man will not cook for (the) children himself.)

It can also function as an anaphor, with its head appearing in another clause as antecedent. The following examples will be intelligible if the addressee is able to link the reflexive emphasiser to a previously mentioned noun phrase:

- (89) **[Ka boyena] a ka se apeele bana.**
 (He will not cook for (the) children himself.)
- (90) (a) **O ra go re [ka bosona] se ka ema?**
 (Do you mean on its own it can stand?) OR
- (b) **O ra go re se ka ema [ka bosona]?**
 (Do you mean it can stand on its own?)

In the absence of the head noun the reflexive emphasiser is interpreted according to the absolute pronoun that forms part of its structure, and that links it to a familiar noun phrase.

- (ii) **ka + noši** has the same meaning with **ka + bo + N** (absolute pronoun), but it has no structural resemblance to its head.

- (91) **Bošego bjoo Leilane o robetše kgorong a dišitšwe ke [kgoši
 [ka noši].**
 (Matsepe 1968:35)
 (On that night Leilane slept at the *kgoro*⁴ guarded by the king
himself.)

- (92) **Dipudi di re go hlahlelwa di be di kgokwe ke [modiši [ka noši].**
 (After being driven into the kraal, the goats are tied by the herder himself.)

Ka bo + N (absolute pronoun) and **ka noši** are always linked to a familiar NP, and they render the NP definite.

3.4.2.2.4 Inclusive quantifier

Structure

The inclusive quantifier exhibits agreement with its head. Its morphology is as follows:

Ka + Prefix + Numeral (more than one)

Table 3.6 illustrates the actual constructions per plural class, using the numerals **-bedi** (two) for ‘both’ and **-raro** (three) for ‘all three’:

Table 3.6: Inclusive quantifier

Class Prefix	Inclusive quantifier	Analysis
2 Ba-	ka babedi ka bararo	ka + ba + -bedi ka + ba + -raro
4 Me-	ka mebedi ka meraro	ka + me+ -bedi ka + me+ -raro
6 Ma-	ka mabedi ka mararo	ka + ma+ -bedi ka + ma+ -raro
8 Di- & 10 Di(N)-	ka dipedi ka ditharo	ka + di + -pedi ka + di + -tharo

The alternative forms leave out **ka**, and occur as NP + **bo** + numeral or as \emptyset + **bo** + numeral. All three forms are represented in the following three examples:

- (93) **[Banna [ka babedi] ba dula mo.**
(Both men stay here.)
- (94) **[Banna [bobedi] ba dula mo.**
(Both men stay here.)
- (95) **[Bobedi] ba dula mo.**
(Both stay here.)

Syntactic positions

The inclusive quantifier can appear with or without its head. Similar to other quantifiers discussed above, it either occurs with an overt head or on its own if the referent of the head is known. If the full object noun phrase does not appear, the object clitic appears before the verb stem. Examples:

- (96) **Ba gamile [dipudi [ka dipedi].**
(They have milked both goats.)

(97) **Ke [di] jele [ka dine].**

(I ate all four.)

(98) **Leilane ke Maphuthe, Maphuthe ke Leilane, wa bona o tee – o [ba] bone [bobedi].**

(Matsepe 1968:104)

(Leilane is Maphuthe, Maphuthe is Leilane, you see one – you saw them both.)

In example (96) the inclusive quantifier appears with the head noun. In (97) and (98) the full noun phrase does not appear as head; instead object clitics **di** and **ba** appear before the verbal stems **-jеле** and **-bone**, respectively.

Meaning

The interpretation of (96) - (98) is that there is no member of the set that is excluded from reference. The numeral provides information with regard to the total number of elements within the set.

In the Central dialect cluster a similar form is used even with non-plural classes for the standard enumerative form, and it does not necessarily have the same interpretation of inclusivity. E.g.:

<u>Standard form</u>	vs.	<u>Central cluster</u>
(99) Ke nyaka [lego [le tee].		Ke nyaka [lego [ka [le tee].
(I want <u>one fig</u> .)		(I want <u>one fig</u> .)

The name of this quantifier suggests inclusivity, and the interpretation is logically and pragmatically so, and hence definite.

3.4.2.2.5 Ordinal numbers

Mathomo (first) and **mafelelo** (last) are ordinals indicating the position of the referent in line or in sequence. Other ordinal numbers are also used to identify referents in a similar fashion, but enough background information needs to be supplied.

Structure

Ordinals **mathomo** (first) and **mafelelo** (last) always have the same prefix **ma-** irrespective of the class of the head noun. They appear as complements of the genitive **a**, and it is the possessive element that exhibits agreement with the head noun. The rest of the ordinals take the same possessive element, but the prefix is **bo-**.

Class 2: **Batho [ba [mathomo]**

(The first people)

Class 5: **Lebotlelo [la [mafelelo]**

(The last bottle)

Class 14: **Bjala [bja [mafelelo]**

(The last beer)

Class 2: **Batho [ba [boraro]**

(The third people)

Class 5: **Lebotlelo [la [bone]**

(The fourth bottle)

Class 14: **Bjala [bja [bohlano]**

(The fifth beer)

Syntactic positions

These ordinals may appear before or after the noun, or on their own. They are most compatible with singular count nouns for definite reference. Plural and mass nouns are also modifiable by **mathomo** and **mafelelo**, but a numeral is needed to set the limit for inclusive identifiability. The following examples illustrate:

(100) **Ba tla e fa [ngwana] wa mathomo] ka lapeng.**

(They will give it to the first child in the family.)

(101) **Balemi ba ribegile manyora morago ga [pula [ya mathomo] lenyaga.**

((The) farmers turned fertilisers over into the ground after the first rain this year.)

- (102) **Re emetše ge go fihla [boramabelo [ba mafelelo] e be gona re tloša meetse a go nwa.**

(We are waiting for the last athletes to arrive before we remove the drinking water.)

- (103) **Re tsogile re enwa ka [swikiri [ya mafelelo].**

(This morning we drank with the last sugar.)

- (104) **Ka [letšatši [la xo šupa] Modimo a ba a phethile modirô wa xaxwe wo a o dirilexo; 'me ka 'tšatši [la xo šupa] a khutša a feditše modirô wa xaxwe ka moka wo a o dirilexo. ⁵**

(Genesi 2:2)

(On the seventh day God had completed his job that he had done; and then on the seventh day he rested having completed his job that he had done.)

Meaning

The referent of the noun phrase containing the ordinals **mathomo** or **mafelelo** is locatable by its position in the sequence and is, therefore, identifiable by the addressee. In the case of singular count nouns there can be only one. Depending on context and the message being imparted with regard to plural count nouns a numeral may be necessary to narrow the scope, for the addressee to make a relevant inclusive identification. Reference in example (102), however, is inclusive of all athletes up to the last one. A numeral solves the inclusivity problem. For instance, example (105) may be open to misinterpretation, but if a numeral is included as in example (106) or extra information is furnished there will be no ambiguity with regard to the inclusiveness of the relevant members of the set.

- (105) **[Malapa [a mathomo] a motse wo a re buletše dikgoba tša mešomo.**

(The first families of this village opened up job opportunities for us.)

- (106) **[Malapa [a mane [a mathomo] a motse wo a re buletše dikgoba tša mešomo.**

(The first four families of this village opened up job opportunities for us).

Other ordinals also require background information as to where the counting has to start. For instance, in the case of (104) the preceding section of the text in the Bible provides information that counting starts at the beginning of creation. The ordinals **mathomo** and

mafelelo render single count nouns definite. In the case of plural and mass nouns more descriptive material for the purpose of demarcating inclusivity is needed.

3.4.2.3 Possessive

The possessive construction is also known as the genitive. It is a linguistic construction showing a possessive relationship between two noun phrases. Between the two noun phrases denoting the possessum and the possessor there is a possessive preposition, which consists of the root **a** and a prefix resembling AgrS of the head noun; i.e. NP possessum + [(AgrS + **a**) + NP possessor]. The first and second persons take the possessive concord of class 1 for singulars and class 2 for plurals, respectively. Because of the morpho-phonological processes that occur when AgrS and possessive **a** combine, in some cases, table 3.7 below details the agreement element (possessive concord) per nominal class as well as the corresponding AgrS:

Table 3.7: Possessive concords

Person/ class	AgrS	Possessive concord
1	o	wa
2	ba	ba
3	o	wa
4	e	ya
5	le	la
6	a	a
7	se	sa
8	di	tša
9	e	ya
10	di	tša
14	bo	bja
15	go	ga
16	go	ga
17	go	ga
18	go	ga

The possessor may be any noun phrase, including a pronoun (individual or communal).

3.4.2.3.1 Locative gona/ntshe

Locative **gona** or **ntshe** may appear in a possessive construction as in the following examples:

- (107) **[Mosadi [wa gona] o tšere bana.**
 (The woman in question took (the) children.)
- (108) **Bjale a kae [mafehlo [a ntshe]?**
 (Now, where are the churning sticks in question?)

Syntactic positions

Possessives with **gona** and **ntshe** generally appear with the head noun, as in examples (107) and (108) above. The ‘not so common’ stylistic use of **ntshe** without a head noun is observable from the Central and some South-Central dialect clusters, where the discourse participants are already familiar with the referent. Often **ntshe** in these contexts acquires the suffix **-go** with no particular effect on the meaning, as examples (109) (a) and (b) illustrate:

- (109) (a) **Ke re [wa ntshe] ke ge a ntlhabile ka ntaka nke o nyaka go mpolaya.**
- (b) **Ke re [wa ntshego] ke ge a ntlhabile ka ntaka nke o nyaka go mpolaya.**
 (I say the one in question was looking at me as if he wanted to kill me.)

Meaning

The difference between the genitive expressions **-a gona** or **-a ntshe** is only dialectal. However, their usages have spilled into each other’s territories to the extent that they are commonly used interchangeably. They are recognised as synonyms in the standard language. The genitive expression **-a gona** or **-a ntshe** has nothing to do with place *per se*. It is a linguistic element that is used for organising information structure, to signal to the addressee that the NP is locatable from a previous mention. **-a gona/ntshe** has the

function of reviving shared knowledge, as a signal indicating non-novelty. The co-occurring NP is always definite.

3.4.2.3.2 Inalienable possession

Inalienable possession is also known as body parts possession. Lyons (1999:128) explains it as a type of possession that ‘involves possessa that are intimately or intrinsically tied to the possessor’, and he includes one’s family relations. The following examples may be compared ((a) and (b) are inalienable possessions and (c) is not):

- (110) (a) **Ke rata [mmago].**⁶
 (I love/like your mother.)
- (b) **Ke rata [nko [ya lese].**
 (I like an/the infant’s nose.)
- (c) **Ke rata [hempe [ya monna].**
 (I like a/the man’ shirt.)

The referents in examples (a) and (b) are uniquely identifiable. In the case of example (c) a/the man may own many shirts; and unless the context delimits the scope or a particular shirt is described, it will not be identifiable.

Structure

The basic morphological structure of inalienable possession is not different from possession in general.

Syntactic positions

The possessum and the possessor in the construction may assume two different syntactic positions. The illustrations below will start with intransitive verbs, while transitive verbs will follow. The possessum can be in the subject position of an intransitive verb, as in the (a) sentences below, or it can be moved to the post-verbal position as an adjunct to the verb, as with the (b) sentences. The adjunct has no θ -role of its own; instead it shares a θ -role in the subject position.

- (111) (a) **[Letsogo] la ngwana] le rurugile.**
(A/the child's arm is swollen.)
(b) **[Ngwana] o rurugile [letsogo].**
(Same as (a) but Lit.: He is swollen arm.)
- (112) (a) **[Leoto] la pudi] le robegile.**
(b) **[Pudi] e robegile [leoto].**
(A/the goat's leg is broken, i.e. it broke its leg.)
- (113) (a) **[Nko] ya lesea] e khumogile.**
(b) **[Lesea] le khumogile [nko].**
(A/the infant's nose is bruised.)
- (114) (a) **[Dimpa] tša digotlane] di kokomogile.**
(b) **[Digotlane] di kokomogile [dimpa].**
(The) toddlers' tummies are raised.)
- (115) (a) **[Menwana] ya mokgalabje] e ripegile.**
(b) **[Mokgalabje] o ripegile [menwana].**
(An/the old man's fingers and toes are cut off.)
- (116) (a) **[Seatla] sa mosadi] se omile.**
(b) **[Mosadi] o omile [seatla].**
(A/the woman's hand is dry --- very cold.)
- (117) (a) **[Matswalo] a mahodu]] a hwile.**
(b) **[Mahodu] a hwile [matswalo].**
(The) thieves' consciences are dead --- They have no conscience.)
- (118) (a) **[Mahlo] a mafatla] a leane.**
(b) **[Mafatla] a leane [mahlo].**
(The) twins' eyes are askew --- They are squint-eyed.)
- (119) (a) **[Letlalo] la tlou] le šošobane.**
(b) **[Tlou] e šošobane [letlalo]].**
(An/the elephant's skin is wrinkled.)
- (120) (a) **[Monwana] wa molwetši] o kobegile.**
(b) **[Molwetši] o kobegile [monwana].**
(A/the patient's finger is bent.)

The following examples illustrate the possible syntactic positions of body parts possession in sentences with transitive verbs:

- (121) (a) **Ngaka e ripile [letswele la mosadi].**
 (b) **Ngaka e ripile [mosadi letswele].**
 (A/the doctor cut a/the woman's breast.)
- (122) (a) **Bašemanyana ba kgoka [maoto a dipudi].**
 (b) **Bašemanyana ba kgoka [dipudi maoto].**
 ((The) boys tie (the) goats' legs.)
- (123) (a) **Morutiši o tshopha [tsebe ya morutwana].**
 (b) **Morutiši o tshopha [morutwana tsebe].**
 (A/the teacher twists a/the pupil's ear.)
- (124) (a) **Mokgalabje o duma [nko ya lesea].**
 (b) ***Mokgalabje o duma [lesea nko].**
 (An/the old man desires an/the infant's nose.)
- (125) (a) **Lesogana le hloile [mahlo a ngwana].**
 (b) ***Lesogana le hloile [ngwana mahlo].**
 (A/the young man hates a/the child's eyes.)
- (126) (a) **Mošemane o rata [letlalo la mosetsana].**
 (b) ***Mošemane o rata [mosetsana letlalo].**
 (A/the boy likes (the) girl's skin.)

With regard to transitive verbs the whole possessive structure may appear as it is, in the object position, as illustrated in the (a) examples of (121) – (126). Alternatively the construction may appear without the agreement element, with the possessor and the possessum switching positions, as illustrated in the (b) examples. However the (b) structure seems to be grammatical only with verbs whose subject is an agent, (121) – (123). In the ungrammatical forms, (124) – (126), the subject noun phrase is not an agent.

Meaning

In examples (110) – (123) two positions are possible. For instance, in (114) two NPs, **dimpa** (tummies) and **digotlane** (toddlers), enter into a possessive relationship, resulting in a third NP **dimpa tša digotlane** ((the) toddlers' tummies). Although **digotlane** may be either definite or indefinite, **dimpa** will always have definite reference due to being an inalienable possession of **digotlane**. The (b) examples illustrate that the two NPs may appear in alternate positions i.e. **digotlane** as subject and **dimpa** as adjunct: **[Digotlane]**

di kokomogile [dimpa]. The same interpretation holds; whilst the referent of **digotlane** may be ambiguous the referent of **dimpa** will always be definite.

In both syntactic positions of inalienable possessive construction, there is a set with limited membership in which the referent should be located. The possessum is always locatable as belonging to and being one with the possessor. Being identifiable as a body part of the possessor makes the possessum definite.

The width of the scope may not be the same, however. Under normal circumstances, in the case of (113) **nko** (nose) is the only possible member, (111) **letsogo** (arm) is one out of two members, (118) **mahlo** (eyes) is two out of two members, (120) **monwana** (finger or toe) is one out of twenty and (115) **menwana** (fingers and toes) is twenty members. The scope in (113) and (119) is the narrowest, with the total number of members being readily identifiable, and therefore the most definite. They are followed by (111), (112) and (116) with either one of the two members. (120) has the widest scope. Depending on context (115) may be referring to all twenty members or to the majority of the total membership. In all instances it is clear to whom a particular body part or body parts belong, and this is what directs the addressee to the relevant location. The same applies regarding the number of elements within the possessum of examples (121) – (126). With regard to set membership kinship NPs also range from the narrowest to the widest scope in terms of reference. **Mma** (mother) and **papa** (father), **mmatswale** (mother-in-law) and **ratswale** (father-in-law) are different from **koko** (grandmother) and **rakgolo** (grandfather), and the scope widens even further with **motswala** (cousin) and **motlogolo** (nephew/niece), for instance.

Inalienable possession is therefore considered definite because of the feature of locatability, which leads to identifiability. According to Hawkins' (1978) location theory the referent of a definite noun phrase should be locatable in a shared set.

Lyons (1999) is of the opinion that what makes possession definite may be that the noun phrase underlying the possessive expression is definite. This is supported by the fact that when the scope widens, the hearer becomes more reliant on context; otherwise the speaker will have to supply more descriptive material.

Two types of possessive construction that are discussed in this section, viz. a location pronoun in a possessor position and inalienable possession, are closely linked to the feature [+Def]. The appearance of the former always makes NP_{possessum} definite. Inalienable possession is definite by virtue of the possessum being a body part or an intimate relation of the possessor. In the case of inalienable possession, though, there are different widths of scope depending on how many of the referents involved a possessor may have. For instance, the identifiability of a one-member possessum like **nko** (nose) is not exactly the same as that of **monwana** (finger/toe). As the scope widens, other means of expressing and inferring definiteness come into play. Pragmatic factors such as situational contexts and anaphoric reference disambiguate. Other nominal modifiers such as the demonstrative may also be employed for unambiguous reference. By virtue of being locatable and uniquely identifiable, the possessum in inalienable possession constructions is definite.

3.4.2.4 Definite NPs within clauses

3.4.2.4.1 Definite NP with a relative clause with -latela

The verb stem **-latela** (follow) may be used in relative constructions.

Structure

Syntactically it appears in the form [NP CP], where C → Det: **yo** + IP: **a latelago(ng)**,

E.g.:

NP	CP

(127) **[Morutiwa [yo a latelago] ...**
 (The next/following disciple ...)

Syntactic positions

The relative may appear post-nominally, pre-nominally or without a head noun. It appears on its own if the addressee is already familiar with the referent and it is, therefore, unnecessary to repeat it.

- (128) **Ke fokoleditše [molemi] yo a latelago] tema.**
(I lessened the job for the next farmer.)
- (129) **Ke lobile; efela ke tla e buša ka [bareki [ba bane [ba ba latelang].**
(I have lost; but I will recover it from the next four buyers.)
- (130) **O otlele gabotse; go tloga mo [meetse [a a latelago] a mmotong wa Phosa.**
(You should drive well; from here the next water is at the Phosa hillock.)

Meaning

A relative construction with **-latela** guides the addressee to locate the referent within a particular situation of utterance. Similar to the ordinals discussed under 3.4.2.2.5, it becomes easy for a singular noun to secure unique identification. Plural count nouns without a numeral render the scope too wide. Without a numeral the referent in (129) would not be as inclusively identifiable as it is. In the case of mass nouns a single collection or container secures inclusivity. Example (130) is illustrative of a mass noun used as a single collection at a particular spot.

3.4.2.4.2 Definite NP with a copulative clause with **-(n)noši**

AgrS + **le noši** or shortened **nnoši** has the meaning ‘the only’. Within a copulative clause, **nnoši** adds an element of uniqueness to the head noun phrase, making it definite. The following examples illustrate this matter:

- (131) **Ke [mošemane [a nnoši] (yo) re mo tsebago.**
(He is the only boy we know.)
- (132) **Ke [monwana [o le noši] o sego wa gobala.**
(It is the only finger/toe not injured.)
- (133) **Ke [meetse [a nnoši] ka mo motseng lehono.**
(It is the only water in this household today.)

Meaning

Copulative clause with **-(n)noši** brings in an element of unique or inclusive identifiability to the head noun, as illustrated in examples (131) – (133).

It has been shown in this section how the semantics of a nominal modifier and the syntactic position that it occupies may impose a unique or a total reading on the noun phrase, rendering it definite. The modifier may indicate the unique identifiability of the referent by showing precisely which one is being referred to. Modifiers such as the demonstrative, absolute pronoun, emphasisers, ordinal numbers, possessive, NP with relative with **-latela** and NP with copulative with **(n)noši** have been demonstrated to secure unique identifiability of referents. Universal quantifiers and inclusive quantifiers ensure inclusive identifiability. The noun phrases discussed so far are common nouns (except for the mention of a proper name in example (75) where the interpretation of the universal quantifier was under scrutiny). The next section discusses proper names and their role in the unique identifiability of referents.

3.4.3 PROPER NAMES

Proper names are also known as proper nouns. They are names of persons, places and personified characters in fictitious contexts. There are opposing views with regard to whether or not proper names have any semantic content (Lyons 1999, Cruse 2000). One is that they do not, since they only denote an individual and say nothing more about it. Another view is that they do have sense and they denote one-member sets. A common thread that runs through both views is that proper names refer uniquely. According to Lyons (op. cit.) their reference is closer to that of inherently unique definites than to contextually unique definites. However, proper names are different from inherently unique definites in grammatical structure, unless proper names are recategorised as common nouns for finer assurance of uniqueness. In Northern Sotho proper names belong to a different sub-class from common nouns.

Structure

Unlike common nouns, singular proper names of persons have no overt class prefix. They do, however, belong to Class 1a, in terms of agreement morphology. In the plural they take the prefix **bo-** (Cl.2b). E.g.:

(134) **Lesiba – BoLesiba**

(Lesiba – more than one person bearing the name Lesiba/Lesiba & company)

Common animal names are often recategorised as proper names and personified in the context of folk tales, with a similar structure:

(135) **Mmutla – BoMmutla**

(Hare – more than one hare character of a folk tale/Hare & company)

Place names have different structures. Some have locative affixes and others do not. E.g.:

(136) **Gauteng** (place of gold – a South African province) --- locative suffix **-ng**

(137) **GaMolepo** (the name of a place meaning ‘Molepo’s place, i.e. the place where Molepo reigns’) --- locative prefix **ga-**

(138) **Bela-bela** (lit. boil-boil --- a South African town, also known as Warmbaths) --- no affix

Syntactic positions

Like a common noun, a proper name can appear in the subject position and in the object position. It can also appear as the complement in a prepositional phrase. As a place name it assumes the thematic role of location.

Meaning

Some of the Northern Sotho personal proper names have been recategorised from common nouns. They are given to people as a result of certain events or emotions associated with their coming into existence, and as such they originally have meaning. E.g.: **mpho** (gift/present) is a common noun of class 9, with the plural in class 10 **dimpho** (gifts/presents). As a proper noun (class 1a) it has the plural **BoMpho** (more than one person with the name Mpho/Mpho and company). The same applies to names like **Dikeledi** (tears), **Sello** (a cry), **Khomotšo** (consolation), **Lethabo** (joy), **Modiegi** (the slow/delayed one), **Morongwa** (the one to be sent/angel), etc. Other ‘ugly’ or undesirable

common nouns are given as names to babies whose parents have lost a relatively high number of babies before, based on the belief that this supposedly ‘don’t care’ attitude with regard to naming will lead to the baby’s survival. E.g.: **Ntatauwane** (monster), **Kgokgo** (monster), **Roto** (male baboon), **Matlakala** (leaves/peels/rubbish), etc.

Traditional names of persons that are being carried over in families seem to fit the view that they are ‘referring expressions with no sense’ – or the origins are so archaic that the senses have been lost over generations. There is a growing tendency, lately, to try and reconstruct these names in order to make a synchronic recovery of their semantic content. These efforts often result in inaccuracies with tonal contradictions, and therefore seem fruitless. Conventionally, however, there is generally clear guidance with regard to the masculinity and femininity of the referent. Proper names such as **Mosima** (female), **Lesetša** (male), **Malesele** (male), etc. fall into this category. The name-giving patterns of specific dialectal groups coupled with cross-marriages may see these conventions violated; though to a minimal extent.

Even if the semantic content of the origin of a proper name is clear, that remains the origin – a common noun version of a proper name. Unique identification as a proper name surpasses sense. Proper names in general have unique reference. Whilst one person may have more than one name, what is relevant to this discussion is that many people may share a name. In such a case the uniqueness of the name will be confined to a particular context. According to Lyons (1999), in the event of there being more than one possible referent two possible solutions are that the fuller proper names are given or the proper name is recategorised as a common noun and more descriptive material is provided. It may concern a person’s family or the place where he lives or comes from. As far as identifying by families, in westernised settings a surname is usually used. E.g.:

- (139) A: **Ke nyaka Morongwa.**
(I want/am looking for Morongwa.)
- B: **Morongwa ofe?** Or **wa ga mang?**
(Which Morongwa?) (of which family?)
- A: **Morongwa Mashiane.** Or **wa ga Mashiane.**
(of the Mashiane family.)

In traditional African settings a surname may not suffice, since a particular surname often dominates a village. As a result of particular traditional name-giving patterns it is also common for people of the same surname to share a first name. A common traditional identification strategy is to use a person's mother's genealogical descent. E.g.:

- (140) A: **Ke nyaka Malesa.**
 (I want/am looking for Malesa.)
- B: **Malesa ofe?** Or **wa ga mang?**
 (Which Malesa?) (of which family?)
- A: **Wa ga NgwanaMojapelo.**
 (Of Mojapelo's child – daughter.)

The fact is that traditionally when a woman is married she is not 'lost' forever. There is even a saying which expresses the fact that even if she is married, her 'head' remains her family's. The in-laws and the people of their village would normally neither use her first name, nor an equivalent of Mrs. X. Instead she is called so and so's child. It is (was) therefore common practice for people to be identified as children or grandchildren of NgwanaDikgale, NgwanaMogodi, NgwanaMolepo, NgwanaMogonong, NgwanaTladi, NgwanaMothiba, etc.

Places within the same geographical area rarely share a name. Instead it is common, at least in the South African context, for one place to have more than one name, which is not a threat to unique identifiability. Original names (commonly used by indigenous people, but not registered) and the additional ones (which were later given to the same places and registered) have always existed side by side; for example, Modimolle x Nylstroom, Polokwane x Pietersburg, Tshwane x Pretoria, Mokopane x Potgietersrus, Mashishing x Lydenburg, Mangaung x Bloemfontein, etc. Further description may be necessary if two or more places share a name, but often this is solved by the context of utterance.

Proper names are regarded as definite because they refer uniquely. A speaker uses a proper name when there is a uniquely identifiable referent within the relevant set. Expansion or recategorisation becomes necessary only if uniqueness is under threat.

3.4.4 PRONOUNS

The following pronouns are recognised in Northern Sotho: pro-AgrS, pro-AgrO, absolute pronoun in a prepositional phrase and possessive pronoun.

3.4.4.1 pro-AgrS

AgrS is primarily a subjectival agreement morpheme, also known as subject concord. Its secondary function, which is under scrutiny here, is pronominal, i.e. when it appears with an empty pro with which it is coindexed.

Structure

The form of subjectival agreement according to persons and classes is given in table 3.8 below:

Table 3.8: Subjectival agreement

Class/ person	AgrS
1 st p.s	ke
1 st p.p	re
2 nd p.s	o
2 nd p.p	le
1	o
2	ba
3	o
4	e
5	le
6	a
7	se
8	di
9	e
10	di
14	go
15	go
16	go
17	go
18	go

Syntactic positions

The primary function of AgrS is to foster agreement between the grammatical subject of a sentence and the verbal element. It appears as the prefix of the verb and it always agrees with the nominal class of the noun concerned. If the subject is already known, it may not be repeated and the agreement morpheme will function pronominally, coindexed with an empty pro:

(141) (a) **[Mosadi] [o]-a-kitima.**

(A/the woman is running.)

(b) **[pro_i] [o_i]-a-kitima.**

(She is running.)

(142) **[Leilane le Maphuthe] [ba] be ba šetše ba tlwaetše mokgwa wa batho bao ka ge e be e le matšatši ba na le bona. [Ba] bone bohlale bja bona ka moka ...**

(Matsepe 1968: 108)

(Leilane and Maphuthe had already got used to those people's way/manner because they had been with them for days. They saw all their wisdom ...)

In the extract above the first **ba**-AgrS performs its primary function of linking the subject to the verb. The second sentence starts with pro-**ba**, which refers anaphorically to the antecedent **Leilane le Maphuthe** (Leilane and Maphuthe). In the latter appearance it functions as a pronoun, and it is the concern of the present section.

Meaning

The empty pro coindexed with AgrS is regarded as definite (unless context suggests otherwise) because it is used to avoid repetition of an already familiar noun. Its link to a familiar noun is supported by the fact that it is marked for noun class gender; so it becomes easy for the addressee to work out which referent he is expected to identify. E.g.:

(143) **[pro [ba-[fihlile].**

[+2] [+2]

(They have arrived.)

In (143) above the occurrence of AgrS suggests that a noun of class 2 had been mentioned earlier in discourse, or it is known by both the speaker and the addressee through alternative means of conveying familiarity that have already been discussed in section 3.3 of this chapter. The speaker's presupposition in using AgrS-**ba** pronominally is that the addressee will be able to locate and to uniquely identify its referent.

A known referent may also be referred to by a grammatically different, but pragmatically relevant, pro-AgrS. The following dialogue is an illustration of cross-referencing between various classes:

(144) **[Le] kae [lesogana] le re jago ka lona?**

[O] sa tšwele le bagwera ba gagwe.'

(Matsepe 1968:14)

('Where is the young man who is the reason that we are eating (feasting)?')

'He went out with his friends.'

In the first utterance the referent is referred to by a noun of class 5 **lesogana** (young man). One would expect subsequent reference to the same referent to be made by pro-AgrS-**le**. Instead pro-AgrS-**o** of class 1 is used. This does not, however, cause difficulty of identifiability. The discourse participants are able to make relevant co-reference between pro-AgrS-**o**, belonging to the semantic class of persons, and a singular personal common noun, **lesogana** (young man).

Unless pragmatic factors suggest otherwise, the grammatical relation between pro-AgrS and the class holds. As is the case with the absolute pronoun, a plural agreement morpheme may be used for honorific purposes to address or to refer to one person. It is pragmatically correct for pro-AgrS in (145) to refer to a single person as an indication of politeness or respect, a socio-cultural consideration:

(145) **[Ba] re ke [ba] tlele peipi.**

/Lit. They say I should bring them a/the pipe./

(He says I should bring him a/the pipe.)

The identity of the speaker and the hearer is a given in any discourse. A plural grammatical form may also be used to address a single person where it is not necessarily honorifically based, but is used owing to conventional cultural observance as in the following example:

- (146) A: **[Le] kae?**
 (How are you?)
 B: **[Re] gona [re] ka ra [lena].**
 (I am fine; how are you?)
 A: **Le [rena] [re] gona.**
 (I am fine too.)

(146) is a typical way of enquiring about a person's wellbeing in greetings. All pro-AgrS in this dialogue are plural (1st & 2nd person). An adult may address a child in the same way. The Northern Sotho people view themselves culturally as part of one another. If my family or my neighbour is not well, I cannot say I am well because my total 'wellness' depends on the wellbeing and happiness of those around me. This form is culturally embodied, and its interpretation surpasses any grammatical rule.

Depending on the context of utterance, AgrS-**ba** may also have an indefinite interpretation. For instance, when a child arrives at a café and talks to the person behind the counter about what he is there for, he will typically utter (147):

- (147) **[Ba] re ke tle ke reke borotho.**
 /They say I should come and buy bread./
 (I am sent to come and buy bread.)

Even in this case **ba** (subjectival agreement of class 2 - plural) may be referring to one person. The use of this morpheme in this utterance has no definite reference. It is specific in the sense that the child is aware of the identity of the person who sent him to the café, but he does not necessarily share that awareness with the shopkeeper. The identity of the person may not be important to the shopkeeper. The information carried across is that someone sent the child. Who that person is, does not matter. Similarly a child may be running and one person may want to stop him for some reason, and uttering (148) means 'I am not just running around; someone has sent me somewhere'.

(148) **[Ba] nthomile.**

/They sent me./

(I am sent.)

The following dialogue illustrates further that, given particular pragmatic factors, pro-AgrS may not be definite:

(149) A: **[Ba] a go bitša!**

B: **Ke mang?**

A: **Ke rangwane.**

(A: /They are calling you!/ --- You are being called!

B: Who is it?

A: It is uncle.)

If B knew the referent of pro-AgrS-**ba**, he would not enquire about its identity.

pro-AgrS is a grammatically efficient form of definite reference. However, where there is a suggestion to the contrary, pragmatics takes priority.

3.4.4.2 pro-AgrO

The object clitic is not compulsory with every object noun phrase in a sentence. Its main grammatical function is not as an agreement marker; it is regarded as primarily a pronoun (Alan 1983, Lyons 1999).

Structure

AgrO is similar in form to AgrS of a particular noun class, except for 1st p.s, 2nd p.s and class 1, which are given in table 3.9 below:

Table 3.9: Object clitic

Class/ person	AgrO
1 st p.s	N
2 nd p.s	go
1	mo

(a) **Co-occurring object clitic**

An object clitic may co-occur with an overt noun, but it is not obligatory with every object NP that appears in a sentence. Following the view that the object clitic is primarily a pronoun, co-occurrence with a noun will be treated in this section. Compare (150) (a) and (b):

- (150) (a) **[Bomatakataka] [ba - tshwa] [matlakala].**
 [NPsubject] [AgrS -Vst] [NPobject]
 ((The) bush babies spit (the) peels.)
- (b) **[Bomatakataka] [ba - a - a - tshwa] [matlakala].**
 [NPsubject] [AgrS - Pr.Tense - AgrO - Vst][NPobject]
 ((The) bush babies spit the peels.)

In (150) (a), there is no object clitic. NP object **matlakala** is open to both definite and indefinite readings. Whether or not the NP forms part of the speaker-hearer shared set of familiar referents is dependent on context. The second **a** in (b) is the object clitic, and when it co-occurs with the object NP the present tense **a** appears. The presence of the object clitic in (b) renders the object NP definite. Other examples:

- (151) (a) **Le bone [dikgomo]?**
 (Did you see (the) cattle?)
- (b) **Le [di] bone [dikgomo]?**
 (Did you see the cattle?)

If the question in (151) (a) was to be put to the boys of a particular family, whose chore is to tend cattle, in the context where a particular set of cattle went missing and the boys went out to search for them NP **dikgomo** would have a definite reading. In the same syntactic position the object NP has a potential for an indefinite reading. For instance, the same question may be posed to a preschooler on his return from a trip to a farm, in a situation where neither the parents nor the preschooler were aware of the kind of animals that the farmer kept. But if the object clitic is included in the verb, as in (b), the object NP would be definite, suggesting that the NP had been mentioned before or that both participants possessed prior knowledge pertaining to the presence of cattle on the particular farm.

It should be noted that whilst the inclusion of the object clitic in the structure of the verb strongly suggests that the co-occurring object NP is definite, its absence does not make the object NP indefinite. The interpretation of (151) (a) bears testimony to this fact. As the preposed element representing the object it brings focus to the object NP, as in (b).

The co-occurring object clitic focuses on the object NP's status as topic, and renders it definite.

(b) **Empty pro**

The object clitic may appear with an empty pro. The object clitic coindexed with an empty pro can function anaphorically or without a linguistic co-referent. When the referent has been introduced linguistically the object clitic serves as an anaphor, as the following example illustrates:

(152) **'[Le] kae [lesogana] le re jago la lona?'**

'[O] sa tšwele le bagwera ba gagwe.'

'O šetše o [mo] nyaketše?'

(Matsepe 1968:14)

('Where is the young man who is the reason that we are eating (feasting)?')

'He went out with his friends.'

'Have you already looked around for him?')

Pro-**mo** is used anaphorically to refer back to antecedents NP **lesogana** and pro-AgrS-**o**. (Co-reference between **lesogana** and **o** is explained in example 144 of 3.4.4.1.)

The object clitics of the 1st and 2nd person do not need antecedents since the referents are part of the discourse and need not be mentioned. The following examples illustrate this point:

(153) **Ke a tseba gore ba [go] file yena.**

(I know that they gave him to you.)

(154) **Moagišani wa ka o [n]theketše leho.**

(My neighbour bought me a wooden spoon.)

Pro-AgrO can only appear when the object is known and is, therefore, always definite.

Pro-AgrO can also occur when the noun phrase has been mentioned in earlier discourse but its referent is not actually known or does not actually exist, as is the case with donkey sentences. Kadmon (1992:13) explains donkey sentences as those 'sentences that contain an indefinite noun phrase inside the if-clause or a relative clause and a pronoun outside that clause which refer back to the indefinite NP'. Pro-AgrO will still be co-referenced to a linguistically established entity. E.g.:

(155) **Ge nka šegofatšwa ka [lesea] ke tla [le] hlokomela.**

(If I am blessed with a baby I will take care of it.)

(155) is a conditional statement. By definition, there is no baby. Pro-**le** is co-referenced to an element whose familiarity has only been established in the linguistic context, and whose existence is not claimed at all. Another occurrence is that pro-AgrO may in the logical sense not refer to the same referent established earlier, but to another referent with a similar description as illustrated in (156) below:

(156) **Masogana a bohlale a fa [batswadi] ba ona] dimpho, a mašilo a [ba] fa mathata.**

(Wise young men give their parents gifts, foolish ones give them problems.)

pro-AgrO is used only if familiarity has been established.

The object clitic can appear with an overt object NP or with an empty pro. When it co-occurs with an overt noun it occupies a preverbal position, focussing on the status of the object as topic. The co-occurring noun phrase is always definite. If it appears with an empty pro, it still carries the noun's agreement morphology, thereby indicating familiarity. The referent of a noun phrase linked to an object clitic is always uniquely identifiable. Whilst the presence of an object clitic is tantamount to definiteness, its absence is no suggestion to the contrary.

3.4.4.3 Absolute pronoun in a prepositional phrase

The absolute pronoun can appear in prepositional phrases as the complement of **ka-**, **ga-/go-**, **ke-**, **-a** and **le-**, with or without the head noun. As a pronoun it is used to refer anaphorically to an already established referent.

(a) Instrumental **ka-**

Semantic interpretations of **ka** may not only be instrumental; it may be an indication of manner or accompaniment (Mojapelo 1997:32-39). The following examples illustrate the occurrence of an absolute pronoun as a complement of **ka**:

(157) **Sohlola [ngwana] yo!** **Ga se wa swanela go ya nokeng [ka [yena]].**

(Take this baby off your back! You are not supposed to go to the river with him (on your back).)

(158) **Ee, ke bofolla [ka [ona] --- i.e. [ka [maatla]].**

(Yes, I untie in that manner.)

(159) **Ke nyaka go rema mohlare woo [ka [sona]].**

(I want to chop that tree with it.)

(b) Locative **go-**

(160) **Mpša ye e sa dirang mo? Gosasa le tsoge le e iša [go [bona]].**

(What is this dog still doing here? Tomorrow you should take it to them.)

(161) **Ge nka dula [go [sona] nka se we?**

(If I sit on it, won't I fall?)

(c) Locative **ga-**

(162) **Mpša ye e sa dirang mo? Gosasa le tsoge le e iša [ga [bona]].**

(What is this dog still doing here? Tomorrow you should take it to their place.)

(163) **Ke nyaka go tlo etela [ga [lena] ka Mokibelo.**

(I want to visit your place on Saturday.)

(d) Agentive **ke-**(164) **Le nna ke lomilwe [ke [sona].**(I have also been bitten by it.)(165) **Bašemanyana ba kitimišwa [ke [yona].**((The) boys are chased by it.)(e) Possessive **a**(166) **Mola ba fihlago a phatlalatša badišana [ba [tšona] ka go ba tšhošetša, a napa a thoma go swara dipudi tše di dušago a di kgakgamolla mekaka ka thipa, a e lahlela kua.**

(Matsepe 1968:78)

(After they arrived he scattered their (the goats') herders by threatening them; he then started to hold pregnant goats and tear their udders apart with a knife, and throw them – the udders – away.)(167) **Manaka [a [yona] a robegile.**

(Its horns are broken.)

(f) Associative **le-**

Associative **le-** expresses 'together with'. The absolute pronoun can appear as a complement of the associative **le-**. Alternatively the whole phrase appears in a contracted form, with the same meaning. In the contracted form the alternative preposition **na-**⁷, which is used only with absolute pronouns, is written conjunctively with the absolute pronoun and the suffix of the absolute pronoun is discarded. This contracted form is possible with absolute pronouns of all noun classes, except 1st person singular and plural, and 2nd person plural. The three never appear in shortened form as ***nan**, ***nare** and ***nale**, respectively. 2nd person singular, however, becomes **nago** and not ***nawe**. Examples:

(168) (a) **Bana ba ka ba tsene [le [yena] sekolo.**(b) **Bana ba ka ba tsene [naye] sekolo.**(My children attended school with him.)(169) (a) **Tloga [le [bona].**(b) **Tloga [nabo].**(Go with them.)

(170) (a) **Nka se sa ya [le [wena] mabenkeleng; o a nanya.**

(b) **Nka se sa ya [nago] mabenkeleng; o a nanya.**

(I will not go to the shops with you any more; you walk slowly.)

(171) **‘Komelelo ye e re swere ka mogolo. Lebelela, serapolotšwane se e be e le pholo e nala, le gona – kgomokgomo.’**

‘Re ka reng morwarre?’

‘Go tla re re sepele [naso].’

(Matsepe 1968:6)

(‘This drought is bad for us. Look, this stillborn calf was a brown bull with a white forehead; a real bull.’

‘What can we say, my brother?’

‘It means that we should take it with us.’)

In prepositional phrases, the absolute pronoun is always definite. It can only be used if co-referenced to a previously mentioned noun phrase or to a contextually determined referent.

3.4.4.4 Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns are indicative of grammatical person, hence of personal deixis. Possessive pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person singular and class 1 are given in table 3.10 below; the rest are similar to the absolute pronouns of the relevant classes and persons:

Table 3.10: Possessive pronouns

Person/ Class	Absolute pronoun	Possessive pronoun
1.p.s	Nna	ka
2.p.s	Wêna	gago
Cl. 1	Yêna	gagwê

Communal possessive pronouns are often used in contracted form, as illustrated in the box below:

Box 3.1: Communal possessive pronouns

1st p.s: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [gešo] > Dikgomo [tša [gešo] > Dikgomo [tšešo]**
 (My family's cattle)

1st p.p: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [gaborena] > Dikgomo [tša [ga [borena] >**
Dikgomo [tša [borena] (Our family's cattle)

2nd p.s: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [geno] > Dikgomo [tša [geno] > Dikgomo [tšeno]**
 (Your (sg.) family's cattle)

2nd p.p: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [gabolena] > Dikgomo [tša [gabolena] > Dikgomo**
[tša [bolena] (Your (pl.) family's cattle)

Class1: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [gabo] > Dikgomo [tša [gabo] > Dikgomo [tšabo]**
 (His family's cattle)

Class 2: **Dikgomo [tša [ga [gabobona] > Dikgomo [tša [gabobona] >**
Dikgomo [tša [bobona] (Their family's cattle)

A possessive pronoun always appears without its head, coreferenced to an already established referent. The referent may be accessible from previous discourse or it may be a participant in discourse.

(172) **Mpheng [wa [sona] o wetše ka meetseng.**

(Its handle fell into the water.)

(173) **Ke bone pene [ya [gagwe].**

(I saw his pen.)

Examples (172) and (173) illustrate that without a head noun the possessive pronoun is able to refer unambiguously. When the speaker makes such utterances, he is presupposing that the hearer will already be familiar with the referent of the possessive pronoun.

Possession denoting family members/relations is another form of inalienable possession; and it is the form that is mostly expressed pronominally. An expression of communal possession as illustrated in box 3.1 on page 155 is different in meaning from possession of a collective, in the following manner:

- (174) (a) **Koloi [ya [rena]** (our car)
 (b) **Koloi [ya [gešo]** (my family's car)
 (c) **Koloi [ya [borena]** (our family's car)

Depending on context, communal possession of 1st person singular, expressed by the possessive pronoun, can also be used to express the relationship that the speaker/writer wishes to establish with his addressee. E.g.:

- (175) **Ba ile ba senyana letlalo hle [banabešo!]**⁸
 (Matsepe 1968:74)
 (They damaged each other's skin, my people.)

In its simplest interpretation **ngwanešo** and **bana bešo** mean 'my sibling' and 'my sibling(s)', respectively. The narrator addresses the reader using this type of possessive construction to express the establishment and/or maintenance of closeness with the reader. In the following example a character addresses other men at the *kgoro* about a cow that is wandering about next to a ditch into which its newly-born calf has fallen:

- (176) **Ge ke bega ke ilale, ke re hle [banna [ba gešo] thušang ge e le gore mong wa yona le a mo tseba, a ye go e thuša.**
 (Matsepe 1968:8)
 (As I report now, I say, my fellow men, please help if you know its owner so that he can go and help it.)

Because the possessor is assumed to be familiar, prior to the utterance of a possessive pronoun, possessive pronouns always have definite reference.

Pronouns are the most common means of anaphoric reference in Northern Sotho; and they refer unambiguously. A pronoun may also provide definite reference by virtue of its referent being a participant in discourse.

3.5 CONCLUSIONS

This section is an encapsulation of the factors responsible for definite interpretation of noun phrases in Northern Sotho. As a Bantu language, Northern Sotho is non-articled. The

language is grammatically unmarked for simple definiteness. In Northern Sotho a noun phrase's definiteness is dependent on pragmatic factors, as well as syntax/semantic factors.

It has been demonstrated in this chapter that definiteness in Northern Sotho can be determined from both grammatical and non-grammatical factors. Pragmatic factors are non-linguistic; their familiarity is situationally dependent. Familiarity is based on the immediate physical environment, the broader situation and general knowledge. A Northern Sotho speaker utters a full noun phrase for definite reference if situational contexts and/or general knowledge afford him assurance that the addressee will be able to recognise the referent as the only one relevant, and uniquely identify it. For instance, the referent of the noun phrase may be the only one satisfying the description offered by the noun phrase in the immediate physical environment; accessible through vision, smell, auditory or tactile means. The noun phrase may appear with a verb which suggests that certain steps ought to be taken in order to access the referent through the factors mentioned above. The discourse participants' prior knowledge of a particular physical situation may also accord a noun phrase definite reference.

The context in which the addressee uniquely identifies referents may be broader than just the immediate physical one. A referent may be known to be the only one existing in a particular broader situation at a particular time. Shared general knowledge about the universe gives certain noun phrases definite reference – referents of such noun phrases are said to be inherently unique. A noun phrase may also have definite reference if it refers anaphorically to an already familiar referent, referred to by the antecedent. Anaphoric reference may be explicit or implicit. A full noun phrase or a pronoun may refer anaphorically to the same referent or to an associated referent accessible from the linguistic context. There may be no linguistic antecedent but the pronoun would still refer successfully to a definite referent, e.g. to the speaker and the hearer as participants in discourse. A speaker/writer uses an anaphor if he holds the presupposition that the addressee will be able to use it to pick out an antecedent to which the latter has been introduced earlier in discourse. These pragmatic factors contribute to a definite reading of the noun phrase.

Definiteness can also be determined from the interplay of syntax and semantics. The bare noun phrase, which has the potential for ambiguity, can be interpreted as definite owing to

nominal modifiers that may co-occur with it, or function pronominally linked to it by its agreement morphology. Determiners and quantifiers are used to direct the reading appropriately. The demonstrative has been identified as the only determiner in Northern Sotho that gives definite reference to a noun. The demonstrative root **a** carries the feature [+Def]. The demonstrative can appear with the head noun or on its own. It performs deictic and anaphoric functions. In both functions it renders the noun definite by indicating precisely which referent is intended, which can be accessible via the senses or by locating it from previous discourse. The demonstrative copulative identifies the referent by indicating the position where it is situated. Another feature of both the demonstrative and the demonstrative copulative that plays a role in the unique identifiability of referents is the suffix, with the feature [\pm Prox]. The demonstrative always has definite reference.

Other nominal modifiers that accord definite reference to an NP are quantifiers: the absolute pronoun, universal quantifier, emphasisers, inclusive quantifier and ordinal numbers **mathomo** and **mafelelo**. The basic function of the absolute pronoun is to place specifying or contrasting emphasis on the co-occurring noun phrase. Its link to the co-occurring noun makes it definite. If used pronominally it refers anaphorically to an established referent. It can also appear on its own and without prior mention of a full noun phrase if the identity of the referent is a given, such as when it refers to any of the discourse participants. The appearance of an absolute pronoun indicates definite reference.

The universal quantifier takes two forms, **ohle** and **ka moka**. It indicates inclusiveness or totality of reference for members of a shared set. As a result, the hearer will always know that of all the members of a familiar set, reference is being made to all. Its use with proper names as illustrated in example (75) is for the verification of unique identifiability. Co-ordinated **-ngwe** and **mang** also indicate inclusiveness, giving definite reference to the noun phrase. Although both co-ordinated **-ngwe** and co-ordinated **mang** have alternative interpretations they are discussed in this chapter because they are not necessarily ambiguous. Each context determines which of the two interpretations is intended, such that they cannot have both interpretations in the same environment. The interpretations of co-ordinated **-ngwe** and co-ordinated **mang** discussed in this chapter are definite.

The reflexive emphasiser is also always linked to a familiar noun and it, therefore, accords a definite reading to the noun phrase. The inclusive quantifier indicates inclusiveness in a

manner that is absolute, making membership of a referent set precise. The ordinal numbers **mathomo** and **mafelelo** ensure unique identifiability with singular count nouns, provided that the context indicates where the counting starts or ends. The inclusive identifiability of plural count and mass nouns with **mathomo** and **mafelelo** is dependent on an incorporated numeral that sets the limit for shared set membership. With regard to the possessive, there are constructions with **gona/ntshe** and inalienable possession. A possessive construction with **gona/ntshe** always makes the possessum definite because it identifies the latter as part of previous discourse. In inalienable possession the possessum is expressed and inferred as definite since it is a body part or an intimate relation of the possessor. Some body parts and kinship referents have wide scope and will require supporting identification strategies such as modifiers or searches in previous discourse.

The interpretation of a relative clause with **-latela** as definite is correctly inferred if the hearer also shares knowledge of the physical space or discourse position occupied by the referent. Like ordinals, unique identifiability of noun phrases in a relative clause with **-latela** is easily inferable with single count nouns, whilst plural count and mass nouns need demarcating support from numerals. A copulative with **(n)noši** also renders the noun phrase definite by unique identifiability. All the modifiers discussed in this chapter play a vital role in expressing and inferring definiteness, in cases where pragmatic factors alone cannot. Their semantic content and the syntactic positions that they occupy contribute to the interpretation of noun phrases as definite.

Proper names are definite by virtue of their unique reference. The speaker uses a proper name in a particular context when he is aware that there is one individual fitting the reference. In cases where unique identifiability may be under threat, i.e. where there may be more than one entity qualifying for reference by bearing the same name, methods of expansion or recategorisation are used. Adding on a family name may expand the proper name of a person. A proper name may also be recategorised as a common noun and descriptive phrases be added on.

Finally there are pronouns, viz. subjectival agreement, object clitic, absolute pronoun in prepositional phrases and possessive pronouns. Pronouns as anaphors are the most efficient tools for definite reference in Northern Sotho. A subjectival agreement morpheme may appear pronominally if the noun is familiar and therefore it is unnecessary to repeat it. Because it refers anaphorically to an antecedent, it has definite reference. It has, however,

come to light that there is one use of class 2 AgrS that is not necessarily definite, i.e. an indefinite but specific reference as illustrated in examples (147) – (149). In this other interpretation the identity of the referent is not central to the message, and the grammatical role of subjectival agreement is overpowered by socio-culturally conventional pragmatic interpretation. The object clitic may co-occur with an overt noun where it places focus on the status of the noun as topic, thereby according it definite reference. When it appears pronominally it refers anaphorically to an established referent. Co-occurring with a noun or appearing on its own, the object clitic always gives definite reference to the noun phrase. Absolute pronouns appear in prepositional phrases referring anaphorically to familiar referents. This occurrence makes an absolute pronoun as the complement of prepositions definite. The possessive pronouns discussed in this chapter are also always linked to a previously established referent, or the referent is a given.

The pragmatic conditions and the syntax and semantics of modifiers discussed above constitute the factors contributing to the definite reference of noun phrases in Northern Sotho. The situation of utterance and the general knowledge shared by discourse participants enable definite reference. Whilst the syntax and semantics of nominal modifiers as grammatical factors accord noun phrases a definite interpretation, in a few cases where the semantics of the modifier is in conflict with pragmatics the ultimate interpretation becomes dependent on the pragmatic context. Context, therefore, plays a vital role in the interpretation of noun phrases as definite.

FOOTNOTES

¹ In the present day orthography **x** is written as **g**, and a high tone is generally not marked.

^{2 & 8} [**Banabešo**] should be disjunctive – [**bana bešo**]

³ Cf. Mokgokong (1968) for Northern Sotho dialect clusters and their geographical areas.

⁴ **Kgoro** is a traditional court or meeting place of men, of a particular village or clan.

⁵ The form [**la xo šupa**], used in the biblical text, is an accepted variant of [**la bošupa**].

⁶ [**mmago**] is the contracted form of [**mma [wa gago]**].

⁷ **Na** as an alternative to **le** is not used in everyday Northern Sotho, but it surfaces rarely in certain culturally bound utterances, and the meaning appears to have shifted slightly.

CHAPTER FOUR

INDEFINITE NOUN PHRASES IN NORTHERN SOTHO

4.1. AIM

The previous chapter dealt with definite noun phrases. In this chapter attention is given to noun phrases that do not have definite reference. It has already been established that Northern Sotho does not place any morphological markings on a noun phrase to indicate that it is not definite. The semantics, syntax and morphology of indefinite NPs in Northern Sotho will be looked into, divided into simple and complex indefinites. Bare noun phrases with indefinite interpretation are regarded as simple indefinites whilst complex indefinites receive their indefinite reference from modifiers. These modifiers will also be discussed in relation to their role in giving the noun phrase indefinite reference. The noun phrases are dealt with in the order: simple indefinites, complex indefinites, generics and noun phrases in idioms.

4.2 INDEFINITENESS

4.2.1 Hawkins (1978)

Hawkins identifies the following speech acts for indefinite reference: The speaker (a) introduces a referent (or referents) to the hearer; and (b) refers to a proper subset, i.e. not-all, of the potential referents of the referring expression. According to Hawkins' analysis, when a speaker uses an indefinite noun phrase the implication is that of a whole set of items defined by the noun phrase, reference is made to only one or some of them. Whilst one of the speech acts for definite reference is that the referent must be located in a shared set, the speech act of indefinite reference remains uncommitted to the issue of locatability; i.e. non-locatability is not a defining characteristic feature of indefiniteness.

4.2.2 Chesterman (1991)

Chesterman's opinion is that, in contrast to definites which are always locatable, indefinites are non-locatable unless context suggests otherwise.

4.2.3 Diesing (1992)

In dealing with the interpretation of indefinite noun phrases Diesing brings about a link between the Kamp-Heim semantics of (in)definiteness and the GB syntactic theory. By means of her Mapping Hypothesis, dealing with English and German, Diesing illustrates that there is a correlation between the syntactic position of the NP and its interpretation.

4.2.4 Lyons (1999)

Lyons is of the opinion that an indefinite noun phrase is generally used if the referent has not been part of a conversation, or is not in any way familiar to the hearer and he is being newly introduced to it. In uttering an indefinite noun phrase the speaker indicates to the addressee that the referent is not part of their shared familiarity. The referent of an indefinite noun phrase, therefore, does not form part of the addressee's experience and is non-identifiable. Lyons distinguishes between simple and complex indefinites. He explains simple indefinites as those noun phrases that gain their indefinite interpretation from linguistic elements whose only, or main, function is to indicate indefiniteness, such as the English indefinite article *a*. Complex indefinites, on the other hand, receive their interpretation from some expression, which is not an article. These other expressions are nominal modifiers that are, according to Lyons, incompatible with definiteness and are not necessarily [-Def] since many of them differ according to degrees of specificity.

4.2.5 Cruse (2000)

According to Cruse 'the essence of indefinite reference is that the identity of the referent is not germane to the message: that is, nothing hinges on the individual features of the referent, only the class of features indicated are presented as relevant'. This, continues Cruse, 'has nothing to do with whether or not either the speaker or hearer is in fact able to effect a unique identification of the referent' (Cruse 2000:308).

A speaker would therefore use an indefinite expression if he does not expect the hearer to have prior knowledge of its referent and the latter is only hearing about it for the first time. Alternatively, the speaker may not find it necessary to establish whether the hearer is familiar with the referent or not; the identity of the referent may be a non-issue for the purpose of the discourse they are conducting. It is possible that the speaker himself may

not have any particular referent in mind when uttering an indefinite noun phrase. To this effect a further distinction is drawn in the linguistics literature mentioned above, within indefinite noun phrases, between specific indefinites and non-specific indefinites. The scholars agree that the referent of a specific indefinite noun phrase is familiar to the speaker whilst that of a non-specific indefinite noun phrase is not. Whether the speaker has some referent in mind or not the noun phrase is indefinite as long as there is no indication of shared familiarity with the hearer, or expectation of unique identifiability by the hearer.

With regard to Northern Sotho, which is non-articled, a noun phrase may be bare. Bare noun phrases exist in Northern Sotho that are by themselves incompatible with definiteness. Furthermore, there are nominal modifiers whose semantic content is incompatible with unique identifiability, and they pass their semantic interpretation onto the head noun. The use of an indefinite noun phrase can either remain neutral to the issue of locatability or it can deliberately widen the 'search space' (Cruse *op. cit.*) to signal to the hearer that he is not expected to locate and uniquely identify the referent. This chapter discusses noun phrases that are regarded as indefinite. Section 4.3 will be devoted to simple indefinites, i.e. full noun phrases that project indefinite interpretation themselves. Section 4.4 concerns complex indefinites, i.e. noun phrases whose indefiniteness stems from their being qualified by modifiers that have indefinite interpretation. Generics are discussed under section 4.5, followed by idioms in 4.6.

4.3 SIMPLE INDEFINITES

4.3.1 Aim

There are noun phrases in Northern Sotho that can function without any modifier, to indicate indefiniteness. The purpose of this section is to examine each one of these noun phrases and to investigate the speaker's motivation in choosing them. It is also important to understand how the hearer interprets them. The argument presented in this section is that their semantic content indicates to the hearer that he is not expected to identify the referent, or rather that the identity of the referent is not central to the message being imparted. Such NPs can be dubbed Northern Sotho versions of simple indefinites (cf. Lyons 1999), since they themselves contribute to their indefinite reading and are not assisted by modifiers.

Noun phrases that are discussed in this section are regarded as simple indefinites in Northern Sotho.

4.3.2 bofengfeng

4.3.2.1 Morphology and derivation

NP **bofengfeng** may be linked to quantifier **-fe** (which), which is basically an interrogative. It is a noun of class 14, and it does not have a plural counterpart. Its diminutive form is **bofengfenyane**. It appears with a locative suffix **-eng**.

4.3.2.2 Meaning

bofengfeng is equivalent to ‘somewhere’ or ‘such-and-such a place’, with the semantic interpretation ‘in, at or to some unknown or unspecified place.’ The diminutive **bofengfenyane** has the same interpretation.

4.3.2.3 Syntactic positions

NP **bofengfeng** may appear in the following syntactic positions:

A locative complement:

- (1) **Re ile ge re fihla ra hwetša a ile [bofengfeng].**
(When we arrived we found that he went somewhere.)
- (2) **Bana ba gagwe ba dula [bofengfenyane].**
(His children live somewhere.)

A locative subject:

- (3) **?[Bofengfeng] go a gadima.**
(At such and such a place it flashes.)
- (4) **?[Bofengfeng] go na pula.**
(At such and such a place it rains.)

- (5) **Ba re [bofengfeng] go a gadima.**
(They say at such and such a place it flashes.)
- (6) **Ba re [bofengfeng] go na pula.**
(They say at such and such a place it rains.)

Examples (5) and (6), preceded by AgrS-re, place NP **bofengfeng** in a more acceptable situation than (3) and (4). The verbal phrase settles the NP in the subject position and it indicates that the speaker is in a way familiar with the referent, although he does not mention it by name. Examples (3) and (4) are odd, unless they are echo statements and not necessarily informative.

(bo)fengfeng cannot appear as complement in a prepositional phrase with **ka**, **go**, **ga** and **le**. However, it may appear with **ke** and **a**, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (7) **O kgahlilwe [ke [bofengfeng]].**
(He liked such-and-such a place.)
- (8) **O kgahlilwe [ke [tša [bofengfeng]].**
(He liked those of such-and-such a place.)
- (9) ***Ga ke nyake go ja ka seatla; ke nyaka go ja [ka [bofengfeng].**
(I don't want to eat with a hand; I want to eat with such and such a place/somewhere.)
- (10) ***Ba tlogeleng ba ye [go [bofengfeng].**
(Let them go to such and such a place/somewhere.) --- where 'such and such a place/somewhere' is physically present and is [+animate].
- (11) ***Dikgomo di tšwa [ga [bofengfeng].**
((The) cattle come from such and such a place/somewhere's place.)
- (12) ***Bana ba tlile [le [bofengfeng].**
((The) children came with such and such a place/somewhere.)

Bofengfeng is a locative noun. It can only appear with those prepositions which are compatible with complements that have locative interpretation. Examples (9) – (12) are ungrammatical in Northern Sotho. The complement of **ka** in example (9) can only be a non-locative. The **ka** that can be used with **bofengfeng** is not a preposition but a specified locative prefix, with tonal differences according to dialectal regions. E.g.:

- (13) **Ba re ba e loketše [ka [bofengfeng].**
 (They say they put it inside something.)

It is not the intention of the speaker that a locative referred to by the NP **bofengfeng** be identifiable, and therefore the NP has indefinite reference.

4.3.3 lefeela

4.3.3.1 Morphology and derivation

Lefeela is a noun of class 5, which may derive its origin from the adverb **feela** (only/just).

4.3.3.2 Meaning

Lefeela means ‘nothing’, ‘zero’, ‘nought’ or ‘not anything’. Mokgokong & Ziervogel (1975) explain **lefeela** as an old spelling form of **lefela**. However, the noun appears in the following selected sources as follows: *Beibele* (1951, 15th impression 1985) – **lefêla**; Matsepe (1968) – **lefeela**; *Northern Sotho Terminology & Orthography* No. 4 (1988) – **lefeela**. The spelling that will be used for the purpose of this study is **lefeela**, consistent with the spelling in the last-mentioned source, which is the latest document compiled and approved by the standardising body and the most recent publication of the three.

Another interpretation of **lefeela** has a plural in class 6 – **mafeela** (good-for-nothing/irresponsible/worthless/useless people), which is ambiguous as to definiteness and indefiniteness. If **lefeela** appears in the context of being a singular counterpart of **mafeela** it may also be ambiguous, meaning a good-for-nothing/useless/irresponsible/worthless person, and not ‘nothing’.

4.3.3.3 Syntactic positions

The appearance of **lefeela** in the subject position seems to be restricted to the ‘good for nothing’ meaning, which is not directly linked to this discussion, but will nevertheless be illustrated by the following examples for the purpose of distinction:

- (14) **[Lefeela] lela le kae?**
(Where is that good-for-nothing person?)
- (15) **[Mafeela] ale a kae?**
(Where are those good-for-nothing people?)
- (16) **Yoo yena e no ba [lefeela] la ngwanenyana.**
(That one is just a good-for-nothing girl.)

The same interpretation in the object position is illustrated in examples (16) and (17):

- (17) **Ba e file [lefeela] lela.**
(They gave it to that good-for-nothing person.)
- (18) **Ba e file [mafeela] ale.**
(They gave it to those good-for-nothing people.)

Examples (14) – (18) illustrate that NP **lefeela** may not always be indefinite, which is a different interpretation from the following one.

For the interpretation that is of interest to this chapter, **lefeela** can only appear in the singular. **Lefeela** as an indefinite noun phrase can appear in the object position and as the NP complement in prepositional phrases.

In examples (19) – (20) **lefeela** appears in the object position:

- (19) **Mo o bonago banna ba kgobokane o tsebe gore ga se ba kgobokanela [lefeela].**
(Matsepe 1968:39)
(Where you see men gathered you should know that they are not gathered for nothing.)
- (20) **O tlike a phuthetše [lefeela] ka kobo.**
(Lit. He came wrapping nothing in a blanket --- He did not bring anything.)

Lefeela may also appear as a locative internal argument, i.e. a locative object, with suffix **-ng**, as illustrated in the following example:

- (21) **Felo fao go be go se na ditsela ka ntle le mebila ye e tšamego e felelela [lefeeleng].**

(Matsepe 1968:106)

(At that place there were no roads except for footpaths that abruptly ended nowhere.)

In example (21) NP_{loc} **lefeeleng** appears as the internal argument of the verb **e felelela**.

Examples (22) – (25) illustrate the occurrence of **lefeela** as complement in prepositional phrases:

PP with agentive **ke**:

- (22) **O be a sa makatšwe [ke [lefeela] ka gore ka moo lapeng e be e se ntshe, gobane le ge nnete gona monna a be a etšwa monyanyeng, o be a se a swara makobela ka go rata bjala moo ga gagwe.**

(Matsepe 1968:63)

(She was not surprised by nothing because it was not there in the household, for even if the husband had come from a wedding he did not bring *makobela*¹ with him because of his obsession with beer.)

PP with possessive **a**:

- (23) **Meropa ye e be e sa llele [lefeela], le koša yeo e be e se [ya [lefeela] gobane go be go nyanywa ka magomo ao Lefehlo a a hlabilego ka taelo ya Phetedi, magomo a go leboga ge ba fentše sera seo etšwe le go kopana ba sešo ba kopana.**

(Matsepe 1968:96)

(The drums were not sounding for nothing, and the song was not for nothing because a feast was celebrated with the cattle that Lefehlo slaughtered on Phetedi's instructions; the cattle in thanksgiving for conquering the enemy before they even meet.)

Note that the first appearance of **lefeela** in (23) is that of an internal argument.

PP with **ka**:

- (24) **O se ké wa bolêla leina la Morêna Modimo wa xaxo [ka [lefêla]; ka xobane e a bolêlago leina la xaxwe [ka [lefêla] Morêna a ka se kê a mo lesa à sa ôtlwe.**

(Ekisodo 20:7)

(Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.²)

PP with **le**:

- (25) A: **Malome'ago o tlile le eng?**

(What did your uncle bring?)

- B: **O tlile [le [lefeela].**

(He brought nothing.) --- Lit. came with nothing.

The referent of **lefeela** is not uniquely identifiable. The NP therefore has indefinite reference.

4.3.4 aretse

4.3.4.1 Morphology and derivation

Aretse (unknown thing/place) is an indefinite noun phrase derived from shortening the phrase **ga re tsebe** (we do not know) > negative morpheme **ga** + 1st person plural AgrS **re** + verbal stem **-tseba** (know), ending on an **e** because of the negative. This shortened form **aretse** is also commonly used in verb form for **ga re tsebe** (we do not know). Another form of shortening involving the verb stem **-tseba** (know) that is observable in the spoken language of the older generation is something like: '**Ke a mo tse, Robote**' instead of '**Ke a mo tseba, Robote**' (I know him, Robert), which expresses the notion that the speaker knows the referent so well. The indefinite noun phrase **aretse** does not have a plural form.

4.3.4.2 Meaning

As a noun phrase **aretse** carries the semantic interpretation of its origin ‘not knowing/not known’. The NP **aretse** can refer to a thing or a place, depending on the syntactic position that it occupies and the meaning that the speaker wishes to express.

4.3.4.3 Syntactic positions

Aretse may appear in the object position to indicate a thing or locality as illustrated in the following examples:

(26) **Ba mo lešitše [aretse].**

(They fed him ‘I don’t know what’.) --- something unknown/mysterious.

In (26) NP **aretse** refers to an unknown thing that the person in question may have eaten.

In (27) below NP_{loc} **aretse** is the internal locative argument of the verb **re falalelago**:

(27) **Ge eba ke nnete lefase le ke la banna le basadi, gona go bolela nnete ye e tletšego, mohla re falalelago [aretse] – di ile go šita baahlodi, gobane ga re apee selo ka ntle ga potse fela.**

(Matsepe 1968:31)

(If it is true that the world belongs to men and women, then truly, the day we immigrate to ‘I don’t know where’ the judges are going to be faced with a difficult task because we are merely making a mess.) --- unknown place.

In example (27) above the narrator chooses NP_{loc} **aretse** to express uncertainty about the exact locality to which people go when they die. Moreover it is not necessary for the purpose of this discourse that the reader uniquely identify the locality being referred to.

Whether **aretse** is a thing or a place is semantically and syntactically determined. The verb class for which the NP is subcategorised indicates whether NP **aretse** refers to a place or a thing.

Aretse may not appear in the subject position. It may however appear as an agent in a passive sentence, as in the following example, where the original subject has been right dislocated:

- (28) **Ba rwele kgwara; Jabu o jelwe [ke [aretse] gape.**
 (They are encountering difficulties; Jabu went AWOL again.)

-jelwe ke aretse (Lit. eaten by I don't know what/unknown thing) is an idiomatic expression meaning to disappear without trace or to be absent without leave.

Example (29) below would be ungrammatical:

- (29) ***[Aretse] e jele Jabu gape.**
 (Lit. I don't know what ate Jabu again.)

In example (28) **aretse** appears in a prepositional phrase as complement of agentive **ke**, referring to an unknown agent. The NP **aretse** may not appear as complement of **ka**, **go**, **ga** or **le** in a prepositional phrase; the sentences would be ungrammatical.

The NP **aretse** has indefinite reference since the place or thing referred to is unidentifiable.

4.3.5 boratapelo

4.3.5.1 Morphology and derivation

Boratapelo is a compound noun formed by the verbal stem **-rata** (love/like) and the noun **pelo** (heart). The noun has variant forms **maratapelo** and **boratwakepelo**. **Maratapelo** is not a plural form of **boratapelo**, as would be expected of the relationship between nominal classes 14 and 6. Both are nouns with a locative interpretation that may refer either to a place or to places. **Boratwakepelo**, which is also a compound noun, also incorporates the passive element **-w-** and agentive preposition **ke**.

4.3.5.2 Meaning

The compound noun **boratapelo** with variants **maratapelo** and **boratwakepelo** means ‘where the heart desires’ or ‘where one wishes to be’; it is always a locative. One would rather wander away to this ‘unspecified place’ than be at some identifiable place at a given time, for some reason.

4.3.5.3 Syntactic positions

The NP may appear in the following syntactic positions:

Locative complement:

- (30) **O iketše [boratapelo] o lebetše gore le mo romile go kga meetse.**
 (He just went where he wants, he forgot that you sent him for water.)
- (31) **O se ke wa dumelela bana bao go ya [maratapelo].**
 (Don’t allow those children to go where they please.)

In the two examples above, **boratapelo/maratapelo** is a locative internal argument.

Boratapelo/maratapelo can appear in prepositional phrases as the complement of **ke** and **a**. Other prepositions are not compatible with the NP since it is a locative.

- (32) **O tennwe [ke [tša boratapelo]; o boile.**
 (He is tired of (things of) where he wanted to be; he is back.)

Locative subject:

- (33) **[Boratapelo] go a tena; o tla ba wa boa.**
 (Where one goes to as he pleases is tiring; you will end up being back.)

Boratapelo is an unidentified place where one can go or be as one pleases.

4.3.6 šopoding

4.3.6.1 Morphology and derivation

The final **-ng** of **šopoding** is most probably a locative suffix since the noun appears syntactically as NP_{loc}. The noun's non-locative version can, however, not be verified.

4.3.6.2 Meaning

The explanation of this word in Mokgokong & Ziervogel (1975) is only figurative; it is found only in the context of the expression '**go thabela šopoding**' (to rejoice about another's trouble/sorrows), in the same way as in the following example:

- (34) **Ka gona [go thabela [šopoding], a kgotha mangaka a motse ka moka go tla go remela ba ba sa belegego, a re le bahlogadi ba ba sa fifaletšwego ba swanetše go apola tše ntsho ka gore ba fela ba di apere – e tla ba nke ba llela rrago Lefehlo.**

(Matsepe 1968:33)

(Because of being overjoyed about someone's sorrow, he gathered all the village's doctors to come and treat the barren. He said that all the widows still in mourning should discard their mourning clothes because if they continue wearing them it may appear as if they are mourning Lefehlo's father.)

In the extract above chief Lefehlo's father had died. Nthumule, a neighbouring chief, tries hard to defy every aspect of the cultural practice related to the death of and mourning for chiefs. He shows off his happiness over Lefehlo's loss by instructing his subjects to do away with anything that will look as if they are complying with the cultural practice of mourning Lefehlo's father.

However, there is a different interpretation of the word that is clearly locative, which is not compatible with definiteness. It means 'unknown/different place.' The unidentified locality interpretation is illustrated in example (35) below:

4.3.6.3 Syntactic positions

Šopoding appears in sentences syntactically as NP_{loc}. The following excerpt illustrates this:

- (35) ‘Ao! Monna yo o bolela bjang batho? Ngwana ge a tšhabetše komeng, mong wa yona o swanetše gore go mmotšolliša batswadi, a ba romele le le rego se phapaharegeleng [šopoding], nyakelang mono’.

(Matsepe 1968:38)

(How is this man talking? If a child arrives alone at an initiation school, after cross-questioning him about his parents, the owner of the school is supposed to send a message to his parents that says ‘don’t wander about towards a different place, rather direct your search here’.)

NP_{loc} **šopoding** in example (35) appears as NP_{loc} internal argument. It refers to a place whose identity is not relevant to the conversation; hence it is indefinite.

4.3.7 mmenyane

4.3.7.1 Morphology and derivation

Mmenyane has a variant form **nnyanyane**. Its derivation is not clear, though part of it resembles the diminutive suffix **-nyana(e)**. It is a class 1a noun since its plural takes the prefix of class 2b **bo-** < **bommenyane**, when it refers to persons. If it refers to things the normally expected prefix **di-** is usually not articulated, consistent with an option for other nouns in class 10.

4.3.7.2 Meaning

Mmenyane/nnyanyane means ‘so-and-so/what-you-call’. It is an unidentified human being, animal or thing.

4.3.7.3 Syntactic positions

Mmenyane/nnyanyane may appear in the following syntactic positions:

Object position

- (36) **Nke o mphe [nненыane] ke nyaka go tloga.**
(Please give me what-you-call I want to leave.)
- (37) **Maphodisa a mo swere ka gore o bethile [mmenyane].**
((The) police arrested him because he has beaten what-you-call.)

Subject position

- (38) (a) **[Nненыane] e wetše ka meetseng.**
(What-you-call fell into the water.)
- (b) **[Nненыane] yela e wetše ka meetseng.**
(That what-you-call fell into the water.)
- (39) (a) **[Mmenyane] o kae na?**
(Where is what-you-call?)
- (b) **Yola [mmenyane] o kae na?**
(Where is that what-you-call?)

The appearance of **mmenyane** in the subject position is usually, but not always, accompanied by a demonstrative. Although this section is concerned with unmodified nouns, the demonstrative is employed here to demonstrate the occurrence of **mmenyane** in the subject position. The hearer may not be in a position to make a unique identification of the referent but the accompanying demonstrative indicates that the referent is one of the things that the hearer may be familiar with. Precisely which one of the referents, it is not clear at the time of utterance. Without the demonstrative there is no suggestion that the hearer too may be aware of the existence of the referent.

Mmenyane/nnenyane can appear as the complement of **le**, **ke**, **ka**, **go**, **ga** and **a** in a prepositional phrase, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (40) **O sa tšo tloga [le [bommenyane/bonnenyane].**
(He has just left with what-you-call and company.)

- (41) **O tla se longwe [ke [nnyane] tšeo tša bona?**
(Will he not be bitten by those what-you-calls of them?)
- (42) **Ge ba sega ba ilalo ba bolela [ka [mnyane].**
(As they are laughing like they do they are talking about what-you-call.)
- (43) **Banenyana ba kgopetšwe go yo ba makgetla [ga [mnyane].**
(The) girls have been asked to go and be bridesmaids at so-and-so's place.)
- (44) **Ga a šie go šadiša bana [go [bomnyane] ge a eya maratapelo.**
(He is not afraid to leave (the) children with what-you-call and company when he goes where he pleases.)
- (45) **O se ke wa fetša maswi ao ba re ke [a [nnyane].**
(Do not finish that milk; it is said that it is for so-and-so.)

NP **mnyane/nnyane** is used when the speaker has forgotten the name of a particular referent, or for some reason he does not want it known. The NP represents unidentifiability. Pragmatic factors may override the basic interpretation, if both discourse participants are familiar with the referent but the speaker intends to conceal the identity to a third party. The NP is, therefore, incompatible with definiteness.

4.3.8 nnakotse

4.3.8.1 Morphology and derivation

(n)nakotse is a basic noun, with plural in class 2b **bonnakotse**, if it refers to persons. The final **e** manifests in some cases as **a**, yielding **(n)nakotsa**. The noun can appear in the diminutive form only when it ends on **a**, becoming **(n)nakotsane**.

4.3.8.2 Meaning

Like **mnyane/nnyane**, **(n)nakotse**'s semantic content implies 'unidentified person, animal or thing'. It is used as equivalent to 'so-and-so/what-you-call', the same as **mnyane/nnyane**.

4.3.8.3 Syntactic positions

(n)nakotse occupies the same syntactic positions as **mmenyane/nnenyane**, as illustrated below:

Object position

- (46) **Nke o mphe [nnakotse] ke nyaka go tloga.**
(Please give me what-you-call I want to leave.)
- (47) **Maphodisa a mo swere ka gore o bethile [nnakotse].**
(The) police arrested him because he has beaten what-you-call.)

Subject position

- (48) (a) **[Nnakotse] e wetše ka meetseng.**
(What-you-call fell into the water.)
- (b) **[Nnakotse] yela e wetše ka meetseng.**
(That what-you-call fell into the water.)
- (49) (a) **[Nnakotse] o kae na?**
(Where is what-you-call?)
- (b) **Yola [nnakotse] o kae na?**
(Where is that what-you-call?)

nnakotse can appear as the complement of **le**, **ke**, **ka**, **go**, **ga** and **a** in a prepositional phrase, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (50) **O sa tšo tloga le [bonnakotsane].**
(He has just left here with what-you-call and company.)
- (51) **O tla se longwe ke [nnakotsa] tšeo tša bona?**
(Will he not be bitten by those what-you-calls of them?)
- (52) **Ge ba sega ba ilalo ba bolela [ka [nnakotse].**
(As they are laughing like they do they are talking about what-you-call.)
- (53) **Banenyana ba kgopetšwe go yo ba makgetla [ga [nnakotsane].**
(The) girls have been asked to go and be bridesmaids at so-and-so's place.)
- (54) **Ga a šie go šadiša bana [go [bonnakotse] ge a eya maratapelo.**

(He is not afraid to leave (the) children with what-you-call and company when he goes where he/ she pleases.)

(55) **O se ke wa fetša maswi ao ba re ke [a [nnakotse].**

(Do not finish that milk; it is said that it is for so-and-so.)

Mmenyane/nnenyane and **(n)nakotse** are used by the speaker as a replacement for a noun that he cannot remember or that he deliberately withholds. At the time of utterance the addressee is not necessarily in a position to uniquely identify the referent of the NP. Both NPs are incompatible with definiteness.

4.3.9 tsoko and its compounds

4.3.9.1 tsoko

4.3.9.1.1 Morphology and derivation

Tsoko is a basic noun with diminutive form **tsokwana** > **tsoko** + **-ana**. Though the noun is structurally consistent with class 9, it never takes the plural form, ***ditsoko** or ***ditsokwana**, even if the speaker is making reference to ‘things’. This is no different from other nouns of class 10, which offer the option of ‘skipping’ the prefix.

4.3.9.1.2 Meaning

The word **tsoko** is entered in Mokgokong & Ziervogel (1975) as an *adverb*, meaning ‘somewhere’ or ‘out of the blue’. It is not clear whether the authors’ view of the meaning of the word is historically based or not. Although the dictionary entry is **tsoko** on its own, an illustration of the usage of the word is not given. All illustrations furnished in the dictionary are compound nouns. In everyday use of the language, though, **tsoko** functions as having reference to ‘a thing’ that is unidentified.

4.3.9.1.3 Syntactic positions

Syntactically **tsoko** occupies the post-verbal object position. The following sentences illustrate the occurrence of **tsoko**, and the indefiniteness of the noun phrase:

- (56) **Ba mo file [tsokwana] gore a gane go ba tlhatse molatong woo.**
(They gave him something in order for him to refuse to be a witness in that case.)
- (57) **Ka mokgwa wo a kotopanego o ka re ba mo tshepišitše [tsoko].**
(The way he is zealous – in whatever he is doing – it is as if he has been promised something.)

Tsoko cannot appear in the subject position; its appearance there will be ungrammatical in Northern Sotho:

- (58) **[*Tsoko] e wetše ka meetseng.**
(Something fell into the water.)
- (59) **[*Tsokwana] e na le meetlwa.**
(Something has thorns.)

It can also only appear as complement in a prepositional phrase with certain prepositions, as is illustrated in the following examples:

- (60) ***Malome o rekile pudi [ya [tsoko].**
(*Uncle bought something's goat.)
- (61) ***Bana ba gagwe ba ya [go [tsoko].**
(His children are going to something.)
- (62) **Ke nyaka go mmetha [ka [tsokwana].**
(I want to beat him with something.)
- (63) ***O reng o sa mo felegetše [ga [tsoko]?**
(Why don't you accompany him to something's place?)
- (64) **Mmabore o llišwa [ke [tsokwana].**
(Mmabore is crying because of something.)
- (65) **O tšwetše moketeng [le [tsokwana].**
(He returned from the wedding with something.)

Examples (60) – (65) reflect a certain preference with regard to the [±human] feature of **tsoko/tsokwana** as NP complement in a prepositional phrase. It does not occur comfortably within an environment where the complement is supposed to have a [+human] semantic feature, and rather prefers [-human] environments.

Tsoko is an indefinite noun in the sense that the identifiability of the referent is not expected. When a speaker uses **tsoko** or **tsokwana** he indicates to the hearer that he need not make a unique identification of the referent. The identity of the referent may not be important for the hearer at a particular moment in discourse. The referent may be familiar to the speaker and the hearer, but owing to certain pragmatic conditions the speaker may want to keep a third party in the dark about the referent. With **tsoko** identifiability is not relevant. **Tsoko** means ‘something’, and therefore does not, on its own, refer to a person or a place. Humorously, a character in a popular Northern Sotho television drama series from the past was named **Tsokwana**, fondly referred to as **Tso**.

4.3.9.2 Compound nouns with **tsoko**

4.3.9.2.1 Morphology and derivation

In a compound noun **tsoko** always appears as the second part.

4.3.9.2.2 Meaning

The meaning of **tsoko** in relation to indefiniteness was discussed at the end of 4.3.9.1 above. Compounded to a noun it modifies the first part of the compound, thereby resolving definite/indefinite ambiguities. There are no restrictions as far as the semantic features of the common noun that may be compounded with **tsoko** are concerned. A compound with **tsoko** could, therefore, refer not only to ‘a thing’, but also to unidentified person(s), animal(s) and place(s). Mokgokong & Ziervogel (1975:144) present the compounded meanings as follows: ‘*ngwetšanatsoko* (*any bride*); *monnatsoko* (*any man*)’. The interpretation of a compound with **tsoko** that the authors present is tested in the examples under 4.3.9.2.3, and it appears to mean ‘a certain’ rather than ‘any’.

4.3.9.2.3 Syntactic positions

Compounds with **tsoko** may appear in the following syntactic positions:

Object position

- (66) **Mosima o ikhweleditše [sekgalabjanatsoko] a se hlapiša.**
 (Mosima found herself a certain old man and bathed him.) --- i.e. she improved his state/appearance.
- (67) **Ke tla se re go fihla a nthekišetša [kolobetsoko] e bile e gwemehla!**
 (Did he not, when I got there, sell me a certain pig that was also pregnant!)
- (68) **O boletše [toropotsoko] nna ga ke sa e gopola.**
 (He mentioned a certain town; I do not remember it.)
- (69) A: **Le nyaka eng, Koko?**
 (What are you looking for, Grandmother?)
- B: **Thekgwana, ngwana' ngwanaka. Ke e beile [felwanatsoko] bjale ke gakilwe.**
 (The snuffbox, my grandchild. I put it somewhere/at a certain place and I cannot remember where.)

In example (69) **felwanatsoko** is the locative internal argument of the verb **ke e beile**.

Subject position

- (70) **[Lešilotsoko] le ntshwetše ka mare mo.**
 (A certain/some fool spat on me here.)
- (71) **[Selotsoko] se a ntshepela ka mo morago.**
 (A certain thing/something is crawling on my back.)
- (72) **[Mothotsoko] o ntlhabile ka ntaka ka mo thoko ye.**
 (A certain person is goggling at me from this direction.)

The constructions illustrated above are not as frequent as the post-verbal ones. The common appearance is the post-verbal one in the passive form. However, a speaker may prefer the preverbal position for the purpose of emphasis.

As complement in a prepositional phrase:

- (73) A: **O tšere kae leloba leo?**
 (Where did you get that flower?)
- B: **Ke le filwe [ke [monnatsoko] kua mabenkeleng.**
 (It was given to me by a certain man at the shops.)

- (74) **Mma o išitše Malose sepetlele – o lomilwe [ke [selotsoko].**
(Mother took Malose to the hospital – he has been bitten by something/a certain thing.)
- (75) **Mahodu ao a mabe a mo hlabile [ka [selotsoko] le ntho ga e bonale.**
(Those evil thieves stabbed him with something; the wound is not even visible.)
- (76) **Ba re e tlo tla [le [bannatsoko] go tšwa motseng woo.**
(They say it will come with certain men from that village.)
- (77) **Ka mokgwa wo Malepe a se nago dihlong, matšatši a ba re o dula [ga [monnatsoko] kua Mogoto.**
(The way Malepe is not ashamed, these days they say he lives at a certain man's home at Mogoto.)
- (78) **Ka botlatla bjo bja gagwe o ile ge a eya ntlwaneng a šia lesea leo [go [mosaditsoko] gona moo sepetlele.**
(Because of his stupidity, when he went to the loo he left the infant with a certain woman at the hospital.)

The speaker in (66) refers to an old man that he either knows personally or has heard about, and that the hearer is clearly being newly introduced to. The referent is indefinite but specific; and cannot be interpreted as 'any'. The same applies to (67). The speaker has a particular pig in mind that he is referring to. It is hard to find any evidence that a compound noun with **tsoko** implies 'any'. What Ziervogel & Mokgokong manage to capture with regard to the interpretation of these compounds is the indefiniteness brought in by **tsoko**.

A locative meaning is attained only if **tsoko** is compounded to locative noun **felo** (place) i.e. **felotsoko** (a certain place) or diminutive **felwanatsoko**. Other locative nouns such as **fase** (down), **morago** (at the back), **godimo** (up), **mošono** (this side), **mošola** (that side), etc. cannot compound with **tsoko** to be ***fasetso**, ***moragotsoko**, ***godimotsoko**, ***mošonotsoko**, ***mošolatsoko**. This seems to be the case because **felo** (place) is an unspecified locality whilst the latter locative nouns refer to specified localities.

If Grandma in (69) had put her snuffbox **fase**, **morago**, **godimo**, etc., it would not be 'a certain place' or 'somewhere', and she would not be searching.

Tsoko accords the unidentifiability to the compound, making it indefinite.

4.3.10 Nouns with stem **-kete**

4.3.10.1 Morphology and derivation

-kete is a basic nominal stem. It may appear with prefixes of classes 1, 7 and 14 to narrow down on the type of thing being talked about. Class 1 prefix **mo-** indicates that the referent is a person, while class 7 **se-** is indicative of a thing and class 14 **bo-** of place (the indefinite seems to be the only context where class 14 prefix **bo-** indicates locality, and not the conventional classes 16-18; cf. also **bofengfeng**, **boratapelo** in subsections 4.3.2 and 4.3.5, respectively). The plural of class 1 **mokete** is class 2a **bomokete**. Class 7 **sekete** takes plural class 8 **dikete**, whilst class 14 **bokete** has no plural counterpart. It is also common practice to reduplicate the stem i.e. **mokete(kete)** (so-and-so/someone), **sekete(kete)** (such and such a thing/something) or **bokete(kete)** (somewhere/such and such a place).

4.3.10.2 Diminutive

The diminutive is formed by suffix **-ana**, and owing to morpho-phonological processes the final **e** becomes **i**, yielding **-ketiana** < **-kete** + **-ana**.

4.3.10.3 Meaning

The nominal stem **-kete** expresses something, someone or somewhere unspecified, unknown or unidentified.

4.3.10.4 Syntactic positions

The following examples illustrate the appearance of nouns with **-kete** in the object position:

(79) **Le ge a se a hlwa letšatši ka moka; o dirile [sekete].**

(Even if he did not spend the whole day, he did something.)

- (80) **O tllile a lekeleditše diatla, ge ba re mongatse wola o kae a re 'ke o lebetše [boketeketiana]'**.

(He came empty handed and when asked where the hat was he said, 'I forgot it at such-and-such a place'.)

NP with **-kete** in (80) has a locative interpretation.

The situation as regards the subject position is illustrated in the following examples:

- (81) **O re [moketekete] o mo adimile dieta maabane.**

(He says so-and-so lent him shoes yesterday.)

- (82) ***[Mokete] o mphile lengwalo.**

(So-and-so gave me a/the letter.)

- (83) ***[Boketeketiana] go a fiša.**

(Such-and-such a place/somewhere is hot.)

In example (81) NP with **-kete** follows a verbal phrase with **-re**, to indicate that the speaker is in some way familiar with the referent. The speaker became familiar with the referent from the subject of **-re**, and he may either have forgotten the name or not have heard it properly in the first place. Although familiarity with the speaker is suggested the information is new to the hearer, which makes the NP indefinite. In a traditional childrens' game, played normally by little girls, called **banana** or **boMmasekitlana** there is a character called **Mokete**. In that context example (82) would be an appropriate utterance, but the subject NP will not be indefinite, since it will be functioning as a proper name.

NP with **-kete** can appear in prepositional phrases as complement. The following examples illustrate this usage:

- (84) **Koloi ya gona o re o e filwe [ke [moketekete].**

(The car in question he says was given to him by so-and-so.)

- (85) **Selo seo se bothata kudu; ba re ba se bofolla [ka [seketeketiana].**

(That thing is too tight; they say they unscrew it with something.)

- (86) **Mmagwe o re o mo tlogetše [ga [moketekete].**

(His mother says she left him at so-and-so's place.)

- (87) **Mmagwe o re o mo tlogetše [go [moketekete].**
(His mother says she left him with so-and-so.)
- (88) **Ke kwele ba re Lesiba o ratana [le [moketekete].**
(I heard that Lesiba is in love with so-and-so.)
- (89) **Nna re šia go e swara; akere ba re ke [ya [moketekete].**
(We are scared of touching it; isn't it they say it belongs to so-and-so?)
- (90) **Lehono ke mosadi ebile ke [mmago [mokete].**
(She is now a woman and even someone's mother.)

Example (90) brings in another form of possession, viz. inalienable possession. Although the referent of **mokete** in (90) is unfamiliar, the scope is narrower, in the sense that the possessor is known.

As a nominal stem **-kete** carries indefinite interpretation, signalling that unique identification is neither important nor relevant. Interesting to note is that in all examples but (79) and (90) NP with **-kete** is preceded by a verbal phrase with **-re**. This situation is a result of the fact that usually NP with **-kete** occupies a place in the speaker's mind. The speaker would be familiar with the referent but either has forgotten the name, did not hear it well or simply decides to keep it unidentified.

4.3.11` Interrogative words mang, eng, kae

4.3.11.1 Morphology and derivation

Mang, **eng** and **kae** are basic interrogative words. **Mang** is a noun of class 1a and its plural is **bomang**, class 2b. **Eng** appears sometimes, rarely, as **dieng** class 8/10 in the case where the speaker is aware of the plurality of the unknown referent. **Kae** always appears in this form.

4.3.11.2 Meaning

Ziervogel (1969:119) points out that the interrogative is not a part of speech itself, but that interrogatives belong to a variety of parts of speech. **Mang** (who) is a noun that refers to persons. Interrogative **(di)eng** (what) functions in the same way as **mang**, except that the referent questioned by **eng** always has the semantic feature [-human]. **Eng** is sometimes

shortened to **ng. Kae** (where) is a locative adverb. The interrogatives express unidentified person(s), thing(s) and place(s), respectively.

4.3.11.3 Syntactic positions

(a) Interrogative **mang**

Syntactically **mang** can appear in the object position, as in examples (91) and (92) below:

(91) **‘O reng wena Monokomaropana?’**

‘Rena re melatela kgoši ya ka.’

‘O re rena – ke wena [le [mang]?’

‘Ke tla tseba bjang tau rabatho?’

‘Le latela [mang] goba [bomang]?’

(Matsepe 1968:77)

(‘What do you say, Monokomaropana?’

‘We are followers, my king.’

‘You say you (pl.) – you (sg.) and who?’

‘How will I know, my Lord?’

Who (sg.) or who (pl.) are you (pl.) following?’)

(92) **‘Phetedi e le ngaka ya kgale ya marumo, yo a sa tshepego yena o tla tshepa [mang]?’**

(Matsepe 1968:96)

(Phetedi is an old war doctor, if one does not trust him, whom will you trust?)

Mang may appear alone as in the following two examples:

(93) **‘E lego mogwera wa gago o kae a sa hlwe a bonala?’**

‘[Mang]?’

‘Sohlang.’

‘O ntshe, ga a ntshe.’

(Matsepe 1968:7)

(‘How is your friend? - he is scarce.’

Who?’

‘Sohlang.’

‘He is so-so / well, but not so well.’)

The speaker in example (93) wants to know which friend of his is being referred to.

(94) **'Ge ke mmotšiša ke motho yo a bolelago gore morwediate yo a nyetšwego ke Leilane, o iteilwe ke yena Leilane maabane a ntshe.'**

'O be a le mo.'

'[Mang]?'

'Leilane.'

(Matsepe 1968:21)

('When I asked him he said my daughter who is married to Leilane had been beaten by Leilane the previous day.'

'He was here.'

Who?

'Leilane.')

It should be noted that in Northern Sotho pro-AgrS is not marked for masculinity or femininity, but for nominal class and number. Hence the speaker's enquiry in example (94) above may concern either a male or a female person. In this case there are three possible referents, i.e. Leilane, his wife or his mother-in-law. Hence the speaker should find out who of the three had come there the previous day.

The appearance of **mang** in the subject position becomes ungrammatical. To this effect Demuth & Harford (1999), in remarking about Southern Sotho and Bantu languages in general, point out that grammatical subjects in Spec-IP cannot be questioned except when they appear as echo questions or in a cleft sentence. The phrase contained in the cleft sentence in this case will be a relative construction. The following examples illustrate the ungrammaticality of **mang** in the subject position of a sentence, as well as the points made by Demuth & Harford (op. cit.):

(95) ***[Mang] o file bana dinamune?**

(Who gave (the) children (the) oranges?)

(96) ***[Bomang] ba file bana dinamune?**

(Who gave (the) children (the) oranges?)

As an example of an echo question where **mang** may appear in the subject position, the questions in examples (95) and (96) above would be correct if they occur in a similar context to the following one:

- (97) A: **Maiša o be a le mo a re wena o mo rogile.**
 B: **[Mang] o be a le mo?**
 A: **Maiša, ka nama.**
 (A: Maiša was here saying that you insulted him.
 B: WHO³ was here?
 A: Maiša, in person.)

The following examples illustrate the occurrence of **mang** in a cleft sentence that contains a relative clause:

- (98) **Ke [bomang] ba filego bana dinamune?**
 (Who is it that gave (the) children oranges?)
- (99) **Ke [bomang] ba le ba letilego?**
 (Who is it that you are waiting for?)
- (100) **'Ngwana yoo o dutše bogadi bjalo ka betši ka moka, ya re letšatši le lengwe ge ba etšwa legogweng, a ipega gore o swerwe ke phefo. Phefo e hlwa e swara mang le mang, ke [mang] yo a bego a gopola gore go tlile go befa?'**
 (Matsepe 1968:40)
 (The child stayed at her in-laws like all daughters-in-law. Then one day after making love she reported that she was feeling cold. As feeling cold is for everyone, who is it that would have thought it was going to be bad?)

Another alternative appearance of **mang** is as a right dislocated subject, which is illustrated below:

- (101) ***[Mang] o a tseba?**
 (Who knows?)
- (102) **'Afaeya?'**
'Re kwa ka mabarebare.'
'Ba tsebanela kae baetapele bao?'

'Go tseba [mang]?'

'Ba boletše neng, ba kwewa [ke [mang]]?'

Matsepe 1968:81)

('Is it?')

'We hear through the grapevine.'

'Where do the two leaders know each other from?'

'Who knows?'

'When did they talk, and by whom were they heard?')

Mang may also appear in prepositional phrases as NP complement. The last sentence of example (102) above and example (103) below illustrate the occurrence of **mang** in a passive sentence as complement of agentive **ke**:

(103) **'Mphe peu.'**

'Aowa! E tla hlagolelwa [ke [mang]]? '

(Matsepe 1968:77)

('Give me a/the seed.'

'Oh no! By whom will it be hoed (cared for)?')

Other prepositional phrases:

(104) **'Taba tše bohloko tše o di kwa [ka [mang]]?**

(Whom did you hear this bad news from?)

(105) **Ga ke tsebe gore ke tla ya [le [mang] toropong gosasa.**

(I do not know whom I will go to town with tomorrow.)

(106) **Ka mehla le iša dinotlelo [go [mang]]?**

(Usually whom do you take the keys to?)

(107) **Malope o tla tlogela dikatse [ga [mang] ge a eya maeto?**

(At whose home will Malope leave the cats when he goes to visit?)

(108) **Na o apere hempe [ya [mang] nke o molwetši?**

(Whose shirt are you wearing, looking like a patient?)

The following example, which constitutes a common introductory line in traditional poetry, also illustrates the occurrence of **mang** as complement of **ke**:

(109) '**Kgomo e a tsha!**'

'**E gangwa [ke [mang]]?**'

'**E gangwa ke nna ...**'

(Matsepe 1968:75)

(Lit. 'the cow spits' --- pronouncement that the poet is burning with desire to praise.

'By whom is it being milked?'

'It is being milked by me ...')

In the case of praise poetry, the response to **mang** is the identity of the praise poet. It is a way in which the poet introduces himself and owns up to whatever he says in the poem. In the context of praise poetry the question only calls for a declaration of the identity of the known referent. This does not however pre-empt the indefiniteness of **mang** as a noun phrase.

Mang represents the unknown, and it requires unique identification of the referent. Therefore, the response is a definite NP such as a proper noun or an explanatory phrase. As a noun phrase **(bo)mang** has an indefinite interpretation since it interrogates the identity of the referent — a definite noun phrase cannot be interrogated.

(b) Interrogative **eng**

Like **mang**, **eng** does not occupy the subject position, unless it appears in an echo question or a cleft sentence. **Eng** may appear as an inverted subject, as the following examples illustrate:

(110) ***[Eng] e wetše ka meetseng?**

(111) ***[Eng] e robegile?**

(112) **[Ke [eng] ye e wetšego ka meetseng?**

(What is it that fell into the water?)

(113) **Go lla [eng]?**

OR shortened

Go [llang]?

(What cries?)

The construction illustrated in (110) and (111) is ungrammatical in Northern Sotho, unless it is an echo question.

Eng may appear in the object position as illustrated in the following examples:

- (114) (a) **Papago o go file [eng] maabane?**
 (b) **Papago o go [fileng] maabane?**
 (What did your father give you yesterday?)
- (115) **Na o ja [eng]?**
 (What are you eating?)

In the following examples **eng** appears in a PP as the complement of **ka**; it can also be shortened to **ng** and written conjunctively with the preposition to become **kang**:

- (116) A: **Bakgekolo ba tla šeba [ka [eng]?** OR
Bakgekolo ba tla šeba [kang]?
 (What will (the) old ladies eat as accompaniment for staple food?)
- B: **Ba tla šeba ka nama.**
 (They will eat meat with it.)

eng may appear in a PP as complement of **a**:

- (117) A: **Ke kgomo [ya [eng]?**
 (What gender head of cattle is it?)
- B: **Ya tshadi.**
 (A female one.) --- i.e. a cow
- (118) A: **Ke ntlo [ya [eng]?**
 (What type of house is it?) --- i.e. type of roof
- B: **Ya (ma)bjang.**
 (Of thatch.)
- (119) A: **Ke ntlo [ya [eng]?**
 (For what is the house?)
- B: **Ya mpša.**
 (For a/the dog.)

eng as complement of **ke**:

- (120) A: **O lomilwe [ke [eng]]?**
 /By what have you been bitten?/
 (What bit you?)
 B: **Ke mpša.**
 (By a/the dog.)

The question in (120) can be asked as in (121) and (122), with **eng** appearing in a cleft sentence:

- (121) **Ke [eng] se se go lomilego?**
 (What is it that bit you?)
 (122) **Ke [eng] ye e go lomilego?**
 (What is it that bit you?)

Note the options in terms of agreement morphology – class 7 or 9 – in examples (121) and (122).

eng as complement of **go**:

- (123) **O tla re go di apola wa di fega [go [eng]]?**
 (After taking them off on what will you hang them?)
 (124) **Na malome o tla dula [go [eng] ka gore pankana yela e robegile?**
 (On what will uncle sit because that small bench is broken?)

eng as complement of **le**:

- (125) **Na Malesa maabane o tlile [le [eng]]?**
 (What did Malesa bring yesterday?) --- with what?
 (126) **Ke nyaka go bona gabotse gore mpša e lwa [le [eng]].**
 (I want to see properly what a/the dog is fighting with.)

eng does not appear with **ga** as head because the complement of **ga** must have the feature [+human].

(c) Interrogative **kae**

Like **mang** and **eng**, **kae** does not occupy the subject position, unless it appears in an echo question or a cleft sentence. **Kae** may also appear as inverted subject. The following examples illustrate this matter:

(127) *[**Kae**] go a hlohlonga?

(Where is itching?)

(128) *[**Kae**] go robegile?

(Where is broken?)

(129) [**Ke [kae] mo go hlohlongo?**

(Where is it where it is itching?)

(130) **Go robegile [kae]?**

(Where is broken?)

(131) **Go hlohlonga [kae]?**

(Where is itching?)

The construction illustrated in (127) and (128) is ungrammatical in Northern Sotho, unless it is an echo question, as explained under **mang**.

Kae may appear in the complement or adjunct position as illustrated in the following examples:

(132) **Bana ba tla robala [kae] pula e ena bjalo?**

(Where will (the) children sleep while it is raining like this?)

(133) **Le tlo re go bofa dingata tša gona la di fihla [kae]?**

(After binding the bundles of wood in question where are you going to hide them?)

Kae may not appear in a prepositional phrase as the complement of **go** and **ga**. In the following examples **kae** appears with specified locatives **ka** and **mo**:

(134) **Morutiši o rile re bee dipuku [ka [kae]?**

(Inside what did the teacher say we should put the books?)

(135) **Morutiši o rile re bee dipuku [mo [kae]?**

(Where did the teacher say we should put the books?)

Kae in a PP as the complement of **a**:

(136) **Le re ke sekepe [sa [kae]?**

(Of what place do you say the ship is?)

(137) **Ngwanenyana yo wa lebelo ke [wa [kae]?**

(Of what place is this fast girl?) --- i.e. fast in running.

Kae in a PP as the complement of **ke**:

(138) **Rangwane o tennwe [ke [kae]?**

(Where is uncle bored with?)

(139) **Ngwana yo o re o hlohlonwa [ke [kae]?**

(Where does this child say he is itching?)

It is evident that interrogatives **mang**, **eng** and **kae** represent unidentifiable referents, and that they indicate indefinite reference.

4.3.12 Coordinated interrogative words mang le mang, eng le eng, kae le kae

4.3.12.1 Morphology and derivation

The three coordinated modifiers are derived from the interrogatives **mang**, **eng** and **kae**, respectively. They can be coordinated with **le** or with **kapa**.

4.3.12.2 Meaning

The basic meaning of the interrogatives is the one discussed under 4.3.11.2 above, viz. unidentifiable reference. Coordination with **le** can take another interpretation that is inclusive and hence definite, as explained in chapter three. Coordination with **kapa**, however, does not have the other interpretation. For instance, **mang kapa mang** means 'any person' whilst **mang le mang** may mean either 'anybody' or 'everybody'. This section deals only with the indefinite interpretation of coordinated interrogatives.

4.3.12.3 Syntactic positions

Coordinated interrogatives may appear in the following syntactic positions:

(a) Coordinated **mang**:

mang kapa mang; mang le mang (anybody/any person) can appear in the subject position, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (140) **[Mang le mang] a ka apea khabetšhe ya jega.**
(Anyone can cook cabbage in such a way that it becomes eatable.)
- (141) **[Mang le mang] yo a nago le tthaologanyo ye e bulegilego – a ka bona gore taba ye e entshe.**
(Matsepe 1968:106)
(Any person with a clear mind can see that this issue exists.)

Object position

- (142) **O e fe [mang kapa mang].**
(Give it to anyone.)
- (143) **Ge o na le lerato o tla kganyogela [mang le mang] katlego.**
(If you have love you will wish anyone success.)
- (144) **Ke morara kudu mo a nogo seba [mang kapa mang].**
(He is such a gossipmonger that he just gossips about anyone.)

Coordinated **mang** may appear in prepositional phrases as the complement of the prepositions **ka, ke, le, go, ga** and **a**, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (145) **Ke morara kudu mo a nogo bolela [ka [mang kapa mang].**
(He is such a gossipmonger that he just talks about anyone.)
- (146) **Pheladi ge a selekile ga a tšwafe go humela [ka [mang kapa mang].**
(When she has been naughty Pheladi is never hesitant in seeking protection from anyone.)

- (147) **Ngwana wa gona le go apeelwa ga a apeelwe; o iphepelwa [ke [mang le mang].**
(The child in question is not even cooked for; he is just fed by anyone.)
- (148) **Yoo ga a šie bomaemae; o tloga [le [mang le mang] yo a tlogo ka mmotoro.**
(That one is not afraid of ritual murderers; he leaves with anyone that comes in a motorcar.)
- (149) **Ge a šetše a gopotše makgasemane a ka lahla ngwana [go [mang kapa mang].**
(When he really craves illegally brewed beer he can dump a/the baby on anyone.)
- (150) **Segatamorokwana seo le go kgetha ga se kgethe; se nwa [ga [mang le mang].**
(The/that drunkard does not even choose; he drinks at anyone's place.)

Coordinated **mang** is not concerned about the identity of the referent.

(b) Coordinated **eng**

Eng kapa eng; eng le eng (anything) can appear in the subject position, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (151) **[Eng le eng] ye le e lokišitšeng e lokile.**
(Anything that you have prepared is fine.)
- (152) **[Eng kapa eng] ge e tšhetšwe letswai e a tsefa.**
(Anything when seasoned with salt is delicious.)

Object position

- (153) **Wa ka ga a na bothata; le ka mo fa [eng le eng] o tla no itšela.**
(Mine does not have a problem; you may offer him anything he will just eat.)
- (154) **O je [eng kapa eng]; go sego bjalo o tla hwa ka tlala.**
(You should eat anything, otherwise you will die of hunger.)

Eng kapa eng; eng le eng may appear in prepositional phrases as the complement of prepositions **ka, ke, le, go** and **a**, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (155) **O se ke wa tshwenyega ka foroko; nna ke ja [ka [eng kapa eng].**
(Do not worry about a/the fork; I eat with anything.)
- (156) **Ngwana o thabišwa [ke [eng le eng].**
(A/the child is pleased by anything.)
- (157) **O se ke wa tšwela mo o lekeleditše diatla; le ge o ka no tla [le [eng kapa eng] molato o ka se be gona.**
(You should not come here empty-handed; even if you bring anything there will be no problem.)
- (158) **Ge mphego o tletše le ka di fega [go [eng kapa eng] ka moo ntlong.**
(If the hanger is full you may hang them on anything in the house.)

Coordinated **eng** cannot appear as complement of **ga** because the NP complement of **ga** must have the feature [+human]. Reference with coordinated **eng** does not involve the unique identifiability of the referent.

(c) Coordinated **kae**

kae kapa kae; kae le kae (any place) can appear in the subject position, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (159) **[Kae le kae] go a robalega ge o lahlegile.**
(Anywhere/any place is sleepable when you are stranded.)
- (160) **[Kae kapa kae] go lokile.**
(Any place/anywhere is fine.)

Complement

- (161) **Manthe ge a selekegile o ikela [kae kapa kae] go fodiša monagano.**
(When Manthe is irritated she just goes anywhere/to any place to calm down.)

- (162) **Aowi, ngwana wa batho! Ga a na ntlo; o no tšama a ithobalela [kae le kae].**

(Shame, poor soul! He does not have a house; he goes about sleeping anywhere.)

Kae le kae; **kae kapa kae** may also appear in prepositional phrases as the complement of prepositions **ke** and **a**, and is not compatible with other prepositions. The following examples illustrate this point:

- (163) **Batho ba go ithata ga ba kgotsofatšwe [ke [kae le kae]; ba kgetha mafelo a a hlwekilego.**

(Neat people are not satisfied with anywhere; they choose clean places.)

- (164) **Rena ka gore ga re tsebe dinamune gabotse re no reka [tša [kae kapa kae].**

(Because we do not know (the) oranges that well we buy (those) of anywhere.) --- from any place.

Coordinated **kae** lacks the unique identifiability of the locality spoken about, and is therefore indefinite. All three interrogatives **mang**, **eng** and **kae** retain their indefiniteness reading even in coordinated forms.

4.3.13 Nouns with -kae

4.3.13.1 Prefixes

Morphology and derivation

Interrogative **-kae** may appear as a nominal stem. The prefixes that it may take are classes 1 **mo-**, 2 **ba-** and 7 **se-**. A noun with **-kae** need not agree with its head. Whenever the referent is a person or persons, **-kae** takes prefix **mo-** for singulars and **ba-** for plurals (classes 1 and 2 are semantically general classes of persons), irrespective of the nominal class of the head noun. If the referent is a language, the prefix **se-** is used.

4.3.13.2 Meaning

The initial interrogative interpretation is carried on into nouns with **-kae**. When nominal stem **-kae** appears with prefix **mo-** it is used to enquire about a person's origin in terms of country or nationality; while with **se-** the enquiry concerns language. The head noun need not be overtly present in the sentence; the prefix alone suffices to indicate whether the referent is a person or a language.

4.3.13.3 Syntactic positions

Nouns with **-kae** appear in the object position and never as subject. The following examples illustrate the occurrence of nouns with **-kae** in the object position:

(165) **Na o bolela [sekae]?**

(What language do you speak?)

(166) **Na Malesela o nyetše [mokaе]?**

/Malesela married a person of what country/nationality?/

(Of what country or nationality is Malesela's wife?)

If the head noun appears in the same clause **-kae** may appear as the complement of the copula **ke**. The following examples illustrate this:

(167) **Na ngwetši ya gago [ke [mokaе]?**

/Your daughter-in-law is a person of what country/nationality?/

(Of what country/nationality is your daughter-in-law?)

(168) **Lephodisa le le swerego batho mo maabane [ke [mokaе]?**

(Of what country/nationality is the policeman that arrested (the) people here yesterday?)

(169) **Le re bašomi ba mo polaseng ye [ke [bakaе]?**

(By the way, of what country/nationality are the workers of this farm?)

(170) **Polelo ye [ke [sekaе]?**

(What language is this?)

Nouns with **-kae** are ungrammatical in the subject position, as the following examples illustrate:

(171) ***[Mokae] o šoma polaseng ye?**

(172) ***[Sekae] se bolelwa ke mang?**

However, they can appear in a cleft sentence as illustrated in the following examples:

(173) **Ga se ka kwa gabotse gore ke [mokae] yo a kgethilwego.**

(I did not hear well the nationality/country of origin of the one that has been elected.)

(174) **O a tseba, ga ke mo kwešiše; ga ke tsebe gore ke [sekae] se a se bolelago.**

(You know, I don't understand him; I do not know what language it is that he is speaking.)

-kae does not function structurally like an adjective stem. For instance, the following phrases are ungrammatical:

(175) ***Monna [yo [mokae].**

(176) ***Polelo [ye [sekae].**

If a demonstrative or possessive with **gona** appears with the subject NP, **-kae** is preceded by copula **ke**, as illustrated in the following examples and example (170) above:

(177) **Monna wa gona [ke [mokae]?**

(Of what nationality/country is the man in question?)

(178) **Setlatla se [ke [mokae]?**

(Of what nationality/country is this fool?)

It has been established in the previous chapter that a possessive with locative **gona/ntshe** functions like a demonstrative in terms of according definite reference to the noun phrase. What is unidentifiable in the case of nouns with **-kae**, however, is not the referent of the head noun but the country from which the referent of the head noun originates. **-kae** with **se-** indicates that a language needs to be identified.

With prefix **mo-**, the modifier has an overlapping interpretation with **mohlobo mang** (cf. section 4.4.2). Whilst **mohlobo mang** enquires about nationality or tribal affiliation, **mokae** enquires basically about locality, i.e. country of origin. There is, however, a fine line between country of origin and nationality, hence the overlap. The overlap is illustrated in examples (179) and (180) below:

(179) A: **Na moeng wa gago ke [mohlobo [mang]]?**
(What nationality/tribal group is your guest?)

B: **Ke Moshona.**
(He is Shona.)

(180) A: **Na moeng wa gago ke [mokae]?**
(Of what country is your guest?)

B: **Ke MoZimbabwe.**
(He is Zimbabwean)

In the case of (180), the response in (179) would still be appropriate because it is common knowledge that the Shona people are from Zimbabwe or that Zimbabwe is the country with the largest population of Shona people.

Modifier with **-kae** has indefinite reference. It indicates that a locality/nationality or language is not uniquely identifiable.

4.3.14 semangmang

4.3.14.1 Morphology and derivation

Semangmang has its origin in interrogative **mang**. The noun **(se)mangmang** (so-and-so/what's his name/somebody/someone) can appear in the singular with or without the prefix **se-**, i.e. it can be **mangmang** or **semangmang**. With or without prefix **se-** its plural takes the prefix of class 2b **bo-**, consistent with proper and kinship nouns. The plural will be either **bomangmang** or **bosemangmang**. Both variants, either in the singular or plural, can be used with the diminutive suffix **-ana** (which can also variably end with **e** instead of **a**) to yield **mangmanyana/mangmanyane**, with plurals **bomangmanyana/bomangmanyane** or **semangmanyana/semangmanyane** with plurals **bosemangmanyana/bosemangmanyane**.

4.3.14.2 Meaning

NP **(se)mangmang** refers to a person that need not be identified. Usually someone else would have revealed the identity of the referent, which is in this case the proper name, to the speaker. The speaker may either have forgotten the name or deliberately withholds this identity. The identity of the referent of **(se)mangmang** is not known to the hearer; therefore the noun phrase is indefinite.

4.3.14.3 Syntactic positions

Semangmang may appear in the object position as illustrated by the following sentences:

- (181) **Puku ya gona ba re ba e file [semangmang].**
 (The book in question they say they gave to so-and-so.)
- (182) **Moshe o re o bone [semangmang], a mo fa yona.**
 (Moshe says he saw so-and-so, and he gave it to him.)

In the subject position **semangmang** appears in two ways. It is usually preceded by the verbal phrase AgrS-**re** (say) to show that the speaker's familiarity with the referent is obtained from someone else. The speaker may have heard the name and either forgotten it or deliberately conceals the identity of the referent. If **semangmang** in the subject position is not preceded by AgrS-**re** (say), it is usually echoing the original utterance that had been preceded by the phrase. The following examples illustrate the two appearances of **semangmang** as explained above:

- (183) **Ba re [semangmanyana] o ba file ditloo.**
 (They say so-and-so gave them jugo beans.)
- (184) ***[Semangmang] o bolela kudu.**
 (So-and-so talks too much.)
- (185) ***[Semangmang] o na le leoto le tee.**
 (So-and-so has one leg.)

(184) & (185) are appropriate if they echo originals in the form of (183), as in the following excerpt:

(186) 'Go fihla motho a etša lena ge le ilale. Mola a fihlago, o re hwetša re nwela kgorong, aowa, o a tamiša, go hloka molato, e bile ba mo gela mekgopu e se mekae.'

'Ke theeditše.'

'Mola a fetšago, o re na [semangmang] ke ofe.'

'[Semangmang] ke ofe.'

'Anthe motho yo o romilwe.'

'Anthe motho yo o romilwe.'

'Sebakeng sa gore wena o mang, o tšwa kae, o mo nyakelang le go mo tseba o sa mo tsebe – ba re šo.'

'Ba re šo.'

(Matsepe 1968:56-7)

'There arrived a person like you do now. When arriving he finds us drinking at the *kgoro*. He greets without any problem, they even offer him several helpings (of beer).'

'I am listening.'

'After finishing, he says which one is so-and-so?'

'Which one is so-and-so?'

'This person has been sent.'

'This person has been sent.'

'Instead of saying who are you, where do you come from, why do you want him while you don't even know him – they say here is he.'

'Here is he.'

In the excerpt above the speaker narrates an incident that has previously happened in his presence. It involved two people; one came to look for another. The first appearance of **semangmang** follows **o re** (he says) and a question word **na**. The second appearance, which is at the beginning of the sentence, is an echo statement. The speaker is familiar with both characters, but he chooses to use **motho** (a person) for the first one and **semangmang** (so-and-so) for the second one, for the purpose of this discourse, because he does not find their identities relevant to the addressee and/or for this discourse. The purpose of the speaker in employing this form of narration is to highlight the consequences of identifying a person to another or making them meet without knowing why he should be identified or why they should meet. The identity of the persons in his story is not important, and therefore the speaker uses indefinite referencing strategies.

(Se)mangmang can also appear in prepositional phrases as complement. In the following example NP **semangmang** appears in a PP as complement of **a** and **ga-**, respectively:

- (187) **Seo se be se hlola gore ge wa mohuta woo a na le morero, ba bangwe ba se ke ba etla ka noši, ba romele metseta ya bona, ka pelong ba re afa nna morwa [wa [semanmang], nka tloge ke etšwa mafogohlo ke re ke ya monyanyeng [ga [semangmang]]?**

(Matsepe 1968:64)

(That was causing that when such a person had a feast, others would not come themselves, they would send their representatives. In their hearts they would say would I, so-and-so's son, really suffer 'painful inner thighs as a result of friction' going to celebrate a feast at so-and-so's place?)

It so happens that the appearance of the NP in the excerpt above is also preceded by AgrS **-re: ba re** and **ke re**. In the excerpt above the narrator is commenting about certain types of people whom he likens to Nthumule in terms of their disrespect for fellow people and for their culture as a result of pride, lack of cooperation and being stingy, whilst keen to benefit from others. He remarks that when such people need support and cooperation one day, they are most likely not to receive it. The speaker's choice of NP **semangmang** indicates to the addressee that he should not bother to make a unique identification.

Other prepositions can also appear with **semangmang** as illustrated below:

- (188) **Ga ke mo kwe gabotse, o ka re o re o gahlane [le [semangmang]].**
(I do not hear him well, I think he says he met someone.)
- (189) **Ba swere puku ye koto ba re ba e adimilwe [ke [semangmanyane]].**
(They have a thick book; they say it was lent to them by so-and-so.)
- (190) **Ka mehla ge a eya meletlong ya bošego o re o tlogela ngwana [go [semangmang]].**
(All the time when he goes to evening functions he says he leaves a/the child with so-and-so.)
- (191) **Ka mehla ge a eya meletlong ya bošego o re o tlogela ngwana [ga [semangmang]].**
(All the time when he goes to evening functions he says he leaves a/the child at so-and-so's place.)

(192) **Re tla ka ra tseba nnete? Le yena ga a tsebe o re ba re di tlile [ka [bosemangmanyana].**

(Will we ever know the truth? He also does not know and says they say they heard from so-and-so and company.) --- Lit. came with so-and-so and company.

When the speaker uses **(se)mangmang/(se)mangmanyana(e)** he deliberately signals to the addressee that he does not expect him to uniquely identify the referent. It is being made clear that the unique identifiability of the referent is not relevant for that particular discourse. Therefore, **(se)mangmang** is regarded as an indefinite noun phrase.

4.3.15 **kaekae**

4.3.15.1 **Morphology and derivation**

Indefinite NP_{loc} **(bo)kaekae** (somewhere) is a reduplicated derivative from the interrogative **kae** (where). As part of this indefinite noun **kae** can never be used in the non-reduplicated form. It can function with or without the prefix **bo-**. It has been indicated in 4.3.10 above that in the case of indefinite noun phrases **bo-** functions as a locative prefix. In the case of **(bo)kaekae** (somewhere), though, the prefix becomes optional as there is no possibility of using the stem with another prefix for the purpose of non-locative indefinite reference.

4.3.15.2 **Meaning**

As an interrogative **kae** questions the unknown, and this semantic content has been carried over to the formation of NP **(bo)kaekae**. **Kaekae** refers to an unidentified place. **Kaekae** can only be used to indicate locative indefiniteness.

4.3.15.3 **Syntactic positions**

Kaekae can appear in the following syntactic positions:

The complement position

(193) **Re sa ya [bokaekae].**

(We are still going somewhere.)

- (194) **Ba e tlogetše [kaekae].**
 (They left it at such and such a place.)

Example (195) below illustrates the appearance of **kaekae** in the subject position. It illustrates reference to a particular place the name of which is not known to the speaker. The speaker is also not interested in the hearer identifying the locality.

- (195) **[Kaekae] go a gadima.**
 (Somewhere it flashes.)

(bo)kaekae cannot appear as the complement in a prepositional phrase with **ka, go, ga, le** because it is locative. However, it may appear with **ke** and **a**.

- (196) ***Ke nyaka go ya [go [kaekae].**
 (197) ***Ke nyaka go ya [ga [bokaekae].**
 (198) ***Bašemane ba tlo tla [le [kaekae].**
 (199) ***Le se ka la apea [ka [bokaekae].**
 (200) **O kgahlilwe [ke [kaekae].**
 (He is impressed with such-and-such a place.)
 (201) **O kgahlilwe [ke [tša [bokaekae].**
 (He is impressed with – things – of such-and-such a place.)

The full noun phrases that are discussed in this section inherently lack the semantic-pragmatic feature [+Def]. They appear in utterances to make reference to entities whose unique identifiability is not relevant.

4.4. COMPLEX INDEFINITES

4.4.1 Aim

A Northern Sotho noun phrase, with the potential to be ambiguous, may appear with a modifier to disambiguate it and accord it indefinite interpretation. Lyons (1999) refers to such modified noun phrases as complex indefinites. The aim of this section is to examine modifiers that may give indefinite reference to noun phrases, and their effect on the interpretation of the noun phrase. In doing so, the semantics of these modifiers as well as

the syntactic positions that they may occupy will be unpacked. The following modifiers contribute to the indefinite reading of a noun phrase:

4.4.2 Quantifier **mang**, **mong**

4.4.2.1 Nominal modifier

Morphology and derivation

The quantifier **mang** is derivative from the interrogative **mang**; it never agrees with its head noun and can appear with nouns from all classes.

The quantifier **mong**, on the other hand, is derivative from the interrogative **-eng**, which is sometimes presented as **-ng**, and written conjunctively with the preceding morpheme (cf. 4.3.11.2). The quantifier stem is **-(e)ng**, and it always agrees with the head noun. The occurrence of the quantifier stem **-(e)ng** is restricted to prefixes of classes 1 and 2; **mo-** + **-ng** > **mong** and **ba-** + **-ng** > **bang**.

4.4.2.2 Meaning

The quantifier **mang** appears with the head noun to question what kind, sort or type the referent is. It enquires about **mohuta** (type, sort, kind) and nature. Examples (202) – (220) with the quantifier **mang** enquire about the characteristics or nature of the referent. The response would be descriptive of the referent's characteristic behaviour, nature or structure. In examples (221) and (222) **mohlare [mang]** (what tree) enquires about the kind, type or sort, in which case the specific name of the plant concerned will be given. **Mohlobo/morafe [mang]** enquires about nationality or tribe. The quantifier **mong/bang** always appears separated from the head noun to question what gender the referent is. The unidentified gender questioned by **mong/bang** relates only to persons. The response to **mong/bang** can only be a noun phrase indicating either femininity or masculinity in persons.

4.4.2.3 Syntactic positions

(a) Quantifier **mang**

The following examples demonstrate that quantifier **mang** never agrees with its head:

- (202) **Elego ke [motho [mang] yo le bolelago ka yena?**
(What kind of person is it you are talking about?)
- (203) **O be a sa tsebe gore ke [batho [mang] ba ba tlogetšego dilo di phatlaletše.**
(He did not know what kind of people are they that left things scattered.)
- (204) Ke [motse [mang] wo?
(What kind of village is this?)
- (205) **Ga ke tsebe gore ke [lerotse [mang] le o rego go le ja wa ruruga dimpa?**
(I do not know what kind of melon is it that after eating it your tummy swells?)

The following section deals with syntactic positions that the quantifier **mang** may occupy.

It may appear with a noun in subject position only in cleft sentences, as illustrated in examples (202), (203) and (205) above. The following examples will be ungrammatical:

- (206) ***[Motho [mang] o mphile dijo?**
(What kind of person gave me food?)
- (207) ***[Lebone [mang] le timile?**
(What kind of lamp is off?)

The quantifier **mang** is grammatical with inverted subjects:

- (208) **Ka pele ga masetrata go eme [mohlobo [mang]?**
(What nationality stands in front of the magistrate?)
- (209) **Ga ke tsebe gore go lla [moropa [mang].**
(I don't know what – kind of – drum is sounding.)

It appears with nouns in the object position, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (210) **E lego wena o sohla [mmotu [mang]?**
(What – kind of – gum are you chewing?)
- (211) **O e file [setlatla [mang]?**
(What – kind of – fool did you give it to?)

Mang also appears with cognate objects:

- (212) **Na malome'ago o lla [sello [mang]?**
(What – kind of – cry is your uncle crying?)
- (213) **O be a robetše [boroko [mang] a bile a tlogelwa?**
(What – kind of – sleep was he sleeping that he was left behind?)

The quantifier **mang** also occurs with nouns in prepositional phrases. In the following extracts the noun with **mang** appears in a PP with agentive **a**. In the second extract agentive **a** is preceded by copula **ke**:

- (214) **A go se lebalweng gore tlihabano ya kgale e be e le [ya [sebopego [mang]?'**
(Matsepe 1968:66)
(Let it not be forgotten how the nature – of what nature – of an old war was.)
- (215) **'Re llela go buša, re llišwa ke go bušwa; re llela go huma, re llišwa ke bodiidi gobane nnete gona se sekaone se ka ganwa ke wa mogopolo wa [mohuta [mang].'**
(Matsepe 1968:34)
(‘We yearn to rule, we complain about being ruled, we yearn to be rich, we complain about poverty because truly who, with all his full senses, can refuse the best?) --- Lit. the one with what kind of mind?)

Other prepositional phrases:

- (216) **Ga ke tsebe gore o loilwe [ke [moloji [mang].**
(I do not know by what kind of wizard/witch he is bewitched.)
- (217) **Le sega [ka [mphaka [mang] le sa ntšhe tema?**
(What kind of knife are you cutting with but without making progress?)

- (218) **Ana ba re o dula [le [mohlobo mang]?**
(By the way, what nationality is he staying with?)
- (219) **Ga ke kwešiše gore Pheladi o tsene [ga [mohlobo [mang] a boilego a le bjalo.**
(I do not understand what nationality's home Pheladi went to, coming back like this.)
- (220) **Bana ba gona ba tšwa [go [badirelaleago [mang] ba boago ba sa kgoga patše?**
(From what kind of social workers do the children in question come from still smoking dagga?)

Mohlare mang (what tree) enquires about the kind, type or sort, which furnishes the name of the plant concerned. The following examples illustrate:

- (221) A: **Legong le ke la [mohlare [mang]?**
(Of what tree is this wood?)
B: **Ke la mosehla.**
(It is of bush willow.)
- (222) A: **O kgele [mohlare [mang] lehono?**
(What 'tree' type did you pick today?)
B: **Leroto.**
(*Leroto*)

Because of the semantic content of the verb, example (222) is relevant to **morogo** as a specific type of plant and cannot be used for just any 'tree'. Other relevant answers to the question in (222) would be **monyaku**, **mphodi**, **motšhatšha**, **theepe**, etc. – names of different types of **morogo**.

Mang may enquire about 'kind', relating to various persons' behavioural characteristics, nationality, ethnicity or tribal origin, as in the following examples:

- (223) **Na monna wa gagwe ke [mohlobo [mang]?**
(What nationality is her husband?)
- (224) **Ga ke tsebe gore ke [setlatla [mang] se se mpitšago ke leša ngwana.**
(I do not know what fool calls me while I am feeding a/the baby.)

(225) **Ana ke [morafe [mang] wo ba rego o khurumela ngwana ka seroto ge a robetše?**

(By the way, what tribe is it that is said to cover a/the baby with a basket when he is asleep?)

The quantifier **mang** is indefinite because it represents unidentifiability with respect to kind, type or sort, nature, characteristic, nationality, tribe and clan.

(b) Quantifier **mong**

The syntactic positions that the quantifier **mong/bang** may occupy are different from those of the quantifier **mang**. A quantifier with stem **-(e)ng** never appears as a specifier of the noun phrase that it qualifies. If the head noun appears in the same phrase as the subject, **-ng** with the relevant prefix appears in a PP as complement of copula **ke**. Quantifier **mong/bang** can also appear in the mentioned PP without an overt head noun as subject, if the subject is already familiar, as the following examples illustrate:

(226) A: **Ba re ke tle ke le botše gore rakgadi o na le ngwana.**

(I am sent to tell you that my aunt has a baby.)

B: **Ngwana [ke [mong]? --- [PP with ke with head noun]**

(What gender is the baby?)

OR

B: **[Ke [mong]? --- [PP with ke without head noun]**

(What gender?)

A: **Ke mošemanyana.**

(It is a boy.)

(227) A: **Afa o kwele gore Masese o filwe mafatla?**

(Have you heard that Masese has twins?)

B: **Aowa, o ikhuditše! O tla rereša gape ke matšatši a palelwa. [Ke [bang]? --- PP with ke without head noun.**

(She is relieved! You are right; she looked highly pregnant for a while.

What gender are they?)

B: **Ngwanenyana le mošemanyana.**

(A girl and a boy.)

The quantifier **mong** may appear in the object position:

- (228) A: **Mongwaga ke nyaka go dira phejane.**
 (This year I want to have a last-born.)
 B: **O sa nyaka [mong] ka gore o na le ngwanenyana le mošemanyana.)**
 (What gender do you still want seeing that you have a girl and a boy?)
 A: **Yo mongwe le yo mongwe o lokile.**
 (Any one is fine.)
- (229) **Matšatši a go phala kgale; motho o kgona go tseba e sa le nako gore o imile [mong].**
 (Nowadays is better than in the olden days; one is able to know in time what gender you are pregnant with.)

-ng cannot follow directly after the head noun. The following constructions are ungrammatical:

- (230) ***O imile [ngwana [mong]]?**
 (231) ***[Ke [ngwana [mong] yo o mo imilego?**

However, if agentive **a** separates the two the construction becomes acceptable:

- (232) A: **Ke duma ngwana bjang!**
 (I wish so much for a baby.)
 B: **O duma [ngwana [wa [mong]]?**
 (What gender baby do you wish for?)
 OR
 B: **O duma [wa [mong]]?**
 (What gender do you wish for?)
 OR
 B: **[Wa [mong]]?**
 (What gender?)

- (233) A: **Ke hlakišwa ke menyabidi bjang!**
(I suffer so much from an allergic skin reaction!)
- B: **E re motswalago a rotele seolo e sa le bošego, o tlole ka leraga la gona.**
(Let your cross-cousin urinate on an ant-heap very early in the morning, and you smear yourself with the mud.)
- A: **[Motswala [wa [mong]]?**
(What gender cousin?)
- OR
- A: **[Wa [mong]]?**
(What gender?)

mong/bang may precede the noun directly in a cleft; otherwise the two are separated: The following examples illustrate:

- (234) ***O nyaka [ngwana [mong]]?**
- (235) **[Ngwana] yo o mo imilego] [ke [mong]]?**
(The child you are pregnant with, what gender is it?)
- (236) **[Ke [mong [ngwana] yo o mo imilego?**
(What gender is the child you are pregnant with?)

Both **mang** and quantifier with **(e)ng** indicate uncertainty with regard to 'kind', and are therefore indefinite. However, they exhibit differences derivationally, morphologically, syntactically and semantically. **Mang** covers a wide range of kinds including sort, type, nature, nationality, clan, tribe, characteristic behaviour, etc., whilst **mong/bang** is semantically limited to the gender of persons. **Mang** has no agreement with its head noun and it appears with all classes. **(e)ng**, on the other hand, always agrees with the head noun, and its occurrence is restricted to classes 1 and 2, **mo-** and **ba-**. Whilst **mang** follows directly after the head noun, quantifier with **(e)ng** never does.

4.4.3 Quantifier -ngwe

4.4.3.1 Nominal modifier Morphology and derivation

-ngwe is an adjectival stem and is structurally used with other components (viz. adjectival concord) to form an adjective. The adjectival concord consists of the demonstrative of position 1 plus the adjectival prefix that resembles the class prefix of the head noun. Example: **(Monna) yo + mo- + -ngwe > yo mongwe**. **-ngwe** always agrees with the head noun.

4.4.3.2 Meaning

-ngwe has the meanings another; other; a certain; different; some. It refers to another of the same type as the referent of the head noun. Should the referent type not be the same, a relevant head noun will be used with the modifier. The referent is not uniquely identifiable. An adjective with **-ngwe** may also appear as ‘possessor’ in possessive constructions for a partitive meaning: a partitive construction being a linguistic construction that expresses reference to only a part of the referent of the noun phrase concerned. In Northern Sotho this construction takes the form **-ngwe + possessive a + NP**. When **-ngwe** appears in this construction it means ‘one of/any(one) of/some of’. Because it does not express which part of the whole is being referred to, the reading is not [+Def]. When it appears with count nouns partitive **-ngwe** expresses indefinite numerality. It can also appear with mass nouns to indicate that only a fraction of the whole is being referred to.

4.4.3.3 Syntactic positions

An adjective with **-ngwe** may appear with an overt noun. If the referent class or type is familiar to the addressee the head noun may be left out. There is always agreement with the head noun, as illustrated in the following examples:

(237) **[Batho [ba bangwe] ba na le mahlo a go rotoga.**

(Some people have protruding eyes.)

- (238) **Lefehlo o ile go kwa gore nnetenete Leilane o be a le ga Nthumule, a romela lentšu [magošing [a mangwe], a re tlang le bone ge mpšhe e tima mollo.**

(Matsepe 1968:64)

(When Lefehlo heard that Leilane was truly at Nthumule's place, he sent a word to other chiefs, that they should come and see when an/the ostrich extinguishes fire.) --- i.e. an act of extreme anger.

The head noun may be omitted, if it has been mentioned previously and is hence familiar. The adjective with **-ngwe** will then appear alone and refer anaphorically to the already familiar head noun, without unique identifiability of the referent. The following examples illustrate this:

- (239) **O tlogele lefehlo leo, o tle [le [le lengwe].**

(You should leave that churning stick, and bring another/a different one.)

- (240) **[Ye [nngwe] e a duša.**

(Another one is in calf.)

The head noun and the demonstrative part of the concord may be omitted and the adjectival stem used only with the prefix, which will serve as a marker of the nominal class of the head noun, e.g.:

- (241) (a) **[Motho [yo mongwe] o tlogetše letlakala la panana mo.**

(Some/a certain person left a banana peel here.)

- (b) **[Mongwe] o tlogetše letlakala la panana mo.**

(Someone left a banana peel here.)

- (242) (a) **[Kgomo [ye nngwe] e a duša.**

(Another/a certain cow is in calf.)

- (b) **[Nngwe] e a duša.**

(Another one is in calf.)

With or without the head noun, with or without the demonstrative part of agreement, quantifier **-ngwe** may also occur with the diminutive suffix **-nyana** (this is a widely

distributed suffix for this adjective, but the Sepulana dialect of Northern Sotho uses **-ana** as well).

- (243) (a) **A ka se re poo! Akere ba re o swarišitšwe [selo [se [sengwenyana].**
 (He will not say a word! Isn't it that he has been given something/a certain thing.)
- (b) **A ka se re poo! Akere ba re o swarišitšwe [se [sengwenyana].**
- (c) **A ka se re poo! Akere ba re o swarišitšwe [sengwenyana].**
 (He will not say a word! Isn't it that he has been given something?)

In the subject position **-ngwe** may appear as the specifier or complement of the head noun, depending on the element that the speaker wishes to emphasise, as the following examples illustrate:

- (244) (a) **[Baruti [ba bangwe] ba rera go fihlela ba etšwa dikudumela.**
- (b) **[Ba bangwe [baruti] ba rera go fihlela ba etšwa dikudumela.**
- (c) **[Baruti [bangwe] ba rera go fihlela ba etšwa dikudumela.**
- (d) **[Bangwe [baruti] ba rera go fihlela ba etšwa dikudumela.**
 (Some/other priests preach until they sweat.)

With or without the full head noun, **-ngwe** can appear in the subject position (cf. also 241, 242 & 244 above):

- (245) **[Tšatši [le lengwe] ke ile ke feta ka bona mafasetere a butšwe.**
 (Some day as I was passing I saw (the) windows open.)
- (246) **[Ngwaga [wo mongwe] ba tla tšwelela.**
 (Some year they will succeed.)
- (247) **[Tše [dingwe] di na le meetlwa.**
 (Some/others have thorns.)
- (248) **[Ba [bangwe] ba rera go fihlela ba etšwa dikudumela.**
 (Some/others preach until they sweat.)

An adjective with **-ngwe** can also appear as a quantifier in the object position, with or without the full head noun, and without the demonstrative part of the concord as illustrated in the following examples (cf. also 241 - 243 above):

- (249) (a) **Ge o sa nyake dinamune tše re tla di fa [motho [yo [mongwe].**
 (If you don't want these oranges we will give them to another person.)
- (b) **Ge o sa nyake dinamune tše re tla di fa [yo [mongwe].**
- (c) **Ge o sa nyake dinamune tše re tla di fa [mongwe].**
 (If you don't want these oranges we will give them to someone else.)

-ngwe can appear with nouns that constitute the complement in prepositional phrases. In the PP, though, when the head noun is left out, the demonstrative part of the concord always remains. The following examples illustrate its appearance with **ka**, **le**, **ke**, **a**, **go** and **ga**:

- (250) **Thipa yeo ga e kwe, le reng le sa sege [ka [ye nngwe]?**
 (That knife is blunt, why don't you cut with another one?)
- (251) **Ke gahlane [le [monna [yo mongwe].**
 (I met a certain/another man.)
- (252) **Ke e filwe [ke [segotlane [se sengwe].**
 (It was given to me by a certain/another toddler.)
- (253) **O sega dikemola [tša [bana [ba bangwe].**
 (He is laughing at certain/other children's pimples.)
- (254) **Madimetša o ile [go [yo mongwe].**
 (Madimetša went to another one.)
- (255) **Madimetša o dula [ga [yo mongwe].**
 (Madimetša stays at another one's place.)

It is worth noting that **-ngwe** with the interpretation 'a certain' cannot appear without the head noun; and it always appears after the head noun. The following extract serves as an additional example:

- (256) **Baisa ba ka gore ba šetše ba khoše, ke ba botšiša gore ke bomang ba ba dumedišago, ba fo re ke [banna [ba bangwe], sepela o yo ba bona.**

(Matsepe 1968:56)

(Because these guys are already drunk, I ask them who is greeting, they just say it is certain/some men; go and see them.)

- (257) **Ba re kgalekgale go be go na le [monna [yo mongwe], leina la gagwe e le Dinono. Dinono o be a le šoro go mosadi wa gagwe eupša [bathong [ba bangwe] e le konyana.**

(It is said that a long time ago there was a certain man called Dinono. Dinono was cruel towards his wife, but to other people he was kind.)

The following examples illustrate the partitive interpretation brought about by the occurrence of an adjective with **-ngwe** in the possessor position of a possessive construction:

- (258) **Ya ka potšišo še: Ya re re sa tšo amologana le Leilane ga kgoši Lefehlo, ya ba re šetše re ekwa ba ga Nthumule ba di duletše kgorong moo [yo mongwe [wa bona] a bolelago gore Lefehlo o na le lenyatšo – go tšile bjang hle beng ba ka?**

(Matsepe 1968:28)

(My question is: We have just parted ways with Leilane at chief Lefehlo's place, already we hear that Nthumule's people have a seating at the *kgoro* where one of them is saying that Lefehlo is contemptuous – how did that happen?)

- (259) **[Letšatši [le lengwe] go tla se tle [o⁴ mongwe [wa metswalo] wa bomolwetši hle gomme!**

(Matsepe 1968:41)

(Some day came one of the patient's relatives.)

- (260) **[Yo mongwe [wa lena] a a tle keno.**

(One of you, come here.)

- (261) **Le se ke la noka dijo tše ka letswai; [ba bangwe [ba bana] ba swerwe ke mooko.**

(Do not season this food with salt; some of the children have measles.)

Quantifier **-ngwe** does not possess the feature [+Def]. It indicates to the addressee that the referent is not the one that he can or should uniquely identify. From the examples

given above, the speaker may or may not be familiar with the referent of the NP, but the identity of the referent is certainly not important for the hearer as regards the purpose of the discourse at hand. 'A certain' interpretation, i.e. NP + **-ngwe**, is used to signal that a new referent is being introduced. When the speaker uses **-ngwe** he deliberately signals to the addressee that the referent in question is not the one that the latter is familiar with, but another or a different one.

Pragmatic factors may, however, override this basic semantic interpretation. For instance, both interlocutors may be familiar with the referent but the speaker may deliberately want to conceal the identity of the referent to a third party. For instance, two adults may be having a conversation in the presence of a child and example (262) may be a remark about the child or about someone else:

- (262) **[Motho [yo mongwe] o duma lelekere lela le bapatšwago thelebišeneng.**
 (Someone/a certain person wishes for that sweet being advertised on television.)

In example (262) above, the speaker chooses the linguistic elements that project indefiniteness, whilst in essence the referent is familiar to both him and the hearer. Such usages support the view that (in)definiteness is a grammaticalisation of a pragmatic category; therefore, in any case of conflict pragmatics takes priority.

4.4.4 Coordinated **-ngwe**

4.4.4.1 Coordinated modifiers Morphology and derivation

-ngwe may be coordinated by **le**.

4.4.4.2 Meaning

-ngwe coordinated by **le** may have an all-inclusive interpretation that is consistent with the feature [+Def], as is illustrated in section 3.4.2.2.3 of the previous chapter. Another interpretation of the same linguistic element may give rise to the opposite reading. This section is concerned with the indefinite reading of coordinated **-ngwe**. It is, once more,

context that may determine whether the **-ngwe le -ngwe** that appears in a particular utterance takes the interpretation ‘any’ or ‘each’; neither of which is concerned with the unique identifiability of the referent.

4.4.4.3 Syntactic positions

Coordinated **-ngwe** can appear with or without the head noun, and it can also appear without the demonstrative part of the concord, as the following examples illustrate:

- (263) (a) **[Motho [yo mongwe le yo mongwe]**
 (b) **[Yo mongwe le yo mongwe]**
 (c) **[Mongwe le mongwe]**

-ngwe le -ngwe may appear in the following syntactic positions:

Coordinated **-ngwe** may appear in the subject position, as illustrated by the following examples (cf. also example (228) under 4.4.2.3):

- (264) **[Putšane [ye nngwe le ye nngwe] e thoma go lla ge e bona letšatši le dikela mmayo e sego.**
 (Any/each kid starts bleating when it sees the sun setting while its mother is not there.)
- (265) **[Mongwe le mongwe] o rata go bona mmagwe a thabile.**
 (Anyone/each one likes to see his mother happy.)

The object position

- (266) **Ge ke lapišitšwe ke mongatse wo nka no o hlagaletša [mongwe le mongwe].**
 (When I am tired of this hat I may give it to anyone.)
- (267) **Bana ba mo ba emiša [sefatanaga [se sengwe le se sengwe].**
 ((The) children of this area stop any motorcar.)

Coordinated **-ngwe** may also appear as the complement in a prepositional phrase with the following prepositions:

- (268) **Gantši mosadi ge a riboga o nkgelwa [ke [se sengwe le se sengwe].**
 (In most cases when a woman is in the initial stages of pregnancy she finds that anything smells bad.)
- (269) **Nna ga ke na mathata; nka tloga [le [segotlane [se sengwe le se sengwe].**
 (I have no problem; I may leave with any toddler.)
- (270) **Ngwana wa segwahla ga se a swanela go nwešwa maswi [a [phoofolo [ye nngwe le ye nngwe].**
 (A sickly child is not supposed to be made to drink (the) milk of any animal.)
- (271) **Maphodisa ge a se na lesedi molatong wo o itšego a ya [go [yo mongwe le yo mongwe].**
 (When (the) police possess no clue in a particular case they go to anyone.)
- (272) **Mafokisi ge a le lesolong le le itšego ba sa nyake go lemoša batho ba no ya [ga [motho [yo mongwe le yo mongwe].**
 (When (the) detectives are on a particular operation and they do not want to make people aware they go to any person's place.)
- (273) **Le se ke la sega [ka [thipa [ye nngwe le ye nngwe]; go na le ye e reketšwego lebaka le.**
 (Do not cut with any knife; there is one that is bought for this purpose.)

In the examples given above coordinated **-ngwe** gives an indefinite interpretation to the noun phrase.

4.4.5 Quantifier **-šele**

4.4.5.1 Nominal modifier

Morphology and derivation

Quantifier **-šele** always agrees with the head noun. If the referent of the noun is familiar **-šele** may appear alone, with the agreement morphology of the noun concerned.

4.4.5.2 Meaning

Quantifier **-šele** expresses the meanings ‘different’; ‘other’; ‘not the one’. Like **-ngwe** it indicates to the hearer that the referent is not the one that the hearer is familiar with and can identify; however, it is the same type of referent expressed by the noun phrase. Its use does not lead the hearer to a unique identification of the referent and it therefore accords the noun phrase indefinite reference. In the following extract, for instance, the identity of **medimo** (gods) is not relevant to the message being imparted, hence there is indefinite reference:

(274) **Ké Nna Morêna Modimo wa xaxo. Ké Nna ke Xo ntšhitšexo naxeng ya Egipita ngwakong wa bohlanka. Ke se kê ka bôna Ò na le [medimo [e šele].**

(Ekisodo 20:2-3)

(I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.²)

4.4.5.3 Syntactic positions

-šele appears with the noun in the object position, and it follows the head noun. It may also appear on its own if the referent type of the head noun is familiar to the addressee. The following examples illustrate this point:

(275) (a) **Ba ile ge ba fihla ba hwetša [motho [o šele].**

(When they arrived they found a different person.)

(b) **Ba ile ge ba fihla ba hwetša [o šele].**

(When they arrived they found a different one.)

(276) **Bana ba lehono ba rekelwa [dibapadišane [di šele]; ga se tšela tša bokoko 'a rena tša ditlhaka.**

(Today's children are bought different toys; they are not those of our grandmothers (made) from reed.)

An NP modified by **-šele** may appear as the complement of agentive **a**. Because **naga** (land) is by definition a place, the NP in (277) has the option of taking locative suffix **-ng**, as illustrated in (b):

- (277) (a) **Ga re rate dijo [tša [naga [e šele].**
 (We don't like food of a different/foreign land.)
 (b) **Ga re rate dijo [tša [nageng [e šele].**
 (We don't like food of a different/foreign land.)
 (c) **Ga re rate dijo [tša [e šele].**
 (We don't like food of a different/foreign one.)

However, if **-šele** modifies NP_{loc}, the internal argument NP_{loc} precedes it. The locative suffix falls away if the head noun appears in a PP as the complement of **go**. When NP_{loc} does not appear and **-šele** appears alone, it also appears in a PP with **go** as head, to retain the locative content of the noun. The following examples illustrate:

- (278) (a) **Re ya go dula [nageng [e šele].**
 (b) **Re ya go dula [go [naga [e šele].**
 (We are going to stay in a different/foreign land.)
 (c) **Re ya go dula [go [e šele].**
 (We are going to stay in a different/foreign one.)
 (279) (a) **Le se ke la tlogela nama [lethaleng [le šele].**
 (b) **Le se ke la tlogela nama [go [lethala [le šele].**
 (Do not leave (the) meat on a different wire.)
 (c) **Le se ke la tlogela nama [go [le šele].**
 (Do not leave (the) meat on a different one.)
 (280) **Ke mo romile ga Mashilwane, yena a ikela [ga [monna [o šele].**
 (I sent him to Mashilwane's place and he just went to a different man's place.)

NP with **-šele** may also appear as complement of **ke**, as illustrated in (281) and (282) below:

- (281) (a) **Meetse a feditšwe [ke [dikgomo [di šele].**
 ((The) water is finished by different/other cattle.)
- (b) **Meetse a feditšwe [ke [di šele].**
 ((The) water is finished by different/other ones.)
- (282) **Seo se dirilego Maphuthe gore a felegetše morwagwe – ke go re o be a tenane le Nthumule, ka gona, a kganyoga go itiwa [ke [moya [o šele].**
 (Matsepe 1968:55)
 (What caused Maphuthe to accompany his son – is that he and Nthumule had had enough of one another, as such, he wanted to take a break from him.) --- Lit. to be blown by a different air.

An indefinite noun phrase with **-šele** is unusual in the subject position. For the obvious purposes of emphasis the more frequent appearance is in the post-verbal position.

- (283) **[Monna [o šele] o mphile dijo.**
 (A strange/different man gave me food.)
- (284) **[Naga [e šele] e bolaiša go hlowa.**
 (A strange/foreign land makes one long for home.)
- (285) **[Puku [e šele] e wele.**
 (A different book fell.)

In the subject position, example (284) is the utterance that is not odd, since **-šele** in that context can also mean 'foreign or strange' and not only 'a different one'.

However NP with **-šele** can appear in a cleft sentence. Examples (283) and (285) are better presented in the passive or in subject inversion sentences as illustrated below:

- (286) **Ke filwe dijo [ke [monnna [o šele].**
 (I am given food by a different man.)
- (287) **[Go] wele [puku [e šele].**
 (It is a different book that fell.)
- (288) **Ke [nku [e šele] ye ba e nyakago.**
 (It is a different sheep that they are looking for.)
- (289) **Ke [batho [ba šele] ba ba filwego diaparo tšela.**
 (It is different people who are given those clothes.)

The appearance of **-šele** in examples (286) - (289) above also indicates to the hearer that the referent is not the one that he can identify, but a different one.

Another meaning expressed by the same linguistic element is 'foreign or strange'. In the context where **-šele** means 'foreign or strange', it may not necessarily have an indefinite interpretation. The following extract from the Bible illustrates:

(290) **Xomme re ka hlaba bjang sefela sa Morêna mo [naxeng [e šele].**

(Ps. 137:4)

(How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?)²

In the case of example (290) co-occurrence with demonstrative **mo** (here) renders NP_{loc} **naxeng** uniquely identifiable. Pragmatically, in the context of the extract above, the Israelites were talking amongst themselves regarding being in a foreign land. It therefore follows that the addressee is aware of the identity of the referent. Furthermore, the referent is the only one that satisfies the description contained in the noun phrase. Whilst **-šele** is an indefinite nominal modifier, it has another meaning that may not necessarily be indefinite.

4.4.6 Quantifier **-fe**

4.4.6.1 Nominal modifier

Morphology and derivation

Quantifier **-fe** (which) is an interrogative nominal modifier. It always agrees with the head noun. If **-fe** does not co-occur with the head noun its occurrence incorporates the relevant agreement morphology.

4.4.6.2 Meaning

-fe means 'which one(s)'. It appears in questions and statements to express uncertainty as to the identity of the referent. In statements the noun phrase with **-fe** is normally preceded by a phrase that expresses doubt or lack of knowledge. If the head noun has been

mentioned before, but the referent cannot be uniquely identified, **-fe** is used to enquire about the unique identification of the referent.

4.4.6.3 Syntactic positions

-fe cannot appear with a noun in the subject position unless certain syntactic positions are altered or certain pragmatic conditions are observed:

- (291) (a) ***[Ngwana [ofe] o tlile pele?**
(Which child came first?)
- (b) ***[Ofe] o tlile pele?**
(Which one came first?)

The examples in (291) may occur only as echo questions. **-fe** does not appear with the noun in the subject position, but when the subject has been right-dislocated the structure is grammatical:

- (292) (a) **Go tlile [ngwana [ofe] pele?**
(Which child came first?)
- (b) **Go tlile [ofe] pele?**
(Which one came first?)

In the following examples the subject-inverted construction with **-fe** appears in a statement, preceded by a phrase that expresses doubt or lack of knowledge:

- (293) (a) **Ga ke tsebe gore go tlile [ngwana [ofe] pele.**
(I do not know which child came first.)
- (b) **Ga ke tsebe gore go tlile [ofe] pele.**
(I do not know which one came first.)
- (294) (a) **Ga ke na nnete (ya) gore go tlile [ngwana [ofe] pele.**
(I am not certain which child came first.)
- (b) **Ga ke na nnete (ya) gore go tlile [ofe] pele.**
(I am not certain which one came first.)

Another environment that allows the noun with **-fe** in the subject position is that of a cleft sentence, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (295) (a) **Ke [ofe [ngwana] yo a tlilego pele?**
(Which child is it that came first?)
(b) **Ke [ofe] yo a tlilego pele?**
(Which one is it that came first?)
- (296) (a) **Ke [dipudi] dife] tše le bolelago ka tšona?**
(Which goats is it that you are talking about?)
(b) **Ke [dife] tše le bolelago ka tšona?**
(Which ones is it that you are talking about?)

The following examples illustrate that **-fe** may appear with a noun in the object position:

- (297) (a) **O fologile [pese [efe]?**
(Which bus did you alight from?)
(b) **O fologile [efe]?**
(Which one did you alight from?)
- (298) (a) **Na o binela [koša [efe], Mogotladi?**
(Which song are you dancing to, Mogotladi?)
(b) **Na o binela [efe], Mogotladi?**
(Which one are you dancing to, Mogotladi?)
- (299) (a) **Ga ke tsebe gore ba bea [sešebo [sefe] sebešong?**
(I do not know which relish they are putting on the hearth.)
(b) **Ga ke tsebe gore ba bea [sefe] sebešong?**
(I do not know which one they are putting on the hearth.)

-fe also appears with or without a head noun in a prepositional phrase. It may precede the noun, for the purpose of emphasis. Other constructions such as subject inversion and cleft sentences also accept **-fe** in prepositional phrases, as the following examples illustrate:

- (300) **Malepola šeao, o tla kgetha gore o ja [ka [lefe].**
(There are the spoons; you will choose which one to eat with.)
- (301) (a) **Le tla no bona gore le rema [ka [selepe [sefe].**
(You will see which axe you chop with.)

- (b) **Le tla no bona gore le rema [ka [sefe].**
(You will see which one you chop with.)
- (302) (a) **O bolela [ka [dipudi [dife]?**
(Which goats are you talking about?)
- (b) **O bolela [ka [dife [dipudi]?**
(Which goats are you talking about?)
- (c) **O bolela [ka [dife]?**
(Which ones are you talking about?)
- (303) (a) **O tšhošitšwe ke [dipudi [dife]?**
(By which goats were you frightened?)
- (b) **O tšhošitšwe ke [dife]?**
(By which ones were you frightened?)
- (304) (a) **Bana ba sekolo ba tla felegetšwa [ke [motswadi [ofe] išago?**
(By which parent will (the) school children be accompanied next year?)
- (b) **Bana ba sekolo ba tla felegetšwa [ke [ofe] išago?**
(By which one will (the) school children be accompanied next year?)
- (305) (a) **Ke namane [ya [kgomo [efe] ye e hwilego?**
(Which cow's calf is dead?)
- (b) **Ke namane [ya [efe] ye e hwilego?**
(Which one's calf is dead?)
- (306) **Bomalome ba nthata ka moka; ge dikolo di tswalelwa ga ke tsebe gore ke ye [go [ofe].**
(All my uncles love me; when the schools close I don't know to which one I should go.)
- (307) **Bomalome ba nthata ka moka; ge dikolo di tswalelwa ga ke tsebe gore ke ye [ga [ofe].**
(All my uncles love me; when the schools close I don't know to which one's home I should go.)
- (308) (a) **Bjale ka gore o lwele le bale ba go ahloa sepitša o šika [le [barara [bafe]?**
(Now that you fought with those that judge cases with prejudice which rogues are you with?)

- (b) **Bjale ka gore o lwele le bale ba go ahlola sepitša o šika [le [bafe]?**

(Now that you fought with those that judge cases with prejudice which ones are you with?)

The basic function of **-fe** is interrogative, to question the information contained in the NP. It indicates that the referent of the noun it modifies is unknown. The referent of the noun phrase modified by **-fe** is unidentifiable and, therefore, indefinite.

4.4.7 Coordinated **-fe**

4.4.7.1 Coordinated modifiers

Morphology and derivation

Coordinated **-fe** is derivative from quantifier **-fe**. It can be coordinated by conjuncts **kapa** (or), **le** (and) and by copula **ke** (is). Coordination with **ke** occurs in a complementiser phrase with **gore**.

4.4.7.2 Meaning

Coordinated **-fe** with **kapa** or **le** has the meaning 'any one' or 'each one'. It expresses the notion that the identity of the referent is neither important nor relevant. Another form of coordination is done with **ke**, and it has a different meaning, as illustrated in examples (319) and (320). Coordination with **ke** is preceded by a phrase that expresses doubt or lack of knowledge, and the interpretation is: 'inability to make unique identification'.

4.4.7.3 Syntactic positions

Coordinated **-fe** can appear with or without the head noun in the following syntactic positions:

(a) Coordination with **kapa** and **le**:

Subject position

- (309) **Se tshwenyege; [efe kapa efe] e tla ntshwanela.**
(Don't worry; anyone will suit me.)
- (310) **[Mosadi [ofe le ofe] a ka apea khabetšhe ya jega.**
(Any/each woman can cook cabbage in such a way that it becomes eatable.)

Object position

- (311) **O ka no tliša [efe le efe] ye o e bonago.**
(You may bring any one that you see.)
- (312) **Mo fe [borokgo [bofe kapa bofe] a tlogele go hlwa a re selekile.**
(Give him any pair of pants so that he stops annoying us.)

Coordinated **-fe** can appear in the following prepositional phrases:

- (313) **Yena o šetše a no llišwa [ke [taba [efe kapa efe]; o se ke wa gopola gore o mo kgopišitše.**
(He now cries over any issue; don't think that you hurt him.)
- (314) **Ge a sa hwetše seswantšho se a se ratago o tla tla [le [sefe kapa sefe] ka gore nako ga e gona.**
(If he doesn't find a/the picture that he likes he will bring any one because there is no time.) --- Lit. come with any one.
- (315) **Go sega dijo tša go fiša [ka [mphaka [ofe le ofe] go go hlokiša wa go kwa ka lapeng.**
(Cutting hot food with any knife makes you not to have a sharp one in the home.)
- (316) **Ge o sa mo šupetše gabotse o tla no hubakela [go [motho ofe kapa ofe].**
(If you do not point out correctly for him he will just march in the direction of any person.)

(317) **Ge ba sa kwešiše gabotse ba tlo fetša ba no tsena ka [ga [mokgalabje [ofe kapa ofe].**

(If they do not understand well they will end up entering any old man's home.)

(318) **Ga ke nwe maswi [a [phoofolo [efe le efe].**

(I don't drink any animal's milk.)

- (b) **-fe** coordinated with **ke** appears in a complementiser phrase as the complement of **gore**. The main clause always contains a verbal phrase that expresses doubt, lack of knowledge or understanding. The following examples illustrate the point:

(319) **Ge e le mafatlana a ga Nkhumane ga nke ke tseba gore [ofe ke ofe].**

(As for Nkhumane's twins I'm never able to tell the one from the other.) ---
Lit. I never know which is which.

(320) **O tla tšea efe a tlogela efe a sa kwešiše le gore [efe ke efe]?**

(Which one will he take and which one will he leave while he is not even able to tell the one from the other?) --- Lit. he does not understand which is which.

Coordinated **-fe** does not require the hearer to uniquely identify the referent of the noun phrase it qualifies; hence the indefinite interpretation of the NP.

4.4.8 kae

4.4.8.1 Nominal modifier Morphology and derivation

Another **-kae** (with a high tone) is used only with prefix **bo-**; and it never agrees with the head noun.

4.4.8.2 Meaning

-kae with prefix **bo-** expresses lack of knowledge with regard to a monetary amount. It means 'how much money'.

4.4.8.3 Syntactic position

Bokae never appears in the subject position. It can, however appear in subject inverted constructions and in cleft sentences. It can also appear only with copula **ke**, in a question. It appears in the object position and in prepositional phrases. Although the noun phrase being questioned is **tšhelete** (money), it never precedes **bokae**, as the following examples indicate:

Subject position

(321) ***[Bokae] bo timetše?**

(How much money is lost?)

(322) ***[Bokae] bo filwe bana?**

(How much money is given to (the) children?)

Cleft sentences

(323) ***Ke [tšhelete [bokae] bjo bo timetšego?**

(How much money is it that is lost?)

(324) **Ke [bokae] bjo bo timetšego?**

(How much money is it that is lost?)

(325) **Ke [bokae] bjo bo filwego bana?**

(How much money is it that is given to (the) children?)

Subject inversion

(326) **Go timetše [bokae]?**

(How much money is lost?)

(327) **Go nyakega [bokae]?**

(How much money is wanted?)

Object position

(328) **E re ke bone gore mma o go file [bokae].**

(Let me see how much money (my) mother gave you.)

- (329) **Sekolong ba nyaka [bokae]?**
 (How much money do they want at school?)
- (330) ***Sekolong ba nyaka [tšhelete [bokae]?**

Prepositional phrases

- (331) **O timeletšwe [ke [bokae], samma?**
 (How much money did you lose, my sister/brother?)
- (332) **Mošopšadi o nyetšwe [ka [bokae]?**
 (With how much money is Mošopšadi married?)
- (333) **O reng o sa tloge? Kgane ba rile o tle [le [bokae]?**
 (Why are you not leaving? How much money did they say you should bring?)
- (334) Koko 'ago o rekile malahla [a [bokae]?
 (Of what cost is the coal that your grandmother bought?)

Bokae cannot appear in a prepositional phrase as complement of **go** and **ga**.

4.5. GENERICS

4.5.1 Definition

According to Cruse (2000:57) 'a generic sentence is a sentence in which some statement is made about a whole unrestricted class of individuals, as opposed to any particular individual.' Carlson (1977) distinguishes two basic varieties of genericity, viz. reference to a kind, a genus and a proposition about a regularity, which summarises groups of particular episodes or facts. Generic propositions are, therefore, not propositions about particular individual entities, but about a whole class.

Reference to a genus is illustrated in the following sentence:

- (335) **[Katse] e na le boya.**
 (A/the cat has fur.)

The generic reading of subject NP in example (335) has something to do with the fact that the assertion is not about any particular cat, but refers to a whole genus. Furthermore, the predicate expresses a characteristic and permanent feature of the genus rather than an episodic and temporary occurrence. In this regard, with regard to English, Carlson (as cited in Diesing, 1992) distinguishes between stage-level predicates and individual-level predicates. Individual-level predicates express permanent states such as that expressed by the predicate in example (335), and they allow only the generic reading of their bare plural subjects. Stage-level predicates on the other hand may allow both temporary and permanent states of their bare plural subjects. Another variety of genericity, viz. a proposition about a regular occurrence, which summarises groups of particular episodes or facts, relates to a reading such as the one illustrated in example (336) below:

(336) **Ke ja [kolobe].**

(I eat pork.)

NP **kolobe** in (336) can have two readings: (a) The speaker may be eating pork at the time of utterance and the object NP may be referring to that particular piece of meat; (b) there may be no meat in sight, in which case the object NP has a generic reading reporting on a regularity concerning the fact that the speaker does not abstain from eating pork. The latter interpretation refers to a habit summarising a series of regular episodes about pork in general rather than to an isolated episode referring to a particular piece of pork, hence a generic reading.

The next section discusses the kind-referring genericity of Northern Sotho singular and plural count nouns as well as mass nouns.

4.5.2 Kind-referring NPs

A Northern Sotho bare noun phrase may appear as a kind-referring NP. In illustrating this position the subject position will be considered first:

(337) **[Tlou] e duša dikgwedi tše 22.**

(An elephant's period in calf is 22 months.)

(338) **Ka tshwanelo [lese] le mela meno a ka fase pele.**

(Rightly an infant grows lower teeth first.)

- (339) **[Diapola] di na le dithapo.**
(Apples have pips.)
- (340) **[Dimpša] di a loma.**
(Dogs bite.)
- (341) **[Meetse] a loketše mebele ya rena.**
(Water is good for our bodies.)
- (342) **[Madi] a baba letswai.**
(Blood is salty.)

The noun phrases in the subject position of the examples above are singular, plural and mass. All of them accept a generic interpretation. The sentence/utterance becomes true for the whole class and it applies generically to any member of the class, under normal circumstances. The NP **tlou** in (337), for instance, does not refer to a particular individual elephant. The sentence asserts that any animal that is an elephant and is capable of being in calf takes a gestation period of twenty-two months. Similarly, a whole class fitting the description expressed by the noun phrase **leseae**, **diapola**, **dimpša**, **meetse** or **madi** possesses the proposition expressed by the predicate as a permanent or a characteristic feature. The proposition does not single out an individual but applies to the whole ‘kind’.

Examples (343) and (344) below illustrate cases of subject inversion:

- (343) **Go hlatša [phoofolo], motho o a belega.**
(It is an animal that litters, a person gives birth.)
- (344) **Go apewa [lerotse] e sego legapu.**
(It is lerotse⁵ that is cooked, not watermelon.)

Right-dislocated subjects also accept a generic reading. NPs **phoofolo** and **lerotse** do not refer to any particular animal or *lerotse*, respectively, but to a whole genus.

The following examples illustrate the fact that kind-referring NPs may also appear in the object position:

- (345) **Rakgadi o tšhaba [noga].**
((My) aunt is scared of a snake.)

(346) **Bana ba gagwe ba rata [morogo].**

(His children like morogo⁶.)

(347) **Ke hloile [dišo].**

(I hate sores.)

(348) **Bana ba rata [maraga].**

((The) children like mud.)

Noun phrases in the object position of examples (345) – (348) also do not single out individual referents, but are kind-referring NPs. In example (345) there may be no specific snake of which the speaker's aunt is scared, the statement describing her phobia of snakes in general. NP **noga**, therefore, refers to a whole species. The same applies to other object NPs in the rest of the examples.

Generic reference as illustrated in all the above examples has indefinite reference in the sense that it lacks unique identifiability of the referent. The hearer is not familiar with any specific referent, but is familiar with the whole kind. What causes the hearer to make sense of the utterance is that the predicates used with the noun phrases do not suggest that any particular referent is linked to a particular isolated episode, but they do express a constant or characterising feature of the referent of the NP.

Idioms constitute another aspect of language that contains noun phrases which do not refer to any particular individual, and are discussed in the following section.

4.6. IDIOMS

4.6.1 Definition

An idiom is explained as 'a group of words whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of the constituent words' (*Collins English Dictionary*, 21st Century Edition, fourth edition 2000). Nunberg, Sag & Wasow (1994) use the same explanation as one of the components for defining idioms, viz. conventionality. Other dimensions of idiomacy according to Nunberg et al. (op. cit.) are inflexibility, figuration, proverbiality, informality and affect; none of which 'applies obligatorily to all idioms'. With regard to figuration Nunberg et al. point out that some idioms have no literal meanings, and as such the issue of figuration does not apply to them. The issue of inflexibility relates to the fact that there are certain

syntactic constructions in which idioms may occur. An idiom may, however, change form, such as the tense of the predicate or voice, but this does not seem to affect the reading of the NP.

The semantic interpretation of noun phrases contained in idioms is the matter under investigation in the next section. With regard to Northern Sotho idioms the discussion will be limited to those idioms that can convey literal meaning as well; simply because referents of the noun phrases can be traced from both the literal and figurative views. It should also be noted that idioms are socio-culturally charged; as such they tend to show a link with a particular socio-cultural group.

The following idioms contain noun phrases that will be interpreted with respect to (in)definiteness:

4.6.2 Indefinite NPs

(349) **Go ja [mabu].**

/go wela fase; go palelwa ke selo./

(Lit. To eat soil. --- to fall onto the ground; to fail at doing something.)

(350) **Go sepediša [mpa].**

/go sepela ka go tenoga; go tšama motho a kgopela dijo./

(Lit. To make a/the stomach walk/to walk because of a/the stomach --- to walk with the belly protruding in front; to go about asking for food.)

(351) **Go tšhuma [lesaka].**

/go tloga; go široga./

(Lit. To burn a bag. --- to leave; to give way.)

(352) **Go bula [ditsebe].**

/go kwešiša; go theeletša gabotse./

(Lit. To open ears --- to understand; to listen attentively.)

(353) **Go nkgā [mekgatho].**

/go se kgone go itirela selo ka baka la bjana./

(Lit. To smell of breast milk. --- to be unable to do something because of being too young.)

An idiom may be used in a sentence in any form, without interfering with the interpretation of the noun phrase involved. The following sentences illustrate the usage of some of the above-mentioned idioms:

(354) **Ba be ba tletše ka holong mongwe le mongwe a butše [ditsebe].**

(They were full in a/the hall, each one listening attentively.)

(355) **O sa le mo? Kua gageno [lesaka] le a tšhungwa.**

(Are you still here? At your home they are leaving.)

(356) **Go sepediša [mpa] ga se mo go botse, go rata gore motho a tloge ka gae a jele.**

(To go about asking for food is not nice, a person is supposed to eat before you leave home.)

The noun phrases appearing in the idioms above are in the first place used in a figurative way and do not refer to the entities apparently described by the logical meaning. Taking them literally, the NPs do not refer to unique individual entities but to a whole class. Because of the lack of unique reference these NPs are regarded as indefinite.

The same kind of reference may be said of proverbs, which are defined (*Collins English Dictionary* op. cit.) as short pithy sayings in general use, stating a general truth or piece of advice. Proverbs are also figurative in meaning, containing noun phrases that are symbolic, stating a general state of affairs, and do not refer to any particular referent. Proverbs are not constructed for any particular individual but for the general use of society as an educational or advisory tool. Whilst a proverb picks up the genericity in the NPs the meaning is not literal.

The following examples illustrate NPs in the subject position of proverbs, covering those with copulative predicates. Some subjects are in the possessive construction:

(357) **[Tšhwene] ga e ipone makopo.**

(Lit. A baboon doesn't see its own eye ridges.)

A bad person does not normally realise how bad he is; instead he is aware of other people's shortcomings.

(358) **[Mosadi] ke tšhwene o lewa mabogo.**

(Lit. A woman is a baboon, it is her hands that are 'eaten'.)

The attractive thing about a woman is when she is a hard worker and good at caring for the family.

(359) **[Makhura [a ngwana] ke go rongwa.**

(Lit. A child's fat is to be sent.)

A child gets luck from agreeing to be sent and to assist people especially because those who sent him would give him something in return.

(360) **Tlogatloga e tloga kgale, [modiši [wa kgomo] o tšwa natšo šakeng.**

(Lit. A real starter starts early just as a cattle herder leaves the kraal together with them.)

Each person should learn to do things while still young so that he perfects his skills and does better as an adult, unlike starting to learn to do things as an adult.

NPs in the object position:

(361) **Mmago ngwana o swara [thipa] ka bogaleng.**

(Lit. A child's mother holds a knife at the sharp end.)

A mother will get into dangerous and compromising situations if it means saving her child.

(362) **Ngwana a sa llogo o hwela [tharing].**

(Lit. A child that does not cry dies in a/the thari⁷.)

A person who does not ask for help if he is in trouble will remain in his situation as people will not be aware of his predicament and help him.

(363) **Alela [moeng] gobane motlalekgomo ga a tsebje.**

(Lit. Prepare a bed for a guest because the one who comes with a head of cattle is not known.)

It is proper to show respect to all people because if you are in trouble in future you do not know who is going to help you out.

Like NPs in idioms, NPs in proverbs also have indefinite reference. They do not refer to any particular individual referent but they state a proposition with regard to the whole class of referents defined by the noun phrase.

4.7. CONCLUSIONS

The referent of an indefinite noun phrase is not expected to be uniquely identifiable by the addressee. If the speaker alone is aware of the existence of the referent of the noun phrase but the addressee is not, the noun phrase is still indefinite but specific. A non-specific noun phrase is uttered if the speaker himself does not have any particular referent in mind. Indefinite reference can either remain neutral as to locatability or the search space can be deliberately widened to indicate to the hearer that he is not expected to identify the referent. In this chapter indefiniteness has been divided into simple and complex indefiniteness. Bare noun phrases whose semantic content implies that their referents are not, or need not, be identified constitute simple indefinites.

All simple indefinites share a common semantic interpretation of the unidentifiability of the referent, be it a person, thing or place. They may appear in various syntactic positions, but some of them exhibit ungrammaticality or oddness in the subject position whilst the post-verbal position seems to accommodate all indefinite NPs. The post-verbal position includes the object position, passive construction and subject inversion. **Lefeela**, **aretse**, **šopoding**, **tsoko** and nouns with **-kae** are ungrammatical in the subject position. The referents of these NPs are unfamiliar to the speaker as well. **Bofengfeng**, **-kete** and **semangmang** mainly find themselves a place in the subject position by occurring with a verbal phrase containing **-re**. The verbal phrase suggests that the speaker is in a way familiar with the referent of the noun phrase. He may have heard the noun and forgotten it, he may not have heard it properly in the first place or he may deliberately decide to keep the identity of the referent under wraps. Compounds with **tsoko** do appear in the subject position, though the more frequent occurrence is in the post-verbal position. The referent of a compound with **tsoko** is familiar to the speaker. **Mmenyane** and **nnakotse** rarely occur in the subject position (unless in an exclamation), and if they do they usually take a demonstrative. The speaker is familiar with the referent of **mmenyane** and **nnakotse**. **Boratapelo** in the subject position has a certain generic undertone, not referring to a specific location linked to a particular individual at the time of utterance.

Interrogatives **mang**, **eng** and **kae** are also unacceptable in the subject position, unless they appear in an echo question. An echo question is accompanied by a higher tone, which is only distinguishable if the utterance is presented orally. However, the post-verbal position of subject inversion is grammatically acceptable for these interrogatives. They

may also appear in cleft sentences. Their coordinated counterparts appear in the subject position. Most of these noun phrases appear in prepositional phrases, provided the environment is compatible with their semantic content. For instance, **tsoko** on its own cannot be the complement of **ga** since complements of **ga** are supposed to have the feature [+human] and **tsoko** is [-human]. Locative indefinites appear with fewer prepositions.

Nominal modifiers with semantic content that is incompatible with definiteness are used with noun phrases, and they transfer that feature onto the noun phrase. Complex indefinites obtain their reading from co-occurring modifiers. These modifiers can also appear without the head noun, and agreement morphology narrows the scope with regard to the type or class of the referent. Modifiers **mang**, **mong/bang**, **-fe** and **-kae** are interrogatives. They basically express 'not knowing', and are therefore incompatible with unique identifiability. Even the speaker is not familiar with the referent. **-Ngwe** and **-šele** are not interrogatives but they both express unidentifiability in the sense that whilst the noun is mentioned or known, the referent is a different or another one, but of the same type that the NP describes.

The object position is suitable for all complex indefinites. They also appear in prepositional phrases, if there is no semantic conflict between the preposition and the complement. **Mang**, **mong/bang**, **-fe** and **-kae** are ungrammatical in the subject position. They do however find acceptability in the post-verbal position in subject inversion and passive sentences. They also appear in cleft sentences. **-Ngwe** and **-šele** appear in the subject position, but differently. **-Ngwe** can appear without the head noun in this position, though unique identifiability is not ensured. For the meaning 'a certain', **-ngwe** can only appear directly after the head noun and it expresses specificity. **-Šele** conveys another meaning, viz. foreign or strange, that is not necessarily indefinite. Indefinite **-šele** (other/different) prefers the post-verbal position. Its appearance in the subject position seems more unusual than ungrammatical, probably because of grammaticality in terms of the other interpretation.

With regard to genericity there is a lack of uniqueness since reference is made to 'kind' and not to individuals. The kind of verb used with the NP, which contributes to directing the reading, expresses a permanent or characteristic feature and not a single episode related to an individual referent. Kind-referring NPs appear both preverbally and post-verbally.

NPs contained in idioms and proverbs also never refer to individuals. They express general trends, characteristic or permanent features. Furthermore, idioms and proverbs are figurative; as such they do not refer to individual referents as per their logical meaning.

Morphologically it has also emerged, for the first time, in this study that nominal prefix **bo-** (class 14) possesses the semantic content of a locative with regard to indefiniteness. On the syntactic front, all NPs discussed in this chapter can appear post-verbally. It appears that the preverbal position accepts mainly specific indefinites and NPs with a generic interpretation. However, since (in)definiteness is basically a pragmatic category, especially in the case of non-articled languages, the issue concerning the subject position would rather be viewed as a default reading than a hard and fast rule. Where pragmatic factors dictate, a modifier's interpretation may indicate the unexpected and still be acceptable. Finally, simple and complex indefinites, kind-referring NPs, NPs in idioms and proverbs all lack the feature [+Def]. They do not ensure unique identifiability of their referent.

FOOTNOTES

¹ **Makobela** refers to meat shared by the men who were involved in slaughtering a beast.

² Bible translations according to The King James (KJV) Bible - <http://www.bibledatabase.net/>

³ The use of capitals for echo questions is adopted from Demuth & Harford (1999).

⁴ **O** should be **yo**.

⁵ **Lerotse** is a type of melon that can only be eaten cooked, at various stages of growth, to make different types of dishes, such as **mogouwane** and **kgodu**.

⁶ **Morogo** is a general term for all green leafy vegetables.

⁷ **Thari** is made of a tanned domestic animal's (goat/sheep) hide and is used to carry an infant on one's back.

CHAPTER FIVE

AMBIGUITY IN DEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

5.1 AIM

This chapter discusses possible ambiguous interpretations in the definiteness of noun phrases in Northern Sotho. The aim in this chapter is to discover what interpretations a bare noun phrase may have and under what circumstances. The NP will be examined in various syntactic positions, in varying forms. It has been established from chapter 3 that the noun phrase may have definite reference if certain pragmatic conditions are met. Such conditions that make the referent of the noun phrase familiar can be linguistic or non-linguistic. For instance, situational or anaphoric factors may render the NP familiar to the addressee, leading to unique identifiability of the referent. Chapter 4 investigated a number of NPs that have indefinite reference. Indefinite NPs may not be used in other contexts for definite reference. With definite NPs, however, without the pragmatic conditions that render them definite the NP cannot still be definite, except for inherently unique referents. This chapter examines possible interpretations that such NPs may take in different syntactic positions.

5.2 BARE NPs

5.2.1 Types of NPs

Noun phrases may be presented in utterances/sentences in count or mass forms. Count nouns are divided into singular and plural. A singular noun phrase refers to a person or a thing, whilst a plural noun phrase refers to more than one person or thing or different kinds of people or things. On the other hand a mass noun refers to a substance that does not possess a defined form, such as liquid or gas. The noun class system makes it easy to identify nouns on the morphological level as singular and plural. A singular nominal class has a plural counterpart. For instance the plural of a noun in class 1 **mo-** will belong to class 2 **ba-**. Mass nouns do not all possess a clear singular/plural dichotomy because the referent cannot be counted. However, a mass noun can be expressed in the plural to refer to different kinds. The NP is examined in these three forms and their interpretations with regard to definiteness/indefiniteness will be observed.

5.2.2 Types of predicates

Two major types of predicates exist in Northern Sotho, viz. the verb and the copulative. The verb expresses the action performed by the subject, the process it undergoes or the state in which it is. The verb can appear either as a single unit predicating the subject or as a compound verb consisting of a main verb and a deficient verb. In a compound verb, the deficient verb always precedes the main verb and each possesses its own agreement morphology. The deficient verb can never appear without the main verb. For example:

The main verb only:

- (1) **Segotlane se lahla diaparo.**
(A/the toddler throws (the) clothes away.)

Deficient and main verbs:

- (2) **Segotlane se šetše se lahla diaparo.**
(A/the toddler is already throwing (the) clothes away.)

The verb displays a further distinction according to the number of arguments that it may take. An argument is a necessary component of the predicate argument structure (PAS). It can be a noun phrase or a clause that has a referential function. An argument has a specific relationship with the predicate; this relationship is reflected in the lexical-semantic representation. The PAS reflects the number of arguments that a predicate may take. An external argument is the NP or clause in the subject position while an internal argument occupies the object position. A distinction is drawn between one-place predicates, two-place predicates and three-place predicates: intransitive verbs are called one-place predicates because they can only have one argument, viz. an external argument one. Transitive verbs are further divided into monotransitive and ditransitive verbs. The former are two-place predicates. They have two arguments, one external and one internal, whereas the latter are three-place predicates. They have three arguments, one external and two internal. Some verbs may acquire a transitivity affix such as applicative **-el-** and causative **-iš-**, thereby altering from one-place to two-place or from two-place to three-place predicates. Detransitivising affixes, reciprocal **-an-** and reflexive **i-**, reduce the number of arguments by one. The deficient verb will be left out as it does not have any

effect on transitivity, neither will it be discussed in any detail in this study. The following examples illustrate the transitivity of the verb as explained above:

Intransitive verb:

(3) **Pula e a na.**

(It rains.)

Monotransitive verb:

(4) **Mosadi o roba legong.**

(A/the woman breaks a/the firewood.)

Ditransitive verb:

(5) **Mma o fa koko pitša.**

((My) mother gives (my) grandmother a/the pot.)

The verbs in examples (3), (4) and (5) are recorded in their basic forms. It is in the nature of **-na** to have no object. **-roba** can only have one object, in this case **legong**. **-fa** must have two objects, in the case of example (5) **koko** and **pitša**. When verbs gain a transitivising affix one more internal argument is added, as illustrated in the following examples:

(6) **Pula e neja bana.**

(It rains for/onto (the) children.)

(7) **Mosadi o robiša bana legong.**

(A/the woman makes (the) children break a/the firewood.)

Three objects are too much, and they are usually distributed in different clauses or one is pronominalised.

The copulative represents one other kind of predicate, which is not a verb. It predicates the subject differently in various ways, structurally and semantically. The information contained in the copulative regarding the subject does not constitute an action, a process or a state.

Poulos & Louwrens (1994) distinguish four types of copulatives in Northern Sotho according to structure and/or meaning, viz. identifying, descriptive, locational and associative copulatives. The structure of any of the four types of copulative varies according to the mood, the tense and whether it is in the positive or negative. The basic structure (indicative, positive) of the identifying copulative is **ke** + NP. It serves to identify the referent (subject), i.e. the NP complement of the copula **ke** identifies the referent of the subject NP. The complement itself may not always refer; it may also predicate. Descriptive and locational copulatives exhibit a similar structure. Linguists who distinguish only two or three types of copulatives in Northern Sotho do not differentiate between descriptive and locational copulatives; they only consider structure (cf. Lombard 1985, Ziervogel et al. 1969). However, the meaning expressed by the two is different, as are the semantic classes of nouns that may appear as complement of either of the two. Poulos & Louwrens (op. cit.) treat them separately because they take the meaning that the copulatives express into account as well. The descriptive copulative structure is AgrS + NP. The NP complement is a noun of class 6 or 14 and describes the referent. The locational copulative structure is AgrS + NP_{loc}. NP_{loc} provides information regarding the locality of the referent. Finally, the associative copulative structure is AgrS + **na le** + NP, and it expresses association in terms of ownership or 'being in the company of'. The following examples illustrate the basic structure of different types of copulatives as explained above:

- (8) **Malome ke moruti.**
 ((My) uncle is a priest.)
- (9) **Malome o bohlale.**
 ((My) uncle is clever.)
- (10) **Malome o thabeng.**
 ((My) uncle is on a/the mountain.)
- (11) **Malome o na le bana.**
 ((My) uncle has/is in the company of (the) children.)

Of interest to this study are the main verb and the copulative. The deficient verb will not be discussed any further.

5.2.3 Grammatical functions

The criteria for grammatical functions are word order, inflection and movement. These criteria involve the noun phrase as subject, object and complement. Northern Sotho is a subject-initial language with a basic syntactic structure S-V-(O). The subject is the external argument of the predicate. A predicate cannot but have a subject. Grammatically the subject position is to the left of the predicate. Like all Bantu languages, the language is agglutinating, with rich inflectional morphology. Subjectival agreement is obligatory in sentence construction for all verbal forms – except for the imperative and infinitive moods. A grammatical subject of a sentence is, therefore, linked to the verbal stem by means of this compulsory morpheme. Subjectival agreement morphemes vary according to nominal classes. The object is the internal argument of the predicate and its position is post-verbal. As has been explained under types of predicates above, not every predicate has an object. Ditransitive verbs take two objects, the direct object following directly after the verb stem, followed by the indirect object. The object has no compulsory agreement with the verb. Where the object clitic appears, it appears preverbally as a marker of the topic status of the object.

This basic word order is, however, subject to pragmatically determined flexibility. There is movement in passive constructions and in subject inversion. In passive sentences passive morphology de-externalises the subject argument and moves it to the post-verbal object position, leaving an empty subject position with no theta role. Post-verbally the original subject becomes a complement of **ke**. The object occupies the empty subject position, leaving a trace in the position it vacated. The subject may also be right-dislocated and leave an empty subject position, which will be filled by existential **go** coindexed with agreement of inflection. The latter kind of movement is called subject inversion (SI).

It is therefore imperative that, when dealing with the interpretation of a noun phrase in a sentence or an utterance, attention should be paid to the type of the noun phrase, the type of the predicate and all grammatical functions involved.

5.2.4 Bare NPs in Northern Sotho

This section looks at the bare NP in various syntactic positions, with varying grammatical roles. The NP may appear as a subject, an object or a complement. The predicate with

which it appears may be a verb (intransitive or transitive) or a copulative. The role of grammatical functions such as the basic word order, inflectional morphology as well as word order resulting from movement will be taken into account. Within this context the behaviour and interpretations of the bare noun phrase are then examined. The point of departure is to investigate the noun phrase as subject, predicated by the verb.

5.2.4.1 The predicate has a verb

5.2.4.1.1 Subject

The first NP subject that will be dealt with here is that of class 9 because of its unique behaviour with regard to subjectival agreement. Grammatically, subjectival agreement of class 9 is **e**. E.g.:

- (12) **[Kgomo] e] tswaletše mphorogohlong wa dithaba, [e] gana ge bašemanyana ba tšea mohlana.**

(Matsepe 1972: 158)

(A/the cow has calved in a/the mountain cliff, it refuses (the) boys to take the placenta.)

However, common nouns of this class denoting a person's status or profession take class 1 agreement morpheme as well, as illustrated in (13)(b) below:

- (13) (a) **O tšhaba go ya sepetlele; o nagana gore [ngaka] e] yo mo hlaba.**

(He is scared of going to the hospital; he thinks that a/the doctor is going to inject him.)

- (b) **O tšhaba go ya sepetlele; o nagana gore [ngaka] o] yo mo hlaba.**

(He is scared of going to the hospital; he thinks that the doctor is going to inject him.)

In (13)(a) NP **ngaka** (doctor) is linked to the verb by a class 9 agreement morpheme **e**. As far as interpretation is concerned the referent of the NP can be identifiable to both discourse participants, to the speaker alone, or to none of them. The utterance may be based on the fact that it is common knowledge that hospitals employ doctors and their job

often encompasses using an injection; without necessarily being concerned about which specific doctor is going to perform the procedure. With its normal class agreement morphology the noun phrase seems to be ambiguous as to definiteness and indefiniteness. In (b) class 1 agreement morphology is used; and on the interpretation level the noun shifts status from being a common noun to behaving like a proper noun. NP **ngaka** is used as if it is a personal proper name and its referent becomes uniquely identifiable within a given context. The use of AgrS-**o** suggests that the speaker knows which doctor he is referring to and he expects the addressee to uniquely identify the doctor.

Similarly, hypothetically, if I arrive at Dr Marishane's surgery and ask the receptionist:

- (14) (a) **[E] fihlile [ngaka]?**
 (Has a/the doctor arrived?)

and he says 'Yes', on my turn to go into the consulting room I will simply be glad that there is a professional doctor to attend to my needs. I may not even bother about getting the name of the doctor. On the contrary if I ask:

- (b) **[O] fihlile [ngaka]?**
 (Has the doctor arrived?)

and he answers 'Yes', I will be annoyed if I open the door to the consulting room and find anyone other than Dr Marishane. In the case of (b) the NP **ngaka** can only refer to Dr Marishane – a unique doctor in a given context – and to no other doctor.

Other scholars have noticed the alternative agreement potential of personal common nouns of class 9, as demonstrated by the following excerpt:

- (15) 'We should, however, begin by drawing attention to the nice distinction in meaning that is brought about by the different subjectival concords in the following sentences:

kgoši o sepetše
kgoši e sepetše

In the first sentence the relationship between the speaker and the chief is close, i.e. the utterance may be used by the chief's own subject. In the second sentence the relationship is remote, i.e. the utterance may be used by a non-subject of the chief.'

(Mokgokong 1975:81)

Mokgokong explains the difference between the uses of class 1 and class 9 agreement morphemes in terms of closeness and remoteness of relationship. In clarifying 'closeness' Mokgokong adds that the first utterance is likely to be used by the chief's own subject. He explains a remote relationship as that between a chief and a non-subject. Put differently; if the speaker is the chief's subject it is expected that he would know who his chief is and this would normally be his only chief. Relevant to the discussion at hand is the question, in which of the two sentences is the referent of NP **kgoši** uniquely identifiable to both the speaker and the hearer? If the other discourse participant is also a subject of the chief the referent of NP **kgoši** would be uniquely identifiable to both. The hearer may not be a subject of the chief but may similarly be aware of the identity of the chief being talked about. Unpacking the latter relationship and relating it to the issue of (in)definiteness, an utterance like this would be used if the speaker does not necessarily expect the hearer to be able to identify the referent. This non-commitment to uniqueness opens up various possibilities regarding identifiability. With its own class agreement, NP subject **kgoši** is ambiguous as to definiteness and indefiniteness whilst a class 1 agreement morpheme renders it definite.

The suggestion put forward in this study, that the choice of class 1 agreement morphology is motivated by mutual awareness of the identity of the referent rather than 'closeness and subjecthood', is illustrated in the following excerpt:

- (16) **Leilane o ile go kwa [kgoši] a] re badimo ba be le yena, ka pelong a re ba be le [yena [kgoši] ka gore a sa tlile go [mo] laetša gore magoši ao a [mo] tšhabago – a tšhaba nong ye e hlobilwego diphego e bilego e ripilwe molomo le dinala.**

(Matsepe 1968: 26)

(When Leilane heard the chief saying the gods be with him, in his heart he said the gods be with the chief - specifically - because he was to show him

that those chiefs who are afraid of him (the chief) are afraid of a vulture whose wings have been plucked off and the mouth and nails cut off.)

Firstly, the excerpt constitutes the words of the narrator, not of any character in the book who may be a subject of this particular chief. Prior to this passage the narrator took the reader to the royal place of *kgoši* Lefehlo where Leilane was to be tried at a traditional court. Leilane assaulted and insulted his wife, Mohlatša, and his father-in-law, Morara. In the excerpt above the name of the chief is not mentioned, but the excerpt discusses issues relating to Leilane's case. The narrator chooses to use class 1 **a**, **yena** and **mo** instead of class 9 **e**, **yona** and **e**; not because he is a subject of the chief but because he holds the presupposition that the reader can at this stage in the story uniquely identify this particular chief, based on the fact that he made a proper introduction of the chief to the reader earlier in the story and therefore no ambiguity can exist.

The next excerpt concerns a class 9 noun **ngaka** (doctor) and how the narrator alters class 1 and class 9 agreement morphemes and pronouns, depending on mutual familiarity of the referent:

- (17) **Morara o tšere Mohlatša a mo iša banneng gore ba mo alafe dintho tšeo di bego di šetše di senyega ka ge e be e le selemo. Ba hlakile nae¹ kudu, ba di hlatswa ka se le sela, ba di tlema ka morobadigale o borutho le lehwana, ba di oretša boya bja kome le tše dingwe, aowa kgoši – ba ile ba mo emaemela e le ruri gobane morago ga kgwedi ke ge di šetše di thoma go roka legogo. (a) [Ngaka] yeo e bego] e] mo alafa, [e] be [e] se ka tlase ga kgoši Lefehlo, eupša [e] bušwa ke Nthumule yoo a bego a le kgojana le Lefehlo. [Ngaka] ye e be] e] tsebanttho e le ruri , (b) e le [yena] a] alafago ba ba tšwago go gobala marumong, ka gona, ka kwano ya [gagwe] le Nthumule, [o] be [a] se [a] swanela go alafa yo mongwe le yo mongwe ka ntle ga taelo le kwano. (c) Mang le mang yo a tlogo go [yena] o] be [a] swanetše go mo iša mošate gore ba ye go senka ge e ka ba ga go [ngaka] ye nngwe] [ye] e] ka mo kgonago ka ntle ga [gagwe] ka gore nnete gona marumo a a ilelwa.**

(Matsepe 1968:22-23)

(Morara took Mohlatša to men (healers) so that they could treat her wounds that were already septic because it was summer. They struggled, washing them with this and that, dressing them with warm *morobadigale* and *lehwana* (types of medicine), smoking them with the fur of a klipspringer and others – indeed they tried because after a month they (the wounds) started to dry up. A doctor that was treating her was not under *kgoši* Lefehlo, but was a subject of Nthumule. The doctor was very good with wounds – he was the one charged with the responsibility of treating war casualties. As a result, according to his agreement with Nthumule he was not supposed to treat just anybody without instruction and agreement. Anyone who came to him was supposed to be taken to the royal house and an assessment would be made regarding the possibility of there being another doctor besides him who could treat the patient successfully, because in essence, war is sacred.)

In the extract above, the reader is informed that Mohlatša was taken to healers for the treatment of her wounds. In the sentence marked (a) the narrator introduces a doctor whose identity had never been discussed previously and who is, as a result, unfamiliar to the reader. The introduction is made by a class 9 relative clause **ye e bego e mo alafa** (that was treating her), and subsequent agreement morphemes in the remainder of the sentence are all class 9 **e**. The first part of the following sentence marked (b) picks up the recently introduced **ngaka** (doctor) by class 9 morphology, demonstrative **ye** and AgrS **e**. Once co-reference is made and the reader is familiar with the doctor, in the remaining part of the sentence the narrator switches to class 1 pronouns **yena** and **gagwe** and AgrS **a**. The narrator chooses class 1 morphology because he is talking about the doctor whose identity he has already established for the reader. A class 1 agreement morpheme could not be used for a class 9 noun that has indefinite reference. In the last sentence of the excerpt (c) the noun phrase **ngaka** has two separate references. At the beginning of the sentence the narrator uses class 1 **yena**, **o** and **a** for the doctor with whom the reader is familiar. The last pronoun **gagwe** also refers to him; it is class 1 too. The other part of the sentence concerns ‘another doctor’, with indefinite reference, hence the use of class 9 **ye nngwe; ye e**, and not class 1 **yo mongwe; yo a**.

Personal common nouns of class 9 that do not denote social status or profession do not possess this option, as displayed below:

- (18) (a) **[Kgarebe] e] hloile magaba.**
 (A/the young lady hates (the) tubers of sweet bark tree.)
 (b) ***[Kgarebe] o] hloile magaba.**

A difficulty arises as to the situation with other noun classes which do not have the luxury of an option when it comes to the verbal agreement morpheme. Can their only agreement morpheme readily solve the (in)definiteness problem to the extent that the interpretation of a bare noun phrase can rely on its use? One way of solving the problem may be to look at the influence that the information structure may exert on the syntactic structure. The NP would therefore have to be examined in various syntactic positions.

In the following sections the possibility of whether the reading of the bare NP as subject can be definite or not is probed. In the previous examples larger portions of discourse were used to provide context. On the contrary, the following examples will appear as single sentences, divorced from any context. Hypothetical scenarios will be sketched to facilitate possible interpretations of the NPs. It becomes necessary to check these sentences as well, since in natural language any utterance may occur at any time, whether it is related to the topic or not. Not every communication situation involves introducing the topic and continuing without any interruptions. Leaving other possibilities out may result in flawed theoretical assumptions.

NP subject of intransitive verb

Linguistic expressions such as NPs that are assigned Θ -roles are called arguments. NPs and clauses that carry out a referential function are potential arguments, and they constitute the necessary elements in the predicate argument structure. An intransitive verb is a predicate that takes only one argument, an external argument, and has no internal argument. A referring expression can appear as an external argument of an intransitive verb. It is important to examine the interpretation of the NP in this position to see whether it can be unambiguously definite or indefinite, or if there is a possibility of ambiguity. In doing so, some of the possible interpretations of the NP will be brought to light. Examples (19) – (21) below contain an NP subject of intransitive verbs:

- (19) **[Mokgaditswana] o tsene ka mo!**
 (A/the lizard got in here!)

- (a) The speaker and the hearer may have been chasing a lizard and a rat around, and the rat has been captured. The speaker may have seen where the lizard is hiding. NP **mokgaditswana** will be definite because the lizard being referred to is familiar to the addressee as well.
- (b) Example (19) may be uttered as a response to a surprise regarding the speaker's behaviour – of moving away from where he was seated or of looking at a particular spot. He may be the only one who has seen a lizard entering that place. There may have been neither prior mention of any lizard nor awareness of the existence of any. In that event, NP **mokgaditswana** is indefinite since it constitutes new information as far as the addressee is concerned.

(20) **[Matlakala] a a wa.**
 ((The) leaves are falling.)

- (a) NP **matlakala** may be referring to a referent that is known to both participants. There may have been prior mention of the leaves or the leaves may be in full view of both participants. The NP will possess definite interpretation.
- (b) The speaker may appear to lose concentration in a conversation, and instead listens attentively to something else. When his loss of attention is observed or remarked about he may utter (20) as an explanation. He may have been the only one who heard the rattling noise and is just informing the addressee that what he seemed concerned about is nothing serious. The identity of the falling leaves may not be relevant to what they are talking about. He may also be the only one aware of which leaves are falling. NP **matlakala** in this case is indefinite.

(21) **[Madi] a a ela.**
 ((The) blood flows)

- (a) Example (21) may represent a statement about the nature of blood, with no specific blood being referred to. E.g. a preschool teacher could be teaching

the difference between liquids and solids, classifying some as 'flowing' and others as 'not flowing'. In that case the NP has a generic interpretation.

- (b) Two nurses may be in the trauma unit of a hospital helping a patient with a gaping wound and guarding against him losing more blood than he already has. If one of them utters (21), it becomes clear to the hearer which blood is being referred to. The NP will therefore have a definite interpretation.
- (c) It may also be a statement; perhaps an exclamation or announcement about something that only the speaker is aware of. He may also immediately interrupt the conversation and go to do something about it. The speaker may be conducting a telephone conversation with the addressee. The addressee may not be aware of any likelihood of the existence of blood where the speaker is situated. He may also not know whose blood is being talked about. The NP will have indefinite interpretation.

Drawing from the illustrations above, as far as the NP subject of an intransitive verb is concerned there is potential for it to be either definite or not. Though it is not a common occurrence in narration, it is possible to introduce a referent by a clause-initial NP. Depending on the verb, i.e. if its semantic content implies a permanent or a characteristic feature of the referent of the NP, a generic interpretation is attained, e.g. (21a).

The next section deals with the NP subject of a transitive verb.

The NP subject of transitive verb

A transitive verb takes, in addition to an external argument, one or more internal arguments.

NP subject of monotransitive verb:

The following sentence, which is the first in a novel (excluding the introductory paragraph, in which the narrator portrays the general truths of life as he observes them, which has nothing to do with the characters *per se*), illustrates this aspect. The sentence contains a common noun phrase that the narrator introduces to his reader. NP subject **banna** (men) constitutes unfamiliar, new or unknown information:

- (22) **[Banna] ba ohlile maledu kua kgorong, moo megopolo ya bona e šetšego e babaela.**

(Matsepe 1968:1)

(Men have twisted beards there at a/the *kgoro*, where their minds are already limping – ‘tired’.)

- (a) In the excerpt above NP **banna** is indefinite since the reader is only being introduced to it. It is the initial sentence in the story of the novel and no prior mention of any men could have been possible.
- (b) The same sentence would still be relevant if the referent of NP **banna** was familiar to the reader as well.

Other examples:

- (23) **[Mašole] a] hlasela dibo tša manaba.**

((The) soldiers raid the enemies’ refuge.)

- (a) Example (23) may express a statement about what soldiers generally do as a military strategy. In this case the NP does not refer to any particular group of soldiers, and therefore has no definite reference. If the sentence expresses a general or regular occurrence the NP subject will have a generic interpretation.
- (b) Alternatively it may be a statement about an incident taking place at the time of utterance. The referent of the NP may be a particular group of soldiers known to both discourse participants. If the referent is uniquely identifiable to both participants it is definite.
- (c) The addressee may not be in the same room as the speaker. The speaker may be watching a documentary on television, of which the addressee is not aware. This utterance may be an expression of the speaker’s fascination with what he sees. If only the speaker can identify the referent of the noun phrase but the hearer cannot, it is regarded as indefinite, but specific.

- (24) **[Madi] a a ntšhela.**

((The) blood is pouring on me.)

- (a) The blood pouring on the speaker may either be in full view of both discourse participants or the NP may be accessible from previous discourse. The interpretation of the NP **madi** in such a situation will be definite.
- (b) The utterance may comprise an announcement or report about what is happening to the speaker without the hearer having prior knowledge or any form of familiarity with regard to the identity of the blood being referred to. In this case the NP **madi** would be indefinite.

(25) **[Segwaba] se metša dithapo.**

(A/the glutton swallows (the) pips.)

- (a) There may be a perception that if a person is a glutton he will not use the opportunity to separate and spit out (the) pips. It may seem a waste of time, preventing him from eating as much as he can. Example (25) may represent a remark about the general behaviour of gluttons. In that case the NP bears no definite reference. It reports an assumed characteristic of any referent that is **segwaba**. The NP **segwaba** in this case will be interpreted as generic.
- (b) A group of people may be eating, one of them a glutton known to both the speaker and the hearer. Leisurely eaters may have pips in front of them whilst there may be no pips in front of the person that is regarded as a glutton. The NP **segwaba** in this instance would not refer to gluttons in general but to the one in the immediate physical environment. The NP is therefore definite.
- (c) Example (25) may represent a report about what the speaker is seeing, of which the hearer is not aware. The NP **segwaba** in this case will invoke an indefinite interpretation.

In the case of example (22), nothing in the book prior to this sentence is said about any men nor is there any suggestion about the existence of any men. According to Lyons (1977b:508) a correlation exists between a cognitive point of departure and a communicative point of departure. This point explains why it is a specific rather than a non-specific noun phrase that would be expected in the subject position. In this respect an important point to note is that whilst the referent of a specific NP is known to the speaker, it is not necessarily familiar to the hearer. A noun phrase is regarded as definite only if it is

familiar to both discourse participants. Lyons (op. cit.) further argues that ‘it is reasonable to suppose that what the speaker takes as the cognitive point of departure will depend upon its psychological salience for him at the time – upon its being uppermost in his mind’. Granted the probability of the foregoing views, in the case of sentence (22) the referent **banna** (men) may be psychologically salient for the narrator, hence its appearance in the initial position of the sentence. In this case the psychological subject and the thematic subject coincide. For the narrator the referent of the NP is known, but for the reader it constitutes new information. As such the NP is regarded as indefinite.

In comparing a sentence like (24) **Madi a a ntšhela** with (21) **Madi a a ela** it becomes clear why the former can only have a definite and indefinite interpretation and not a generic one, whilst all three interpretations are attainable with the latter. It is neither a permanent nor a characteristic feature of blood to pour itself on anyone. But to flow or to be liquid is. **-tšhela** (pour) expresses an instantaneous event whilst **-ela** expresses a characteristic feature of the referent. As such, not every NP in the subject position can take both the generic and non-generic reading. The class of the verb used with the NP also influences the reading.

Ditransitive verb

NP subject of ditransitive verb:

- (26) **[Baoki] ba fa balwetši dihlare.**
 ((The) nurses give (the) patients medicine.)
- (a) This may be a statement about what nurses do as a matter of routine. There may be no particular group of nurses giving out medicine to any patients. The NP **baoki** would therefore have generic reference.
- (b) It may concern an activity that takes place at the time of utterance, witnessed by the speaker and the hearer in the immediate physical environment. In such a case the NP subject **baoki** will have definite reference.
- (c) It may be a statement uttered by the speaker reporting what he sees at the time of utterance, even though the hearer may not have prior knowledge of or be familiar with, the referent of NP **baoki**. The NP would have indefinite reference.

(27) **[Panka] e adima batho tšhelete.**

(A/the bank lends (the) people money.)

- (a) One of the practices of banking institutions is to lend people money. It may be a statement that has nothing to do with lending by any particular bank. The NP subject would be interpreted as generic.
- (b) The speaker and hearer may be witnessing people queuing at a particular banking institution in order to borrow money. If the referent of the NP is this particular bank then the reference is definite.

(28) **[Bjala] bo hlokiša motho tlhaloganyo.**

(Beer causes a person not to have insight.)

Example (28) has generic interpretation. With the feature [-animate] mass noun phrases are incapable of being an agent. They gain two objects through transitivity affixes, and these seem to impose a generic reading on the subject NP.

The foregoing examples illustrate that the NP subject of a transitive verb can also be ambiguous as to (in)definiteness. The possible interpretations for this position are definite, indefinite and generic. Indefinite reference in the subject position seems to favour a specific reading.

The examples discussed thus far involving the subject position are largely most appropriate for generic reading. With regard to definite and indefinite interpretation, they are merely illustrations of possible ambiguity. In discourse, referent tracing plays an important role. Therefore certain referent tracing mechanisms such as those discussed in chapters 3 and 4 are used for disambiguation. It is normally not the intention of the speaker to create ambiguity deliberately. Unmodified subject NPs that are not covered by the pragmatic conditions discussed in chapter 3 will always be ambiguous unless the predicate allows a generic reading. The next section discusses the interpretation of the noun phrase in the object position.

5.2.4.1.2 Object

In 5.2.2 the difference between different types of transitive verbs was described. Transitives take objects. This section examines the interpretation of all NP internal argument positions. The internal argument of a monotransitive verb will receive attention first. For ditransitive verbs, the direct and the indirect objects will be treated separately.

Transitive verb

NP object of a monotransitive verb

(29) **Matsemela o nwa [bjala].**

(Matsemela drinks beer.)

- (a) Matsemela may not be drinking anything at all at the time of utterance. The utterance may impart information regarding regularity, that Matsemela is not a teetotaller. The NP object **bjala** therefore has a generic interpretation.
- (b) If there are different types of drinks at a table and the speaker is informing the hearer about which drink is presently in Matsemela's glass, the NP **bjala** would be definite.
- (c) The speaker may be the only one aware of what Matsemela is doing at the time of utterance. The hearer may not even have been aware of the availability of beer in the vicinity and has only just been introduced to this situation. In this case NP **bjala** will be indefinite.

(30) **Bašemane ba hlokomela [dikgomo].**

((The) boys look after (the) cattle.)

- (a) Example (30) may represent a general statement about boys' chores, with no particular boys or cattle being referred to. In such a case the NP **dikgomo** is not definite, but has a generic interpretation.

- (b) It may refer to a particular family's boys and the family's cattle. If the particular herd of cattle is inclusively identifiable by both the speaker and the hearer, the NP is definite.
- (c) The speaker may be aware of the existence of some cattle, which is unknown to the hearer. In that case the NP will be indefinite.

(31) **Na nka fokotša mehlare ye? Gape nna ke tšhaba [noga].**

(Can I thin out these trees? I am scared of a/the snake.)

- (a) The speaker may be a gardener. There may not have been any snake anywhere near, or in, the garden where the gardener wants to cut the trees. The mere fact that the garden is cluttered makes it a potential hazard for harbouring snakes. Therefore the NP **noga** has generic reference.
- (b) There was an incident in the news during 2004 concerning a Johannesburg Absa bank branch and its disgruntled client who let a group of live snakes out of a bag. Suppose one of the snakes was seen hiding among some decorative plants in one corner inside the building. After the ordeal one employee might utter the same to his senior. It would be in the knowledge that one snake is still there and it must be found so that they can work without fear. The NP **noga** will in this case have definite reference, referring to a particular snake with which both the speaker and the hearer are familiar.
- (c) The gardener may have seen a snake the day previously but not have notified the garden owner. This could be its first mention, from which the next utterance may follow. The speaker may be aware of the existence and the identity of the snake, but because the NP constitutes new information for the hearer it is regarded as indefinite.

5.2.4.1.3 Direct and indirect object

Ditransitive verb

The direct object will be treated first, followed by the indirect object.

Direct object:

(32) **Malome o adima [banna] digarafo.**

((My) uncle lends (the) men (the) shovels.)

- (a) The speaker may be informing the hearer about what his uncle does for a living. It may be common knowledge that it is generally men who use shovels. Without any particular men being referred to, NP **banna** has a generic reading.
- (b) Suppose there is a funeral in the village and men have arrived to borrow shovels in order to dig the grave. The speaker's uncle is in the storeroom with the men when his wife (who had seen them before) enquires where her husband is or calls him. When the speaker utters (32) the referent of the NP **banna** is familiar to his aunt (the hearer). The NP is therefore definite.
- (c) The identity of the men may be known to the speaker but not to the hearer. Furthermore the identity of the men may not be relevant; it may suffice that **malome** lends some men (the) shovels. In this case the NP **banna** is indefinite.

(33) **Mooki o fa [molwetši] dihlare.**

(A/the nurse gives a/the patient medicine.)

- (a) This may be an activity that is being performed at the time of utterance. It may be a report about a particular patient receiving medicine about whom both the speaker and hearer are aware. In that case the direct object will have definite reference.
- (b) Only the speaker may be aware of what the nurse is doing. The speaker and the hearer may be waiting for the nurse and the hearer wondering what is taking her so long. The hearer may not be aware that there is any patient in the vicinity or that the nurse is supposed to give anyone medication. The NP **molwetši** in this case will have indefinite reference.

(34) **Banenyana ba goletša [meetse] mollo.**

((The) girls make (the) fire for (the) water.)

- (a) There may have been talk of water previously. It might have been mentioned or understood that the water has to be warm or hot, e.g. for bathing or for tea, respectively. When the girls make the fire the speaker may utter (34) to inform the hearer that it is to heat the water that he is familiar with. In this case the NP **meetse** will have definite reference.
- (b) The hearer may be seeing the girls making the fire, without any knowledge of what it is intended for. There may have not been an earlier mention of any water. When the speaker utters (34) the NP **meetse** will convey new information to the hearer, hence it is indefinite.

It becomes evident from the three examples above that the direct object of a ditransitive verb is ambiguous as to generic, definite and indefinite interpretations. In the case of example (33), being given medicine by nurses is what patients normally experience. If there is no particular patient receiving medicine, who is known to both discourse participants, NP **molwetši** cannot have definite reference. If the NP were plural it would allow a generic reading. However, as a singular direct object in this example it is not compatible with genericity.

Indirect object:

- (35) **Malome o adima banna [digarafo].**
 ((My) uncle lends (the) men (the) shovels.)
- (a) Suppose there is a funeral in the village and the men have arrived to borrow shovels so as to dig the grave. The speaker's uncle is in the storeroom with the men when his wife enquires about his whereabouts or calls him. When the speaker utters (35) the referent of the NP **digarafo** is familiar to his uncle's wife (the hearer) as well. The NP is therefore definite.
- (b) Again, the speaker may be informing the hearer about what his uncle does for a living. The NP **digarafo** would be indefinite because it may be only the speaker who is familiar with the referent of the NP and the hearer is being newly introduced to it.
- (36) **Mothušabaoki o gela balwetši [meetse].**
 (A/the nurse aide ladles out (the) water for (the) patients.)

- (a) The nurse aide may have been employed for the purpose of giving (the) patients water whenever they need it. If the statement is about his job description and no water is being ladled out at the time of utterance, the NP **meetse** would take a generic reading.
- (b) The NP **meetse** has definite reference if it has been talked about before, or the hearer is familiar with it by other pragmatic means.
- (c) If there has been no mention of **meetse** before and the hearer is not even aware that there is any nearby, NP **meetse** will have indefinite reference.

(37) **Morutiši o ruta bana [sereto].**

(A/the teacher teaches (the) children a/the poem.)

- (a) The speaker and hearer may be aware of a particular poem that is being taught to (the) children. If (37) is uttered with the presupposition that there is mutual knowledge of the poem, the NP **sereto** has definite reference.
- (b) The speaker may be the only one familiar with the poem that the teacher is teaching. The sentence is correct irrespective of whether or not the hearer is familiar with the poem being referred to. Therefore, the NP is indefinite.

The indirect object position also accepts generic, definite and indefinite interpretations. It is the context of utterance that informs the hearer whether or not he is expected to identify the referent uniquely. Because all interpretations are accepted, potential for ambiguity exists. If there are no pragmatic conditions to provide any clue, nominal modifiers should be employed to ensure unambiguous reference.

5.2.4.1.4 Complement of a preposition

The NP is examined in prepositional phrases as a complement of the following heads:

NP complement of **ke**

A noun phrase may appear as complement in PP with **ke** as head, in passive constructions. The NP complement of **ke** would have originated as a subject argument of the sentence. Passive morphology de-externalises it and moves it to the post-verbal

subject position, leaving the empty subject position with no theta role. This section examines the interpretation of the NP complement of **ke** in passive sentences.

(38) **Pula e nešwa [ke [maru].**

(It rains because of (the) clouds.)

- (a) The utterance may be a general statement about a fact of the weather, with no particular clouds being referred to. E.g. In a geography class NP **maru** would have a generic reading.
- (b) If, on the other hand, a geography teacher is busy with an experiment in class, where he wants the pupils to witness the phenomena of evaporation and condensation in relation to rain, the NP would be definite. There may be experimental representations of everything that he talks about, so that **maru** is visually perceptible to both discourse participants.

(39) **Rakgolo Thema ke sefofu; o hlahlwa [ke [mpša].**

(Grandfather Thema is blind; he is being guided by a/the dog.)

- (a) The hearer may have seen this dog without knowing that it has a special role. This utterance about *rakgolo* Thema's disability may bring to light the role of the dog that the hearer is not already aware of. The NP **mpša** would then be definite.
- (b) The hearer may not be familiar with the dog in any way. The hearer may only be hearing about it for the first time at the time of utterance whilst the speaker is already familiar with it. The NP **mpša** will consequently have indefinite reference.

(40) **Koloi e gogolwa ke [meetse].**

(A/the car is being swept away by (the) water.)

- (a) The speaker and the hearer may have seen torrents of water in a road. When the speaker utters (40) the hearer will be familiar with the referent of the water that is likely to sweep away a large object such as a car. The NP **meetse** will have definite reference.

- (b) If the speaker is only reporting on what he sees through a window, without the hearer having any prior knowledge of any water with this potential, the NP **meetse** will have indefinite reference.

NP complement of **le**

A noun phrase may appear as complement in PP with **le** as head, with the meaning 'in the company of'. In the following examples the interpretation of the NP complement of **le** is examined:

(41) **Mmago Ndlalane o šika [le [bana].**

(Ndlalane's mother moves about with (the) children.)

- (a) This may represent a statement about the fact that this woman likes to be in the company of people younger than she is. There may not be any particular 'children' being referred to. The NP **bana** would therefore be regarded as generic.
- (b) Ndlalane's mother may practise the habit of moving about with her own children. The hearer may be aware of which children the speaker is referring to because of prior knowledge of the situation. The NP **bana** in this case would be definite.
- (c) If, on the other hand, it refers to children that are not necessarily hers and that only the speaker is aware of the NP **bana** would be indefinite.

(42) **Baoki ba šoma [le [ngaka].**

((The) nurses work with a/the doctor.)

- (a) Example (42) may be a general statement about the situation in healthcare institutions, without reference being made to any particular doctor. In a situation like this the NP **ngaka** will take a generic reading.
- (b) If the utterance concerns a particular doctor who is known to both discourse participants, the NP is definite. The doctor may be the only one working at a particular health care centre, and this may be a fact known to both the speaker and the hearer.

- (c) The speaker may be the only one of the discourse participants who is aware of the existence and the identity of the doctor. The speaker may be employed at the same facility in a different capacity and therefore be knowledgeable enough to inform a first-time visitor of the situation there. The identity of the doctor may not be relevant to the message. The NP **ngaka** under these circumstances would be indefinite.

(43) **Sekhurumelo sa gona sesele se feta [le [meetse].**

(There is the lid in question; it floats away with (the) water.)

- (a) The NP **meetse** will be definite if its referent is familiar to the hearer, perhaps owing to previous mention or by perceptibility in the immediate physical environment. It may be uttered immediately after heavy rain with water still running on the roads. The hearer will therefore be familiar with the water that is carrying the lid.
- (b) The hearer may not be aware of any flowing water, and may not have heard about it previously. It may also not be obvious to him that there is any water flowing. In such circumstances the NP **meetse** constitutes new information and therefore has indefinite reference.

NP complement of **ka**

ka may appear in a prepositional phrase as head. With regard to meaning the preposition may present the NP complement as an instrument, as an accompanying partner, as an ingredient or as a manner of doing something or the manner in which something happens. The following examples discuss the interpretation of the NP complement of **ka** in such a phrase:

(44) **Le tlogeleng go bolela [ka [batho].**

(You should stop talking about (the) people.)

- (a) Generally people are the main subjects of gossip. The hearer and his friends may be known gossipmongers. A story with serious consequences for certain people may be narrated in the presence of the speaker and the hearer. If the utterance is a warning to the hearer with no particular people

being referred to about whom he has gossiped recently, the NP would have a generic interpretation.

- (b) The NP **batho** may also refer to specific people that the hearer and his accomplices have actually talked about. The hearer may know that the speaker is aware of a particular incident. If this warning is specifically about the particular incident then the NP is definite. The names of the people may be withheld for various reasons, e.g. if the speaker and the hearer are in the company of a third party who is not supposed to know the details of their conversation.
- (c) The speaker may be referring to specific people about whom the hearer gossiped. It may be the only incident that the speaker is aware of. The hearer on the other hand may have gossiped about so many people that he is not able to make unique identification of the referent of the NP. It may also be of no interest to the speaker whether or not the hearer can make a unique identification of the referent. The NP **batho** would be indefinite.

(45) **Ge a ka fihla bošego ba tlo mmetha [ka [lepanta].**

(If he happens to arrive late in the evening he is going to be given a hiding with a/the belt.)

- (a) There may be a belt known to all the children of a certain family because it may be used specifically for punishing them when they disobey their parents. One of the siblings may be away and the others fear what will happen to him if he arrives late. If the speaker and the hearer are also siblings in that family the NP would have definite reference.
- (b) One of the speaker's siblings may have not returned home from his playgroup. The hearer may not be aware of the situation in the speaker's family regarding naughtiness and its consequences. Amongst the items that are used to give them a hiding if they have been naughty, there may be a belt of which the speaker is aware, but the hearer is not. The utterance may make it clear to the hearer how serious the mistake of coming home late is, based on the speaker's own experience and the general fear of being belted. In a situation like this the interpretation of NP **lepanta** would be indefinite.

(46) **Ge o ka ja borotho [ka [teye] bo ka se go kgame.**

(If you eat bread together with tea, it will not choke you.)

- (a) Example (46) may be a general statement regarding what one can do to prevent choking on dry bread. There may be no tea or bread at the time of utterance. This situation will accord the NP **teye** a generic interpretation.
- (b) NP **teye** will have a definite reading if there is tea in the hearer's cup, he is not drinking it with his bread and he seems to choke on dry bread. The NP will be referring to the tea that the hearer is also familiar with; hence definite reference results.

NP complement of go/ga

go:

A prepositional phrase may have locative **go** as head and NP as complement. Such a prepositional phrase means 'towards' or 'in the direction of' the referent of the NP. The referent of the NP should be physically present at the locality expressed by this phrase. The general semantics of the NP complement of locative **go** has always been regarded as [+human] in Northern Sotho, which should rather have been presented as [+animate]. Poulus and Louwrens (1994: 334) point out that the NP in this position must always possess the feature [+human]. However, this may not always be the case. The first of the following examples is extracted from the Bible and contains a [-human] NP.

- (47) **Sebodu, yaa [go [mohlwá] O bônê mokgwa wa wôna; O tlê O hlalefê.**

(Diema 6:6)

(Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise².)

- (a) The Northern Sotho word **mohlwa** refers to a termite and not just any ant. Its synonym is **lekeke/makeke** (plural). NP **mohlwá** in this case does not refer to a particular termite somewhere, to which a sluggard should go. It refers to a whole genus, a species of the order *Isoptera*. If a sluggard finds any termite anywhere in the world he will be able to observe the same traces of behaviour that are characteristic of termites in general. NP **mohlwá** in the context of this biblical text takes a generic interpretation.

(b) It is possible that ordinary people in ordinary circumstances may use the same utterance. There may be termite activity in the vicinity of the speaker and the hearer. The hearer may be considered ignorant with regard to how he can lift himself out of sluggardness, and the speaker may think it is a good idea to send him to witness this particular activity to gain wisdom. The NP **mohlwa** would be definite.

(48) **Molwetši o swanetše go tsogetla [go [baoki] 'tšatši le lengwe le le lengwe go nwa dihlare tša pele ga difihlolo.**

(A/the patient must go to (the) nurses every morning to take pre-breakfast medicine.)

(a) (48) may represent an utterance in a primary healthcare workshop. In an area where there is a measure of illiteracy certain people may find it difficult to follow instructions concerning medication, especially in the beginning when they are not yet used to the routine. It may therefore be necessary to begin with that their medicine is stored at the centre where its administration can be monitored. NP **baoki** in this utterance may refer to any nurse working at any primary health care centre in any village. It would therefore have a generic interpretation.

(b) (48) may refer to a specific patient and the administration of his medicine at a particular clinic with the nurses responsible. It is well-known that some patients default on chronic medication such as TB pills, but TB patients cannot remain in hospitals if they are out of danger. What normally happens is that nurses at a local clinic keep the medicine and the register and if the clinic is too far away to walk to, a responsible neighbour is appointed for this purpose. In this way there is the assurance that the patient's treatment is being monitored. Example (48) may convey an instruction from a doctor to a family member on a particular patient's discharge from a hospital, identifying the clinic and the nurses. The NP **baoki** would then be definite.

(c) It may be intended to inform the hearer about the activities of a particular patient where the identity of the nurses is not relevant for the hearer, but the speaker is referring to a specific team of nurses who administer this kind of treatment at a healthcare centre. The NP **baoki** would be indefinite.

(49) (a) ***Išang dikgomo [go [meetse].**

Mass nouns are ungrammatical in this position and an NP_{loc} internal argument is preferred. For example, if (49) (a) is to be grammatical it will be put differently as follows:

(b) **Išang dikgomo [meetseng].**
(Take (the) cattle to (the) water.)

However, the present discussion concerns the NP complement of **go**, and it proves ungrammatical with mass noun phrases.

ga:

A prepositional phrase with locative **ga** expresses the locality associated with NP in terms of ownership. Unlike with the **go** prepositional phrase, in the case of the **ga** prepositional phrase the referent of the NP need not be present in person at the locality. The NP must have the semantic feature [+human]. The range of the NP complement of **ga** is spread over proper names, kinship terms and possessive pronouns. To a lesser extent other common nouns do appear as well. Because of the limit that this morpheme puts on the semantic class of NPs, the NP complement of **ga** is almost always uniquely identifiable. However, depending on the scope that the NP covers it may be indefinite or even generic. The following examples illustrate possible interpretations of the NP complement of **ga**:

(50) **Bana ba ile [ga [malome].**

((The) children went to (my) uncle's home.)

- (a) The hearer may be aware that the speaker has only one uncle, or there may be one of the speaker's uncles who is relevant to the discourse. The uncle may either have been mentioned earlier or he may be the only one of the speaker's uncles who lives in the village or town where the children are visiting. In this scenario, the NP **malome** will have definite reference.
- (b) It may not matter which one of the speaker's uncles it is. The utterance may express the idea that the speaker is free to have a night out with the hearer because the children are not home. In this case the NP **malome** will be

indefinite. The referent may be one of seven uncles of the speaker, and there may be no indication as to which of them the reference is intended.

- (51) **Ba ba ganetša go ya [ga [banna] ba re ba ye [ga [basadi] fela.**
 (They prevent them from going to (the) men's homes and say they should only go to (the) women's homes.)
- (a) A certain group of youngsters may be collecting donations for charity. If the utterance refers to any home that belongs to a man, versus those that belong to women, the NP will take a generic interpretation.
- (b) If the youngsters are from a particular church and they are supposed to ask for donations from the church members only, the NP will have definite reference, referring only to the men and the women members of that church.
- (52) ***Re tšwa [ga [maswi].**

Because of restrictions on the semantic feature of the NP complement of **ga**, mass nouns are ungrammatical in this position.

NP complement of possessive a

The following examples seek to discover the interpretations of the NP complement of possessive **a**:

- (53) **Bana ba swanetše go nwa [maswi [a pudi].**
 ((The) children are supposed to drink a/the goat's milk.)
- (a) The NP complement in this example may not be referring to any particular goat but to goats in general as producers of milk that is regarded as good for children. The NP **pudi** in this case will have a generic reading.
- (b) A family could be rearing a goat for the purpose of providing the children with milk. There may be at any stage a possibility of there being milk in the household other than goat's milk, in which case the goat must be milked to obtain milk for the children. Example (53) may convey an instruction to

youngsters visiting the family as to what to do when they are babysitting. In this case the NP **pudi** will be definite.

(54) **Bašemane ba robile [mpheng [wa selepe].**

((The) boys broke a/the axe's handle.)

- (a) The hearer may be aware of the axe being talked about. He may have seen the boys using it or it may have been mentioned before. Then the NP **selepe** would have definite reference.
- (b) If the hearer is being informed about an axe that he has not heard of before and he is not even aware of its existence the NP **selepe** would have indefinite reference.

(55) **Nna ke tlo šeba ka [lebebe [la maswi].**

(I am going to eat with (the) milk's skin.)

- (a) The milk may have just been boiled after being obtained from a family's cow and put aside to cool. The family's young members may consider the skin that forms on top a delicacy, so much so that they usually take turns eating it. If reference is made to the skin of the milk in the immediate physical environment the NP **maswi** has definite reference.
- (b) If the hearer is not aware of the availability of any milk but only the speaker is, the NP complement of **a** in this case will be indefinite.

It is evident that the NP complement in a prepositional phrase is ambiguous between definiteness and indefiniteness; and where the predicate allows, it can have a generic interpretation as well.

5.2.4.2 The predicate has a copulative

This section examines the interpretation of the NP subject of a copulative.

5.2.4.2.1 Subject

NP subject of identifying copulative:

(56) **[Meetse] ke sehlare.**

(Water is medicine.)

- (a) Example (56) may utter a general statement about the role of water in relation to a person's health. The NP **meetse** would not be referring to any particular water but to water in general. The interpretation is therefore generic.
- (b) There may be water in a glass, which a patient is being persuaded to drink. Even if reference is being made to the water in the glass, there is some generic meaning involved since this water may not be any different from others. The fact that the water in the glass has health benefits is owing to its being water, i.e. a characteristic feature that it shares with any other water.

(57) **[Ngwanenyana] ke moloti wa batswadi.**

(A/the girl is (the) parents' caregiver.)

- (a) This may be interpreted as referring to an observation, belief or a traditional practice that girls are generally more likely to care for their parents in their old age than boys. In such a case the NP **ngwanenyana** can mean any girl and does, therefore, have a generic interpretation. Traditionally when parents are old and they cannot be on their own any longer, they are taken into a daughter's home. Even if the remark is made with a particular girl in mind, or the referent is familiar to the hearer as well, the statement has an underlying generic interpretation such that it does not apply to that particular girl alone, but to girls in general.
- (b) A definite interpretation may be attained if the idea is to express some comparison between a certain girl and someone who is not a girl. In that way a particular **ngwanenyana** as opposed to a particular **mošemane** (boy), for instance, will be uniquely identifiable. However, her potential for being a caregiver or 'keeper' is based on her general permanent characteristic

features as a girl. Generic significance does not seem to leave this structure whether there is a particular girl being referred to or not.

(58) **[Dipitša] ke tša gagwe.**

((The) pots are his.)

- (a) The NP **dipitša** can have a generic reading if it means that he is the one whose chore it is to cook.
- (b) The other interpretation derived here is that NP **dipitša** is familiar, mainly by previous mention, but it could also be because it is visually noticeable. The construction topicalises the subject in a contrastive way, expressing the idea that something else is not his, but **dipitša** is.

Examples (56) and (57) illustrate two types of noun phrases as subject, viz. mass and singular, in similar circumstances. The complement identifies the subject in terms of its qualities. The complement of **ke** in (58) is a possessive construction. Examples (59) and (60) below represent the converse of (56) and (57) in the sense that the noun that is semantically identifying occupies the subject position. In such circumstances there is an existential presupposition of the referent of the subject, such that the NP is definite and it excludes a generic reading. Examples (59) and (60) illustrate:

(59) **[Tlhatse] ke mosadi.**

((The witness is a/the woman.)

(60) **[Molemi] ke mošemane.**

((The farmer is a/the boy.)

The complement of copula **ke** may also be an adjective. In the following examples the NP is the subject of a copulative with an adjective as complement.

An NP subject where the **adjective** is the complement of **ke**:

(61) **[Mohlare] ke wo mogolo.**

((The) tree is big.)

- (a) A tree in general terms, as a type of plant, may be compared to other plants such as shrubs, including *morogo*. The subject NP **mohlare** will in this case take a generic interpretation.
- (b) If, on the other hand, there is a particular tree being compared with a particular shrub, the NP will have definite reference.

(62) **[Maswi] ke a mašweu.**
 ((The) milk is white.)

- (a) **Maswi** may be described as white as opposed to other liquids, in which case the reference will be generic.
- (b) The NP will be definite if there is milk in one glass and another drink in another glass. The statement will be asserting that the liquid that is white is milk.

(63) **[Barwana] ke ba bakopana.**
 ((The) San are short.)

- (a) The San as a people may characteristically be shorter than other peoples. The NP will have a generic interpretation.
- (b) If there is a group of people amongst whom one has to identify the San, then the NP will have definite reference. The shorter members will be the San.

The NP subject of an identifying copulative accepts both definite and generic readings and does not seem to be compatible with indefiniteness. The copulative, which identifies the subject, gives the equivalent of some entity whose identity cannot be questioned. The interpretation is, however, generally generic. Even in the case where the referent of the subject NP is uniquely identifiable there is a generic quality stemming from the fact that a characteristic feature is expressed or used as a distinguishing tool. Cases like (59) and (60) where the semantically descriptive NP occupies the subject position do not seem to allow genericness.

The NP subject of descriptive copulative:

- (64) **Ka nnete ruri, [lesea] le bose.**
 (Truly, an/the infant is pleasant.)
- (a) Example (64) may express the fact that a family that has a newborn baby generally enjoys him, without referring to any particular infant. The NP **lesea** would take a generic interpretation.
- (b) The NP is definite if it refers to the newborn of a family, known to both discourse participants, in contrast with, for instance, a toddler who will create problems for people because of moving around and being naughty. Both discourse participants may know the two children and compare them with one another. Even in this case an underlying genericity would still be there, unless the NP is used with a disambiguating modifier.
- (65) **[Mageu] a bodila.**
 (Mageu³ is sour.)
- (a) If (65) is a general statement about the taste of **mageu**, the NP has a generic interpretation.
- (b) A person may be tasting different types of drink that are strange to him and this statement may explain to him which of those he is drinking is **mageu**. If the NP refers to the uniquely identifiable drink it would be definite. There would in this case still be an underlying genericity, since this particular **mageu**'s sourness is dependent on it being **mageu**.
- (66) **[Banenyana] ba bohlale.**
 ((The) girls are clever.)
- (a) Example (66) may be an expression of the speaker's observation regarding children in general as they grow up. Without any particular group of girls being referred to, the NP **banenyana** would take a generic reading.
- (b) The speaker and the hearer may be talking about a mutually identifiable group project divided into teams of girls and boys. The NP may be referring

to that specific group of girls as opposed to their male counterparts, and is therefore definite.

The NP subject of a descriptive copulative is evidently ambiguous between definiteness and genericness.

The NP subject of an associative copulative:

(67) **[Maswi] a na le khalsiamo**

(The milk has calcium.)

(a) The interpretation of NP **maswi** in this example is generic. Containing calcium is a permanent and characteristic feature of any milk, not only of a specific one. Any liquid that is milk will contain calcium.

(68) **[Monoto] o na le magalamatima.**

(A/the monoto tree has fast-extinguishing firewood.)

(a) People who use firewood regularly possess special knowledge about the trees in their surroundings regarding the latter's combustion performance. **Monoto** is not suitable for long winter evenings because people will need to put more wood into the fire at short intervals. Not everyone would know about this. New inhabitants in a village as well as children will need orientation. With no particular tree being referred to, and as a statement explaining some of the characteristics of **monoto** as a type of tree, the NP would be regarded as generic.

(b) The NP **monoto** would have definite reference if two people are buying firewood and the speaker is more knowledgeable than the hearer. The hearer may know the types of trees and their names but lack experience as to their suitability as firewood. If the hearer chooses **monoto** and not **mohwelere** (bush willow), for instance, this utterance may express advice that he should put down the **monoto** that he has in his hands because it does not burn as well as **mohwelere**. Again this particular **monoto** has this characteristic feature owing to its being **monoto**, as all **menoto** do.

(69) **[Basadi] ba na le mae.**
 ((The) women have eggs.)

- (a) It is usual that every woman has eggs in her ovaries. In a biology class this would be mentioned as one of the distinguishing characteristics of a female person, without referring to any woman in particular. The NP **mosadi** would in this case have a generic interpretation.
- (b) In the same classroom situation there may be two charts with pictures, one of a woman and another of a man. The same utterance may be used referring to the woman on one picture as opposed to the man on another picture. In this case the NP would be definite.

NP subject of locational copulative:

(70) **[Magaba] a šetše a le gona.**
 ((The) tubers of sweet bark tree are already available.)

- (a) Example (70) may be a remark to acknowledge a particular season of the year without referring to any specific tubers. The NP would have not definite but a generic reference.
- (b) The speaker may be making this utterance based on the tubers that are visible to him and the hearer, and drawing the hearer's attention to them. In that case the NP would be definite.

(71) **[Pitša] e ka ntlong**
 (A/the pot is in the house.)

The NP **pitša** may have been mentioned before and thus constitute old information. It may also be definite by association with a situation involving cooking, of which both discourse participants are aware.

(72) **[Teye] e tafoleng.**
 ((The) tea is on a/the table.)

The tea may have been referred to previously. The tea may also have been made for the addressee so that its first mention is definite since it is in the immediate physical environment, in which the utterance represents an offer of tea.

The NP subject of a copulative clearly tends to favour generic and definite readings. For the definite interpretation of copulatives to be clear beyond any doubt there should be pragmatic grounds to facilitate the reading. Otherwise a disambiguating modifier such as a demonstrative would be appropriate; failing this, interpretation tends to go the generic route.

5.2.4.2.2 NP complement in a copulative

NP complement of **ke** in identifying copulative

The NP complement of **ke** in an identifying copulative can perform two functions, a predicating function and a referring one. Although the present study concerns reference, it is necessary to illustrate both and then suggest possible interpretations with regard to the referring function.

(73) **Makgwathane ke [molemi].**

(Makgwathane is a farmer.)

(74) **Ranti ke [sereti].**

(Ranti is a poet.)

(75) **Moshe ke [moruti].**

(Moshe is a priest.)

(76) **Tlhatse ke [mosadi].**

(The witness is a/the woman.)

(a) A group of people may have arrived at a court case and are clearly in support of the complainant. On hearing that there is a witness among them the hearer may be told (76). In the given situation if there is only one woman the NP **mosadi** will be definite.

(b) All those present may be men and a witness summoned from among them. If a speaker from the group utters (76), the NP **mosadi** will be referring to a

woman with whom the speaker is familiar but the hearer is not. The NP **mosadi** will therefore take indefinite reference.

(77) **Moruti ke [mokgalabje].**

(The priest is an/the old man.)

- (a) A similar scenario to (76) above may be sketched in the case of example (77). A group of people from a particular church may arrive at a night vigil, at which a priest is also expected. With only one old man among them the NP **mokgalabje** will be definite.
- (b) There may be no old man among them. If the speaker utters (77), the NP **mokgalabje** will be referring to an old man with whom the speaker is familiar but not the hearer. The hearer may be a master of ceremonies who thinks that a priest has arrived and has announced some adjustments to the program. The NP **mokgalabje** in a situation like this will have indefinite reference.

Only referring expressions can be interpreted as having either definite reference or not. The NPs **molemi**, **sereti** and **moruti** in examples (73), (74) and (75), respectively, do not function as referring expressions. There is no particular referent farmer, poet or priest who is being talked about; neither is reference being made generically to those. Their function is purely predicative, predicating the subject (cf. Lyons 1977a:201; Lyons 1999:185). However, the NPs **mosadi** and **mokgalabje** are referring expressions. They can be interpreted as either definite or indefinite, and the examples given here illustrate that they can be ambiguous.

NP complement of **na le** in associative copulative

(78) **Malesa o na le [ntlo].**

(Malesa has a house.)

(79) **Segotlane se na le [dišo].**

(A/the toddler has sores.)

(80) **Ntho ga e na [madi].**

(A/the wound does not have blood.)

An associative copulative is a typical referent introduction structure. The NP complement of **na le** is specific, but indefinite. The speaker is clearly familiar with Malesa's house, the toddler's sores and the blood that is not coming from the wound. The information concerns the existence of the referent. At the time of the utterance the familiarity of the referent to the addressee is not presupposed. Identification can only take place after the utterance and it will then be established if the hearer, as well, should or should not identify the referent.

The NP complement of a descriptive copulative is a descriptive word; it does not refer to an entity, while the NP complement of a locational copulative will be dealt with in the next section. It is for these reasons that the NP complements of descriptive and locational copulatives are not discussed here.

5.2.5 Bare locative NPs in Northern Sotho

5.2.5.1 The predicate has a verb

NP_{loc} subject

(81) **[Moeding] go a fiša.**

(In a/the valley it is hot.)

- (a) Using the NP **moeding**, the speaker may be referring to any place fitting the description and not a particular place. Example (81) may be uttered in contrast to **Thabeng go a tonya** (On a/the mountain it is cold). In a case like this the subject NP_{loc} will have a generic interpretation.
- (b) The NP will be definite if there is a particular valley that is being talked about, and the hearer is familiar with it.

(82) **[Fase] go a lapiša.**

(Down/on the floor is tiring.)

- (a) In comparison with sitting on a chair, sitting on the floor may be tiring. If the speaker is uttering this in general terms for information, without any specific place being referred to, the NP will take a generic interpretation.

- (b) A patient may be explaining to his caregivers why he does not like to be left sleeping on the floor for a long time. The caregivers may have the tendency to alternate him between the floor and a bed. Even in this case the floor that the patient is sometimes placed on is no different from other floors in terms of what the predicate expresses, hence a generic implication exists too.
- (83) **[Malopong] go a tsefa.**
(At malopong⁴ is enjoyable.)
- (a) The speaker may not be talking about any particular ceremony where people with ancestral spirits are dancing, but just remarking that if any place is **malopong** it is usually enjoyable.
- (b) The speaker and the hearer may be some of the young people who move between **malopong** and a nightclub on a particular evening. The speaker may be comparing these two places on this particular evening, of which the hearer is also aware. In a case like this the NP **malopong** would have definite reference.

The subject NP_{loc} of a verb can therefore be ambiguous between genericness and definiteness.

NP_{loc} complement

The following examples illustrate possible interpretations of a locative internal argument:

- (84) **Tše dintši ga a di tsebe; o tla ithutela [mošomong].**
(He does not know much; he will learn at work.)
- (a) If **mošomong** is meant to refer to a workplace where this particular person may work some day, but the discourse participants are not even sure when and where he will be working, the NP cannot be regarded as definite. It is generic in interpretation.
- (b) On the other hand, the person being talked about may have a job of which both the speaker and hearer are aware. In such a situation the NP will be definite.

(c) If only the speaker is familiar with the fact that this person has a job the NP will be indefinite.

(85) **Mmagwe o ya [basading]; a ka se boe ka pela.**

(His mother goes to (the) women; she will not return soon.)

(a) The NP **basading** is definite if it refers to a women's gathering that both the speaker and hearer are aware of. They may, for instance, both be aware of a particular meeting to which she is going; they may or may not deliberately withhold information from a third party.

(b) If only the speaker is aware of the nature and place of that gathering or is familiar with it by any other means but the hearer is not, the NP will be indefinite. It may only be relevant for the particular discourse that the mother is going to be away for some time, but not where she is going.

(86) **Le hlabile; bašemane ba ya [madišong].**

(The sun is up; (the) boys are going to a/the place - or places - where livestock are being looked after.)

(a) A certain time of the day is generally accepted as the right time to take livestock out to the veld to graze. Whether there are any livestock, or anybody to take them there, does not matter. The NP **madišong** in that sense does not have definite reference because it does not refer to any particular place uniquely identifiable to the hearer.

(b) The NP **madišong** will have definite reference if there is a particular spot or area in the veld that is allocated to a certain family's livestock, which the hearer is aware of, and where the family's boys always take the livestock. If at the time of utterance these boys are letting the livestock out, the NP **madišong** refers to the locality familiar to both discourse participants.

NP_{loc} adjunct

An adjunct is different from an internal argument in the sense that while the internal argument constitutes a necessary part of the PAS (predicate argument structure) an

adjunct is not. An adjunct is an addition of an adverbial nature that is not obligatory. In the following examples the NP whose interpretation is of interest is a locative adjunct:

(87) **Bana ba gahlana [meralokong].**

((The) children meet at (the) games.)

- (a) The NP **meralokong** may take a generic interpretation if it is not referring to any particular place, but to any place where (the) children play.
- (b) There may be particular organised games familiar to both discourse participants where the speaker expects that a certain group of children will be meeting, and he is informing the hearer of this. In that case the NP **meralokong** is definite.
- (c) The NP will be indefinite if the locality of their meeting or the identity of the locality is not relevant to the discussion at hand. It may only be relevant that they will be meeting, and not necessary that the hearer be able to identify the place. The speaker may be familiar with the place.

(88) **Lefehlo le Nthumule ba opša ke hlogo [kgorong] moo banna ba babedi ba ngangišanago.**

(Matsepe 1968:67)

(Lefehlo and Nthumule are experiencing a headache at a/the kgoro where two men are arguing.)

- (a) If the narrator assumes that there is a unique locality that satisfies the description of the NP, which the reader would assume the NP to refer to, and the narrator is indeed referring to the same locality, then the NP **kgorong** is definite. For instance, the context may offer a reasonable degree of the identifiability of the locality to the addressee. There may be mutual knowledge of a pending appearance at a particular **kgoro**.
- (b) In the event of more than one **kgoro** possibly existing where both Lefehlo and Nthumule may be, the NP **kgorong** would not have definite reference. It may be specific in the sense that the speaker may know about the exact locality but he would not necessarily share that knowledge with the hearer. Hence the NP **kgorong** would be indefinite.

- (89) **Ranti o reketše Makgwathane, Malesa le Moshe diaparo tše mpsa [moše].⁵**

(Ranti bought Makgwathane, Malesa and Moshe new clothes overseas.)

- (a) If the country or city is known to both interlocutors the NP will take definite reference. The NP **moše** will be as uniquely identifiable as the proper name of the country or city.
- (b) If the addressee has no idea of the country or city overseas which Ranti visited or even that the latter had made a visit overseas the NP **moše** would have indefinite reference. Besides, the identity of the country may not be central to the message. Because only the speaker may be familiar with the referent of the NP, the NP is regarded as indefinite.

It is evident from the foregoing examples that NP_{loc} adjunct can be ambiguous.

5.2.5.2 The predicate has a copulative

Subject

- (90) **[Thabeng] ke godimo.**

(On a/the mountain is high.)

- (a) In comparison with **moedi** (valley) example (90) can be uttered to teach the difference between the two words or places, for instance, in a second language acquisition class. It does not refer to any particular mountain, but indicates that if any place is situated on a mountain it will be high up.
- (b) The subject locative noun phrase will take definite reference if, for instance, a family's boys are sent to collect firewood. Some are despatched to fetch it on a particular mountain where the wood is of good quality, whilst the other boys go to the street vendors (the same distance) to obtain some. When the latter arrive earlier, example (90) may explain why this is so, since it takes longer to walk up a steep hill. In this case the NP **thabeng** will be definite.

- (91) **[Thabeng] go na le diphoofolo.**

(On a/the mountain there are (the) animals.)

- (a) If it explains that any mountain shelters animals, then the subject NP_{loc} **thabeng** has a generic interpretation.
- (b) If, on the other hand, there is only one mountain that is being talked about and reference is being made to it, NP_{loc} **thabeng** will have definite reference.

(92) **[Toropong] go botse.**
(In town it is beautiful.)

- (a) The speaker may find the architecture, layout and the general planning of towns usually appealing to his eye, compared with other places that are not towns. Therefore, because he is not talking about any particular town at the moment the subject NP_{loc} **toropong** has a generic interpretation.
- (b) If the utterance concerns a specific town of which the hearer as well is aware, the NP will have definite reference. For instance, someone whom the speaker and the hearer both know may possess two homes, one in a suburban area and the other in a village. Comparing the two homes, it may be that the home in the suburb is regarded as beautiful but the one in the village is not.

(93) ***[Thabeng] go godimo.**
(On a/the mountain is up/high.)

NP_{loc} cannot appear as the subject of a locational copulative.

A locative noun phrase in the subject position of a copulative can be interpreted as generic or definite, depending on the situation of utterance. In the following section the interpretation of NP_{loc} as the complement in a copulative is examined.

Complement of a copulative

(94) **Kgole ke [mašemong].**
(It is at the fields where it is far.)

- (a) In the villages people used to practise subsistence farming and some still do. In the traditional setup the owner decides how big he wants the yard of his property to be. The yard would include a big garden, **serokolo**, which is actually a mini ploughing field. The main ploughing fields are normally far from home. When comparing the two ploughing areas in general without any particular **mašemo** being referred to, the complement NP_{loc} **mašemong** has a generic interpretation.
- (b) If the two are compared, referring specifically to the **mašemong** and **serokolong** of a particular family known to both discourse participants, the NP will have definite reference. The speaker may be informing the hearer, comparing the two places from a certain point where they are situated at the time of utterance.

(95) ***Mošemane o na le [lapeng]**.

NP_{loc} cannot appear as the complement of **na le** in an associative copulative.

(96) **Ngwanenyana o [nokeng]**.

(A/the girl is at a/the river.)

- (a) The hearer may be familiar with the river being discussed by previous mention or because it is the only river in the area. The NP will have definite reference.
- (b) If there is more than one river in the area and there has not been any mention of a river before, the hearer will not be able to make a unique identification. In such a case the NP_{loc} **nokeng** has indefinite reference.

NP_{loc} may appear as the complement of copulatives in other ways, for instance, in the following possessive construction:

(97) **Sudan ke [maleng [a naga]**.

(Sudan is very far.)

In the case of (97) the NP complement provides indefinite information with regard to distance.

However, not every NP with suffix **-ng** that appears as complement of a copulative has a locative meaning. The following two examples contain noun phrases with suffix **-ng**, which have nothing to do with location:

(98) **1942 ke [mehleng [ya ntwā ya bobedi ya lefase].**

(1942 is during the Second World War.)

(99) **Ramaite [o mmeleng].**

(Ramaite is pregnant.)

In example (98), the NP complement of **ke** expresses a period in time. The NP complement in (99) is descriptive of the woman's state, and there is nothing locational about the two.

The NP_{loc} complement of **ke** can be either generic or definite, whilst the complement of a locational copulative accommodates an indefinite interpretation as well. NP_{loc} is ungrammatical as the complement of **na le** in an associative copulative. There can be no NP_{loc} complement of a descriptive copulative because the complement in a descriptive copulative consists class 6 or 14 nouns, which are not locative classes.

The following two sections deal with modifiers that perform a quantificational function, but do not represent cardinal numbers. Such modifiers may appear with a noun phrase to express a small or a big number.

5.3 A SMALL NUMBER

This section seeks to determine how a quantifier expressing a small number impacts on the interpretation of the noun phrase. The following examples illustrate the appearance and interpretation of such quantifiers:

(100) **Ba re adimile [digalase [di se kae].**

(They lent us a few glasses.)

di se kae as a phrase expresses a small number, but also no-commitment with regard to number. Because it does not say which glasses are these few ones it does not solve the problem of (in)definiteness. The hearer is not given any clue with regard to identifiability.

The same phrase may be used with a diminutive suffix or with the adverb **fela** (only). The two additions have no effect on the interpretation of the quantifier, hence not on the NP.

- (101) **Ba re adimile [digalase [di se kaenyana].**
 (They lent us a few glasses.)
- (102) (a) **Ba re adimile [digalase [di se kae [fela].**
 (b) **Ba re adimile [digalase [di se kaenyana [fela].**
 (They lent us only a few glasses.)

The word **nene** can only be used in the negative to express ‘few’ or ‘not many’. This word can never appear in a positive sentence. It can be used with both plural and mass nouns for quantification. When used with a singular noun phrase **nene** does not perform a quantificational function; it expresses smallness. The following examples illustrate this:

- (103) **O belege pele ga nako; leseana la gona [ga le nene].**
 (She gave birth before time; the baby is tiny/not big.)
- (104) (a) **[Batho] ba ba tlilego [ga ba nene].**
 ((The) people who came are few/not many.)
 (b) **Go tlile [batho [ba se nene] fela.**
 (There came only a few people.)
 (c) **Go tlile [batho [ba ba sego nene].**
 (There came a few people.)
- (105) (a) **[Meetse] a ba tlilego nao [ga a nene].**
 ((The) water that they brought is a small amount.)
 (b) **Go faletše [meetse [a a sego nene].**
 (There spilled a small amount of water.)

The diminutive alone may be added to a noun phrase to express smallness of number or amount. In the following example the diminutive is suffixed to a mass noun to express smallness of amount:

- (106) **Ntšhelele [swikišana].**
 (Pour me a little sugar.)

An adjective with **-nyane** may appear with the noun phrase to express smallness of amount. It is also acceptable to use the adjective with a diminutive, resulting in tautology for the purpose of placing emphasis on the smallness of amount, as in the following examples:

- (107) (a) **Ntšhelele [swikiri [ye nnyane].**
 (b) **Ntšhelele [swikišana [ye nnyane].**
 (Pour me a little sugar.)

The adjective stem **mmalwa** (several) is ambiguous between a small and a large number. This is the case because **mmalwa** is relative, dependent on the speaker and the hearer's expectations of the number of referents. However, when the diminutive suffix or adverb **fela** is added, a large number (according to expectations) is ruled out, as the following examples illustrate:

- (108) (a) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše mmalwa].**
 (They lent us several glasses.)
 (b) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše mmalwanyana].**
 (They lent us a few glasses.)
 (c) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše mmalwa] fela].**
 (They lent us several glasses only.)
 (d) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše mmalwanyana] fela].**
 (They lent us a few glasses only.)

A small number merely quantifies the noun phrase, and does not offer any suggestions regarding identifiability. A noun phrase that remains neutral as to unique identifiability rather than limiting the search space to facilitate identification cannot be definite, but only indefinite. However, any identifiability that may be present would not be attributed to the quantifier, but to pragmatic factors.

5.4 A LARGE NUMBER

A large number is expressed by means of the adjectives with **mmalwa** (several) and **-ntši** (many). With regard to mass nouns the adjective expresses amount or number in terms of

types or collections. The following examples illustrate the appearance and interpretation of modifiers that express a large number:

(109) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše [mmalwa].**

(They lent us several glasses.)

The ambiguity of **mmalwa** is explained in section 5.3; hence its appearance in this section as well. The following examples illustrate the appearance of an adjective with **-ntši**, with plural and mass noun phrases:

(110) **Ba re adimile [digalase [tše [dintši].**

(They lent us many glasses.)

(111) **Marinini a ka a tšwele [madi [a mantši].**

(My gums bled a lot.) --- a lot of blood.

(112) **Mmamogolo o hlotlile [bjala [bjo bontši].**

((My) aunt strained a lot of beer.)

A large number is also quantificational, and not identifying. Pragmatic factors, and not the quantifier, will contribute to inclusiveness.

5.5 NPs WITH NOMINAL MODIFIERS

The function of modifiers is to provide more information with regard to the attributional characteristics of the referent of a noun phrase. Together with the noun that it modifies, the modifier constitutes part of the same noun phrase. Whilst the modifier performs one basic function, it takes different forms. The Northern Sotho modifier will be discussed in terms of these types: cardinal numbers, adjective, relative and possessive.

5.5.1 Cardinal numbers

Pre-verbal subject position

(113) **[Pudi [e tee] e wetše ka leopeng.**

(One goat fell into the ditch.)

(114) **[Mehlare [ye seswai] e tumutšwe ke ledimo.**

(Eight trees have been uprooted by the storm.)

(115) **[Mabjala [a mararo] a šetše a betše.**

(Three types of beer have already fermented.)

The modifiers **tee**, **seswai** and **-raro** carry out a quantificational function and do not address the 'which' of the referent of the subject NP. It is not made clear which goat, which eight trees or which three beers are being referred to. The NPs quantified by cardinal numbers may have indefinite reference. Only pragmatic factors may render the NP definite.

Post-verbal object position

(116) **Mogodumo go timetše [pudi [e tee].**

(At Mogodumo one goat got lost.)

(117) **Ledimo le tumutše [mehlare [ye seswai].**

(The storm uprooted eight trees.)

(118) **Ka mokgwa wo ba fadilego e bile ba hlotla [mabjala [a mararo].**

(The way they are eager they are even straining three types of beer.)

Even with the object position the role of the cardinal number is limited to quantification. The cardinal number does not suggest unique identifiability, hence an indefinite interpretation; unless pragmatic factors suggest the contrary.

Mass nouns represent referents that cannot be counted because they lack a specific physical form, but they can be pluralised in terms of how many different types, servings or containers there are. A cardinal number does not solve the difficulty of the noun's (in)definiteness, because it does not provide information as to which one, three or eight entities are being referred to. As such, any definite reference that may exist is not due to a cardinal number.

5.5.2 Adjectives

Adjectival agreement consists of the demonstrative of position 1 plus the adjectival prefix, resembling the nominal prefix. This element forges agreement between the NP that is

being qualified and the adjectival stem. Northern Sotho possesses a limited number of adjectival stems, carrying information about attributes relating to size, colour, shape, character and other physical features. E.g.:

(119) **Monna yo mogolo**

(A/the big man)

yo mo-: adjectival agreement

-golo: adjectival stem, expressing size

This section will investigate the extent to which ‘providing more information’ guides the addressee to identify the referent uniquely.

Subject position

(120) **[Dieta [tše ditala] di a ntshwanela.**

(The green shoes suit me.)

- (a) It may be that any green shoes that the speaker has ever possessed looked good on him. If no specific pair of shoes is being referred to at the time of utterance, but it is merely being observed that the colour green looks good on his feet, the NP will be regarded as having a generic interpretation.
- (b) The speaker may be contemplating putting on either a green or black pair of shoes to go with a particular outfit, trying them on in the presence of the speaker. From this exercise in the presence of the hearer he may find that the green pair looks better on him than the black pair. Because the green pair of shoes is uniquely identifiable to the hearer, as well, the NP will be regarded as definite.
- (c) The hearer may not have seen the shoes and is only being told about them. In this case the NP will take indefinite reference.

(121) **[Ngwana [yo mobe] ga a ratwe ke motho.**

(A the evil/bad child is not liked by anyone.)

- (a) Example (121) may represent a general statement about any child that is bad, without reference to any particular child. In this case the NP takes a generic interpretation.
- (b) If there is a particular bad child known to the speaker and the hearer and reference is being made to him, the NP is definite.

(122) **[Meetse [a mahwibidu] a lomiša mala.**
 (Brownish/muddy water causes stomach pains.)

In this example the NP has a generic interpretation. Muddy water is unclean and therefore regarded as unhealthy; one of the health risks is gastro-intestinal disease.

Object position

(123) **Le se ke la fa [ngwana [yo mobe], a ka se ngwathele ba bangwe.**
 (Do not give (it) to an/the evil child, he will not share with others)

- (a) By this utterance, the speaker may not be referring to any particular child but to any child who may happen to be evil. The NP will be regarded as generic.
- (b) If, on the other hand, the speaker refers to a particular child known to him and the addressee to be evil-hearted, the NP will have definite reference.

(124) **Papa o nthekeše [dieta [tše ditala].**
 ((My) Father bought me green shoes.)

- (a) The hearer may possess prior knowledge about a particular pair of green shoes, which was an alternative choice faced by the speaker. The speaker and his father may have disagreed regarding the choice. When the speaker utters (124) the referent will already occupy a place in the mind of the hearer.
- (b) This may be new information to the hearer, who is only now being informed. Because the NP constitutes new information, it has indefinite reference.

(125) **O se ke wa re nweša [meetse [a mahwibidu].**
 (Do not cause/let us drink brownish/muddy water.)

- (a) The speaker may be referring to any water that is not clean, without there being any suggestion that there is muddy water nearby. The NP will have a generic interpretation.
- (b) If it is known that there is muddy water in the household, and the speaker is merely reminding the hearer to be careful from which tank he ladles the water out, the NP **meetse a mahwibidu** will take definite reference.

A noun phrase with an adjective, both in the subject and the object positions, can be ambiguous. The adjective does not disambiguate; it depends on whether or not the addressee has been provided with a set from which to locate the referent. Without any context, a generic interpretation is the most probable provided the predicate allows the reading.

5.5.3 Descriptive possessive

A descriptive possessive functions the same as the adjective. The complement of **a** can appear as a noun or a clause.

Subject:

- (126) **[Meetse [a ditšhila] a a babjiša.**
(Dirty water causes one to be sick.)

The subject NP in this example has a generic interpretation, because it is a statement reporting on the possible effect of this kind of water in general.

- (127) **[Banenyana [ba go se mimile] ba a selekiša.**
((The) girls who do not blow their noses are disgusting.)

- (a) The speaker may be remarking about any girl anywhere who does not blow her nose. Because there is no particular group of girls being referred to, the NP is generic.

- (b) If the statement concerns a particular group of girls with whom the hearer is familiar, the NP will have definite reference.

(128) **[Monna [wa nko ye kgolo] o tla tšea kae mosadi?**

(Where will a/ the man with a big nose get a wife?)

- (a) Example (128) may be uttered as a remark about any man with a big nose. If there is no man at the time of utterance to whom the speaker is specifically referring, the NP will take a generic interpretation.
- (b) It may be making a comparison between two ugly men looking for wives, of which fact the hearer is aware. The speaker may regard a big nose as the ugliest feature on a man or on this man in particular. As such the speaker may identify the man with a big nose as the one unlikely to be successful. In this case the NP will have definite reference.

A generic reading is the most common inference for these sentences. For a sentence like (128) not to be inferred as generic a disambiguating modifier must be used over and above the descriptive possessive, which does not itself disambiguate.

Object:

(129) **Ga ke nyake [bjala [bja Sesotho].**

(I don't want traditional beer.)

- (a) If there is no traditional beer being offered and the speaker is basing his utterance on a suggestion to buy drinks, the NP will be regarded as generic.
- (b) If there are two types of beer on offer to the hearer, one traditional and the other not, the NP **bjala bja Sesotho** will be regarded as having definite reference.

(130) **Maabane ke bone [banna [ba mašaeidi].**

(Yesterday I saw (the) slovenly men.)

- (a) The speaker may have heard about these men from the hearer or have seen them in the hearer's presence previously. The speaker may be coming from

a place where these men are often seen, so that the NP in the utterance is intended, and inferred, as referring to mutually identifiable men.

- (b) The NP will have indefinite reference if the speaker is informing the hearer about men he has no prior knowledge about.

(131) **'Se rate [motho [wa go dula a re e se ntsebe].**

(I don't like a/the person who always says he does not know me.)

For the standard:

Ga ke rate [motho wa [go dula a re ga a ntsebe].

Example (131) represents a spoken form that used to be uttered by a certain old lady after asking whether one knew her. Whatever the response was, she would express her feelings towards people who said they did not know her. The NP **motho** therefore has a generic interpretation.

Examples (126) – (131) illustrate that a descriptive possessive, in both the subject and object positions, can be ambiguous between genericness, definiteness and indefiniteness. A generic interpretation, where it is allowed, comes first. Definite and indefinite interpretations are distinguishable by context. In cases like these examples, where context is removed, disambiguating modifiers are the most relevant and sensible choice. Otherwise if the predicate excludes genericness the sentence will remain ambiguous and odd.

5.5.4 The relative

The relative is another type of modifier. Northern Sotho possesses two types of relatives, viz. the nominal relative, and the verbal relative.

5.5.4.1 Nominal relative

Abstract nouns of classes 6 and 14 appear as the relative base. The nominal relative agreement resembles the demonstrative of position 1 (cf. chapter 3 for demonstratives).

(132) **Ke tla šupa [bašemane [ba maatla] ya ba bona ba re kukelago yona.**

(I will point at (the) strong boys, to be the ones that carry it for us.)

- (a) There may be a particular group of strong boys familiar to both discourse participants, to which the speaker is referring. The NP will be definite.
- (b) Neither the speaker nor the hearer may know of any strong boys but the speaker may anticipate that once they arrive he will be able to identify these boys. In such a case the NP does not have definite reference. Such boys may exist but be familiar only to the speaker. Either way the NP has indefinite reference.

(133) **Koko o hlapa ka [meetse [a borutho].**

((My) grandmother bathes with warm water.)

- (a) If the statement expresses a routine with regard to the kind of water that the speaker's grandmother uses for bathing, the NP will be regarded as having a generic interpretation.
- (b) The speaker's grandmother may be bathing at the time of utterance. Both discourse participants may be familiar with two types of water, cold and warm, that were set aside for bathing. If the speaker refers to this water of which the hearer is also aware, the NP has definite reference.
- (c) The speaker's grandmother may be bathing at the time of utterance. The hearer may not be aware of the existence of any warm water and he is only hearing about it. In this case the NP will have indefinite reference.

(134) **Le fihle le e bee kgauswi le [nkhutlwana [ye borutho].**

(You should put it next to a/the warm corner.)

- (a) If the NP refers to a mutually identifiable warm corner, it is definite.
- (b) It may only be anticipated that there will be a warm corner where the hearer and company will be able to place the object. The NP is not definite, and not even specific. On the other hand, only the speaker may be aware that of all the corners there is a specific one that is warm and where he wants the object to be placed. In both instances the NP **nkhutlwana ye borutho** is indefinite.

The NP in this position may be ambiguous, and its correct reading will be dependent on the context of utterance.

5.5.4.2 Verbal relative

In this type of modifier a verb stem appears as the core constituent. The verbal relative exhibits two different structures: one is the direct verbal relative and the other the indirect verbal relative. The structure of a verbal relative is characterised by the suffixation of **-go** or variant **-ng** to the verb stem. Agreement morphology exists, by which the verb stem agrees with the subject, and it is different for the direct and the indirect verbal relative.

Direct verbal relative

For a class 3 noun such as **mohlare** (tree), for instance, the direct verbal relative agreement is: **wo o**, and the whole relative will be **wo o +Vst + -go/-ng**. The demonstrative is followed by a subjectival agreement only, to form a direct verbal relative agreement. The following examples illustrate the role of the direct verbal relative in the interpretation of the NP:

(135) **[Dingaka [tše di alafago] baloi di tla ratwa ke mang?**

(Who will like (the) healers that treat witches?)

- (a) The utterance may be only expressing the point that any doctor who does such a thing will not be liked by members of his community. The NP has a generic reading.
- (b) There may be a particular doctor familiar to both discourse participants by means of this description, in which case the NP is definite.
- (c) The NP is indefinite if the speaker alone is familiar with the referent of the NP. The utterance may even be rhetorical or an exclamation, with a particular doctor in the speaker's mind of which the hearer is not aware.

(136) **[Selepe [se se welego] se na le mpheng wa tshipi.**

(An/the axe that fell has an iron handle.)

- (a) There may have been mention of an axe or more. There may also have been extra information that one of them fell, and this may be familiar to the hearer as well. The NP is consequently definite.
- (b) The semantics of the verbal relative suggests that the speaker is familiar with the referent of the NP. Therefore, in the case where the hearer is not familiar with the referent the NP is indefinite.

(137) **[Meetse [a a llago] segwagwa a a kgotsofatša.**

(Water that 'burps a frog' satisfies.) --- i.e. in which a frog burps.

- (a) The statement may be referring to any clean water, with no water containing frogs nearby. In this case the NP has a generic reference.
- (b) The speaker and the hearer may be next to a well, and they hear the sounds of frogs from within it. Even if the speaker is referring to the water in the immediate physical environment, the statement itself takes a generic interpretation. The water in the immediate physical environment triggers the thought but the statement actually applies not only to this water but also to any uncontaminated water anywhere in which frogs can survive.

Based on the examples above, the verbal relative modifier does not appear to ensure unique identifiability in all contexts. Generic interpretation immediately comes to the fore, where the predicate allows it. Definite or indefinite interpretation is dependent on the context of utterance. Noun phrases may be ambiguous even if they are modified by a direct verbal relative.

A direct relative with verbal stem **-re** is, however, always indefinite. Verb stem **-re** in a relative clause may function as an indefinite nominal modifier. **-re**'s basic meaning is 'say', with past tense **-rile** (said). **-itše** is the variant of the past tense. The verbal relative stem with **-re** where indefiniteness is concerned is always in the past tense, in the direct relative construction, taking the following forms: **-rilego/-rileng/-itšego/-itšeng** (a certain/specific/particular). The referent of the NP may be familiar to the speaker, but it may not be expected to be uniquely identifiable to the hearer. The following examples illustrate the occurrence and interpretation of indefinite **-re**:

(138) **Ge o fihla o kgethe [ngwana [yo a itšego] o mo fe yona.**

(When you arrive you should choose a specific child and give it to him.)

(139) A: **Na o reng o re ditela o sa no topa wa feta?**

(Why do you waste our time by not just picking and passing?)

B: **Nka se tope ye nngwe le nngwe, ke nyaka [ye e itšeng].**

(I will not just pick any; I want a specific one.)

Examples (138) and (139) above indicate that the speaker may or may not have any individual referent in mind, but it is clear that the identity of the referent is not, at the time of utterance, familiar to the hearer.

Indirect verbal relative

In the case of the indirect verbal relative, agreement acquires an extra element viz. objectival agreement. The NP in the subject position is the logical object, with its own demonstrative and objectival agreement. Placed between the two is subjectival agreement, which agrees with the logical subject. For instance, if the NP in the subject position is class 3 and the agent is class 2 the indirect verbal relative agreement will be: **wo₃ ba₂ o₃**. The following sentences contain indirect verbal relative clauses:

(140) **[Dinkgwa [tše ba di jago] ga di bodila.**

(The bread that they eat is not sour.)

- (a) If the people being talked about are not eating any bread at the time of utterance it will be clear that the NP **dinkgwa** refers to a type that they normally eat, therefore invoking a generic reading.
- (b) On the other hand, the NP **dinkgwa** may refer to the loaves of bread that the people are eating at the time of utterance. In this case the NP will have a definite reading.

(141) **[Moya [wo re o bušago] o hlwekile.**

(The air that we breathe is clean.)

- (a) If the speaker's statement suggests that the air that human beings breathe is clean, without any limitation as to which air, the NP has a generic interpretation.
- (b) There may have been some pollution in the air earlier than the time of utterance. After the problem has been solved the NP **moya wo re o bušago** may imply the newly purified air as opposed to the previous situation. The NP would then have definite reference.

(142) **[Sefapano [se a se athilego] se swana le sa Morena Jesu.**

(The cross that he carries is like that of the Lord Jesus.)

- (a) There may be more than one cross in the physical environment, but the speaker is referring to the one that is being carried by a particular person. The hearer too will be able to uniquely identify the referent of NP **sefapano**; therefore the NP is definite.

When modified by an indirect verbal relative, the noun phrase seems to be compatible with familiarity, bringing about either a generic or definite reading depending on the situation.

The logical subject is familiar; therefore, the NP in the subject position has a limited scope of reference due to its association with the logical subject.

The contribution of the modifier towards the unique identifiability of the referent of a noun phrase is as dependent upon context as that of a bare NP, which makes the role of the modifier as a linguistic element in this regard minimal. The entire linguistic context, including the semantics of the verb, plays an important role in interpretation. However, the indirect relative construction seems to trigger familiarity, which may be attributed to the presence of AgrO in its structure.

5.5.5 Possessive

The possessive agreement morpheme consists of AgrS + possessive **a**. It forges agreement between two NPs, the nucleus NP and the possessive base. The entire possessive structure, possessive agreement and possessive base modifies the nucleus NP. This structure has two semantic interpretations viz. a possessive relationship and a descriptive possessive. The latter provides the attribute of the referent, just like the

adjective. It has been dealt with in the preceding section and will not be discussed here. The former expresses the relation between a possessor and a possessum. **Kgomo ya malome** is an example of a possessor – possessum relationship, i.e. **malome** (uncle) owns **kgomo** (cow).

(143) **[Nswana [wa kgoši] o eta moroto pele.**

(A/the child of a/the chief leads a/the group of initiates.)

- (a) During any initiation that is conducted according to traditional practices there is usually a child from the chief's family or from the extended royal family who is of an age to be initiated. This child is the leader of the regiment. If the speaker's statement explains this traditional practice without referring to any specific initiation school anywhere the NP has a generic interpretation.
- (b) There may be an initiation school underway in a certain village. To explain to anyone who knows the people in the village but is not conversant with matters of initiation the NP will have definite reference. It will refer to the child of an age to be initiated, of this particular chief.
- (c) The hearer may not be aware that initiations have anything to do with age groups. He may also not know which of the chief's children is at the school. Depending on what the conversation is about, the identity of this particular child may not be relevant. It may only be relevant that the chief has a child there, of which the speaker is aware. The NP would therefore have indefinite reference.

(144) **[Dipuku [tša morutišigadi] di timetše.**

((The) books of a/the lady teacher are lost.)

- (a) The speaker and the hearer may both be familiar with the books that their teacher normally brings to school, in a bag. Suppose vandals have ransacked a certain room at their school. The speaker and the hearer may also know that there were no other books that belong to their teacher in that particular room. If the bag goes missing and the speaker utters (144) the referent of the NP is identifiable to the hearer as well. The NP in this case has definite reference.

- (b) If the speaker is telling this to his parents at home, the NP has indefinite reference. The parents may know that every teacher will obviously possess books but they will not be able to know which of the teacher's books are missing.

(145) **[Kgomo] ya malome] e wetše ka leopeng.**

(A/the cow of (my) uncle fell into a/the ditch.)

- (a) Suppose the speaker's uncle owns only one cow and the hearer is familiar with the fact. Depending, again, on how many uncles the speaker has, the NP may be definite. The speaker may have one uncle or only one of his uncles may be relevant to the discourse.
- (b) If the hearer is not familiar with the fact that the speaker's uncle possesses cattle, the NP will have indefinite reference. The speaker may be familiar with the fact that the speaker's uncle owns cattle but may not know which one of them fell into the ditch. The speaker may also feel that information regarding the identity of the cow is not important to this conversation.

The possessive phrase may appear before the head noun, as in the following examples:

(146) **[Wa kgoši [ngwana] o eta moroto pele.**

/Of a/the chief, a/the child leads a/the group of initiates/

(A /the chief's child leads a/the group of initiates.)

(147) **[Tša morutišigadi [dipuku] di timetše.**

/Of a/the lady teacher, (the) books are lost/

(A/the lady teacher's books are lost.)

(148) **[Ya malome [kgomo] e wetše ka leopeng.**

/Of (my) uncle, a/the cow fell into a/the ditch/

((My) uncle's cow fell into a/the ditch.)

The difference in interpretation between (143) – (145) and their respective counterparts in (146) – (148) above stems from the fact that the preposed element in the latter carries more emphasis than the one that appears last. As far as definiteness is concerned, the syntactic position has no effect. Definiteness will be inferred by other means, whilst preposing directs focus.

In the possessive, the search area becomes limited by the scope of the possessum. Therefore, depending on how many possessa an individual may have, the NP may be definite or indefinite. According to Lyons (1999) what makes the AG possessive definite is not the structure, but the definiteness is in the possessum itself.

Normal spoken/written text always has a contextual background. Hence ambiguity is minimal or not present at all. Concocted isolated sentences used to try and explain a certain phenomenon may not bring it out as naturally as it should be expressed, and are only used to illustrate the potential ambiguity that may be created.

5.6 SUBJECT INVERSION

It has been pointed out in chapter 3 and in section 5.2.3 of this chapter that the basic word order of Northern Sotho is SVO. Only the subject requires compulsory agreement with the verb. According to this basic order the grammatical subject is the logical subject as well. It has also been mentioned that this order is flexible. When a sentence is passivised the logical subject exchanges positions with the object, making the logical object a grammatical subject. Another possible occurrence of change in the order is subject inversion (SI), i.e. right-dislocation of the NP subject. In Northern Sotho subject inversion is possible with both intransitive and transitive verbs. Subject inversion involves the filling of the empty subject position with existential **go** coindexed with agreement of inflection, pushing the original subject to the post-verbal position.

5.6.1 NP subject of intransitive verb

The NP subject of an intransitive verb may be moved to the post-verbal adjunct position. Intransitive verbs in the present tense contain the morpheme **a**, when the sentence is constructed according to the basic order. When the subject is inverted and the empty subject position is occupied by **go** with feature [+existential], **a** does not appear. The 'long form' of the present tense and subject inversion cannot co-occur, as illustrated in (iii) below – the construction would be ungrammatical. These facts apply to both classes of intransitive verbs, viz. unaccusative and unergative verbs, as the following examples illustrate:

- (149) (i) **[Basadi] ba a Ila.**
 ((The) women cry.)
- (ii) **[Go] Ila [basadi].**
 [pro_i-go_i] Ila basadi_i
 (It is (the) women that cry.)
- (iii) ***[Go] a Ila [basadi].**
- (a) Inverted in (ii) the subject may be referring to no particular **basadi**, but just represent a statement of the conventional belief that it is women who cry and not men. In this case the NP **basadi** will take a generic reading.
- (b) If it refers to a particular group of women of which the speaker and the addressee are aware, it will have definite reference. For instance, there may be a known set of people who are crying. The statement may clarify that it is (the) women in the group that are crying and not (the) men.
- (c) It may also be indefinite if only the speaker is familiar with the referent of the NP. The hearer may not even have heard the crying, but is only being informed.

The NP subject **basadi** (women) in both (149) (i) and (ii) may be generic, definite or indefinite. The structure illustrated by (iii) is ungrammatical. Other examples:

- (150) (i) **[Pula] e] a na.**
 (Lit.: The rain rains --- It rains.)
- (ii) **Go na [pula].**
 (Lit.: It is the rain that rains.)

There is obviously nothing that can rain except rain; but water may splash down in a similar way. Example (150)(ii) will be appropriate in implying that it is in fact rain which is falling and not what the addressee may think it is. The tense of the sentence together with the semantic content of both the verb and the noun cause NP subject **pula** in this example to be definite. The hearer need not enquire about which rain is being referred to.

- (151) (i) **[Ngwetši] e a tsena.**
 (A/the bride arrives.)

- (ii) **Go tsena [ngwetši].**
 (It is a/the bride that arrives.)

There may be some ululating, which was expected to announce a certain event, but instead that audible at the time of utterance announces the arrival of a/the bride – something different from what the addressee and maybe the speaker were hoping for.

- (a) Both the speaker and the hearer may be aware of the expected arrival of a particular bride. When the sentence is uttered the NP **ngwetši** represents a familiar referent, which makes the NP definite.
- (b) The hearer may not have heard that a bride is expected in the neighbourhood. Therefore the NP **ngwetši** represents new information to him, and the NP is indefinite.

The above examples illustrate that the interpretation of the extraposed NP is contextually determined. It contains the potential to be generic, definite or indefinite. The movement of the subject argument to a post-verbal position places it in a position of focus.

5.6.2 NP subject of transitive verb

In the case of transitive verbs, the NP subject moves to the post-verbal position and the internal argument, which is adjacent to the verb, moves further right after the dislocated subject. The object loses its syntactic position as the argument and becomes another adjunct. The following examples illustrate the point:

- (152) (i) **[Bana] ba bapala kgati.**
 ((The) children play skipping rope.)
- (ii) **Go bapala [bana] kgati.**
 (It is (the) children that play skipping rope.)

- (a) This may be a general statement to the effect that it is normally not adults that play skipping rope, but children. In this way the NP will have a generic interpretation.

- (b) There may be some stamping of feet, heard by both the speaker and hearer as they sit inside a house. They may both be aware that there are children somewhere in the yard. On enquiring about the noise the hearer may be told (ii), linking the referent of the NP **bana** to the stamping. The NP **bana** will in this case take definite reference.
- (c) The speaker may be the only person hearing the stamping and aware of the presence of children in the vicinity. He may have been asked why he seemed distracted and is responding that it is nothing serious to worry about. The NP will have indefinite reference.

- (153) (i) **[Monna] o rema mašaša.**
(A/the man is cutting (the) branches.)
- (ii) **Go rema [monna] mašaša.**
(It is a/the man that is cutting (the) branches.)

- (a) Cutting the branches of trees is one of the chores that men perform before the fields are ploughed. If this utterance is merely explaining how the chores are divided between men and women, the NP will have a generic reading.
- (b) (ii) may comprise the response to a question as to what a particular noise is for. The hearer may be familiar with the referent of the NP **monna** being referred to, in which case the NP is definite.
- (c) The response may not necessarily be dependent on whether the hearer is familiar with the referent of the NP **monna** or not. The NP **monna** may be new information for the hearer but not to the speaker, making the NP indefinite.

Examples (154) and (155) below demonstrate that subject inversion of a transitive verb with mass nouns is ungrammatical. The referent of a mass noun cannot be an agent, and therefore does not make sense in this position.

- (154) (i) **[Bjala] bo tlaetša batho.**
((The) beer makes people stupid.)
- (ii) ***Go tlaetša [bjala] batho.**
- (155) (i) **[Madi] a gaša mooki.**
((The) blood splashes on a/the nurse.)
- (ii) ***Go gaša [madi] mooki.**

It should be noted that the NP objects **kgati** (152) (i) and **mašaša** (153) (i) may be omitted in the (ii) versions because the NPs **bana** and **banna** occupy their position, relegating them to adjunct positions. The interpretation of the extraposed NP in the examples above is similar to that with intransitive verbs. Whether it is definite or not is contextually determined, and the extraposition merely places the NP in a position of focus.

Statements numbered (ii) in examples (149) – (153) may be said of the women, the bride, the children or the man indentifiable to both the speaker and the hearer, with the exception that **go** is in the clause-initial position; this order is preferred for the purpose of contrasting focus of the initial subject with another possible referent. The following two examples contain extensions of the former sentences (149) and (153) to illustrate a contrasting focus:

(156) **Go lla [basadi], e sego banna.**

(It is (the) women that cry, not (the) men.)

(157) **Go rema [monna] mašaša, e sego mosadi.**

(It is a/the man that cuts (the) branches, not a/the woman.)

Example (158) below is used to establish whether the inverted subject position in Northern Sotho admits only a definite or also an indefinite interpretation. The inverted subject is replaced by unambiguously definite and indefinite NPs, to see if they will be accepted in this position.

(158) (a) **[Mosadi] o a apea.**

(A/the woman cooks.)

(b) **Go apea [mosadi].**

(It is a/the woman that cooks.)

(c) **[Go] apea [yena].**

(It is her that cooks.)

(d) **Go apea [yo mongwe].**

(It is another/a different one that cooks.)

The use of **yena** in (c) suggests that the referent is mutually uniquely identifiable, hence definite. In (d) the inverted NP has indefinite reference, since there is no suggestion that it should or can be uniquely identifiable by the addressee. Both sentences are grammatically

and logically correct. (c) says it is a particular woman that cooks and not another person that might possibly also cook; and (d) indicates that it is another or a different person that cooks and not the one who was expected to do so.

The communicative need for the right-dislocation of the subject is due to the pragmatic condition of focus; and does not affect the (in)definite interpretation of the inverted subject. Whether the NP subject is in its basic position, with AgrS, or has been right-dislocated, lacking AgrS, the reading with regard to (in)definiteness is not affected. Northern Sotho does not evidence any definiteness effects with inverted subjects.

To sum up these observations as far as the bare noun phrase is concerned: generics are the most likely candidates for the subject position, followed by definites. However, if a bare non-generic NP is to be unambiguously definite it must either be supported by the pragmatic factors discussed in chapter 3 or otherwise it should appear with relevant modifiers. Indefinites are not prevented from appearing in the subject position, and if they do they possess a [+Spec] feature. In the case of indefinites as well, the role of disambiguating modifiers cannot be overemphasised. Post-verbal positions are more accommodating, but if the predicate allows it, a generic interpretation comes first for a bare noun phrase. If the predicate blocks generic interpretation, definite and subsequently indefinite interpretations are inferred. The object position accepts non-specific indefinites as well.

5.7 OPACITY

An opaque utterance is an utterance that is not transparent in terms of understanding and interpretation. Opacity is therefore the quality of being difficult to understand or to interpret correctly. Hurford & Heasley (1983) explain opaque contexts as contexts that 'block our view' so that the interpretation of referring expressions is not clear. It has been observed in the previous section that there can sometimes be ambiguity between definiteness and indefiniteness of the Northern Sotho NP. The issue of specificity is also important with regard to the interpretation of referring expressions. Within the realm of indefiniteness a distinction is drawn between noun phrases with specific reference and those with non-specific reference. Specific indefinites consist of those noun phrases whose referents are familiar to the speaker but not to the hearer. With regard to non-specific indefinites the

speaker himself may not have any particular referent in mind. Specific NPs can be either definite or indefinite whilst non-specifics are only indefinite.

In language there are certain grammatical contexts that create ambiguity with regard to specificity. The ambiguity of these contexts arises from their containing certain linguistic elements that 'present a proposition as counterfactual, potential or hypothetical, rather than factual' (Lyons 1999:166). The presence of such an operator affects the truth or falsity of a statement. If a certain part is added on to complete the sentence, it may yield a different meaning from that when a different part is added on. Linguistic elements that create this effect include verbs of propositional attitude and intentional verbs, the negative, the interrogative, the potential, modals (causal and conditional) and the future tense. The use of a past versus a future tense may also affect the reading. These linguistic elements will be used in this section as sentence operators that present ambiguities. A distinction drawn by Lyons (op. cit.) between the two readings is that on the non-specific reading the NP is not substitutable by a co-referential expression.

The following examples, (159) – (173), contain in the first part an operator that creates ambiguity. The second part clears up the ambiguity between specific and non-specific interpretations. All sentences each have the (a) and the (b) versions. The second part of the (a) versions represents a specific reading. The disambiguating part suggests the existence of a referent that is familiar to the speaker but may or may not be identifiable to the hearer. In the (b) versions it becomes clear that the speaker himself may not have any uniquely identifiable referent in mind. The utterance does not commit the speaker to the existence of any referent.

5.7.1 Verbs of propositional attitude

Propositional verb stems **-ikemišeditše** (intend), **-nyaka** (want) and **-duma** (wish) are used in (159), (160) and (161) respectively to create ambiguity with respect to specificity. The verbs put forward a desire or intention; and therefore suggest that the referent of the noun phrase can either be uniquely identifiable by the speaker, or not. The continuations of the sentences clear up the ambiguity, as explained above. In the second part of the sentences the (a)'s indicate that the NP is specific and the (b)'s indicate non-specificity.

- (159) (a) **Ngwaga wo ke ikemišeditše go gwerana le [lesogana] la disegišabaeng --- le ge e le mo re sa kwane gabotse.**
 (This year I intend to befriend a/the young man with dimples --- even if we do not see eye to eye.)
- (b) **Ngwaga wo ke ikemišeditše go gwerana le [lesogana] la disegišabaeng --- le ge nnete gona ke tseba gore botse bjo bokaalo ga bo bonabonwe.**
 (This year I intend to befriend a young man with dimples --- even though I know that such beauty is rare.)
- (160) (a) **Ramaite o nyaka go fa [moswaramarapo] sešupanako --- eupša o a se gana.**
 (Ramaite wants to give a/the master of ceremonies a/the watch --- but he refuses to take it.)
- (b) **Ramaite o nyaka go fa [moswaramarapo] sešupanako --- eupša ga se gwa hlwa go tsebja gore go tlo kgethwa mang go sepediša modiro.**
 (Ramaite wants to give a master of ceremonies a/the watch --- but it is not yet known who will be chosen to direct the programme.)
- (161) (a) **Raasetša o дума go leša [ngwana] --- eupša mmagwe o a gana; o re o šetše a lle.**
 (Raasetša wishes to feed a/the baby --- but her mother refuses; she says he has already been fed.)
- (b) **Raasetša o дума go leša [ngwana] --- ka fao o fela pelo ya go ya madibeng a tle a itaole ka se e lego sa gagwe.**
 (Raasetša wishes to feed a baby --- as a result she cannot wait to have her own so that she can do what she likes with what is hers.)

Intentional verbs also create ambiguity with respect to their NP object. Verb stems **-nyaka** (look for) and **-loga maano** (plan) appear in (162) and (163), respectively.

- (162) (a) **Malome Thiladae o nyaka [pudi] --- ke kgale putšane e lla e nnoši ka šakeng e nyaka go amušwa.**
 (Uncle Thiladae is looking for a/the goat --- it is long that the kid has been bleating alone in the kraal wanting to suckle.)
- (b) **Malome Thiladae o nyaka [pudi] --- baeng ba ba tlogo tla mo ba ka se lekanwe ke kgogo.**

(Uncle Thiladae is looking for a goat --- the guests that will be coming here are too many for a/the chicken.)

- (163) (a) **Bakgalabje ba sa loga maano a mafsa a go šoga [mokgopa] --- ke kgale ba o beile o tla ba wa nkga.**
 ((The) old men are still planning to tan a/the hide. --- it is long that they have kept it, it will stink.)
- (b) **Bakgalabje ba sa loga maano a mafsa a go šoga [mokgopa] --- mohlang ba o hwetša mošomo o tla nama wa tšhaba diatla.**
 ((The) old men are still planning to tan a hide. --- when they find one, the job will get done fast.)

5.7.2 Negation

The interpretation of the NP in the negative sentence has less to do with the linguistic elements that appear in the sentence structure.

- (164) (a) **Ga se a ithekga ka [leboto] --- o kgole kudu le lona.**
 (He is not leaning against a/the wall --- he is very far from it.)
- (b) **Ga se a ithekga ka [leboto] --- mo a emego e no ba molala fela; le moagonyana ga o gona.**
 (He is not leaning against a wall --- where he is standing is just a level plain; there isn't even a single building.)
- (165) (a) **Ga se ka bona [moprsta] maloba ge ke be ke le kua Leiden --- ke ile ge ke fihla Amsterdam ka mo founela.**
 (I did not see a/the priest the other time when I was in Leiden --- I called him when I arrived in Amsterdam.)
- (b) **Ga se ka bona [moprsta] maloba ge ke be ke le kua Leiden --- ga ke tsebe gore phuthago yela e tlo feletša kae ngwaga o bile o fela ba sa kgopele thušo go mopišopo.**
 (I did not see a priest the other time when I was in Leiden --- I don't know what that congregation is going to do; the year is coming to an end but they do not ask for assistance from the bishop.)

5.7.3 Questions

In the following examples a noun phrase that is contained in an interrogative sentence is examined for opacity. The noun phrase itself is not interrogative in nature.

- (166) (a) **Le bone [dikgomo]? --- Ba re maabane di be fula di lebile Molapong wo Moso.**

(Did you see (the) cattle? --- it is said that they were grazing in the direction of The Dark Kloof yesterday.)

- (b) **Le bone [dikgomo]? --- Ana o rua diphoofolo tša mohuta mang polaseng ya gagwe?**

(Did you see cattle? --- I'm not sure what kind of animals he keeps on his farm.)

- (167) (a) **Na mmago o ile a ba a tšea [ngwetši] Bošega ngwagola? --- goba ke a foša ga a bolele sa Bošega mosetsana yola?**

(Did your mother marry a/the daughter-in-law from Bošega last year? --- or am I wrong, does that girl not speak the Bošega language variety?)

- (b) **Na mmago o ile a ba a tšea [ngwetši] Bošega ngwagola? --- goba ke gona a sa nyakanyaka?**

(Did your mother marry a daughter-in-law from Bošega last year? --- or is she still looking?)

5.7.4 Conditionals

A conditional sentence or phrase in Northern Sotho begins with the equivalents of English 'if' or 'unless', and it expresses a situation that must occur before something else can happen. Generally the conditional phrase begins with the conjunct **ge** and the verbal form of the clause is in the participial mood. The conditional is dependent in nature and it therefore occurs in a subordinate clause.

- (168) (a) **Ge o bona [sekhwamana] se sehwi bitšwanyana o mpotše --- ke sa ka.**

(If you see a/the red purse you should tell me --- it is mine.)

- (b) **Ge o bona [sekhwamana] se sehwi bitšwanyana o mpotše --- ke kgale ke duma go se reka.**

(If you see a red purse you should tell me --- I have wanted to buy it for so long.)

- (169) (a) **Ge kgwedi e balama [masea] a a kuruetšwa --- le a rekele diapro tše borutho a se ke a tsenwa ke phefo.**
 (When the new moon appears (the) infants are being *kuruetšwa*⁶ --- you should buy them warm clothes so that they do not get cold.)
- (b) **Ge kgwedi e balama [masea] a a kuruetšwa --- ka malapeng ao go se nago bakgekolo ba fela ba lebala.**
 (When the new moon appears infants are being *kuruetšwa* --- families that do not have old women tend to forget.)

5.7.5 Modals

Examples (170) and (171), in the first part of the sentence, contain verbs that appear in clauses which express actions that should or will happen for certain purposes or causes; actions that are dependent on other actions contained in the main clause.

- (170) (a) **O botše Kgadi a tliše [dinotlelo] --- ke kgale ke di emetše.**
 (Tell Kgadi to bring (the) keys --- I have been waiting for them for too long.)
- (b) **O botše Kgadi a tliše [dinotlelo] --- ge a ka di segiša, gore ke kgone go tsena ge a sa ile mošomong.**
 (Tell Kgadi to bring keys --- if she gets to have duplicates cut, so that I can get in when she is still at work.)
- (171) (a) **Le hlatsweng [dibjana] --- ke bone di bobolelwa ke dintši.**
 (You should wash (the) dishes --- I saw them surrounded by (the) flies.)
- (b) **Le hlatsweng [dibjana] --- mohlang ba le rekela.**
 (You should wash dishes --- when they buy you some.)

5.7.6 Future

Actions, processes and events yet to take place are indicated in language by the future tense. The following examples examine how this tense creates opacity and how it can be resolved for the purpose of attaining clarity in certain contexts:

- (172) (a) **Ke tlo tla le [koloji] gosasa --- o tla bona maotwana a ba ntsentšheditšego ona.**
 (I am going to bring a/the car tomorrow --- you will see the wheels that they put in for me.)
- (b) **Ke tlo tla le [koloji] gosasa --- le ge nka no hwetša go se na ye e nkgahlago.**
 (I am going to bring a car tomorrow --- even if I happen not to like any.)
- (173) (a) **Khansela e nkgethile gore ke tlo apeela [mopišopo] gosasa --- ga se ka swanela go hloka nama ya nku; o e rata kudu.**
 (The council chose me to cook for a/the bishop tomorrow --- I must not run short of lamb; he likes it a lot.)
- (b) **Khansela e nkgethile gore ke tlo apeela [mopišopo] gosasa --- aretseng letšatši la sobela go se na yo a beilwego.**
 (The council chose me to cook for a bishop tomorrow --- unless the sun sets before one is appointed.)

Opaque contexts illustrate how an utterance can be ambiguous in terms of the [\pm Spec] feature of the NP. Without the extensions in the examples above it would not be clear whether the NP has specific or non-specific reference.

5.7.7 Past tense versus future tense

Tense and the semantics of the verb can have influence on the reading of the NP. The past tense is a term used in grammar for 'denoting any of various tenses of verbs that are used describing actions, events or states that have been begun or completed at the time of utterance.' (*Collins English Dictionary*, 21st Century Edition). A future tense on the other hand is 'a tense of verbs used when the action or event described is to occur after the time of utterance' (op. cit.). The use of one of the two tenses and not the other may block a particular reading, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (174) (a) **[Mekgaditswana] e tsene ka mo.**
 ((The) lizards got in here.)
- (b) **[Mekgaditswana] e tlo tsena ka mo.**
 ((The) lizards will get in here.)

Because of the difference in tense (174) (a) suggests that the speaker is familiar with the referent of NP **mekgaditswana**. The NP may or may not constitute new information to the hearer, which differentiates between definite and indefinite reference. As far as specificity is concerned the NP can only be specific and not non-specific. (b) on the other hand allows for both specific and non-specific readings since the speaker himself may not be familiar with the referent of the NP. There may or may not be any lizards in the future that may enter.

- (175) (a) **Ke bone [ngaka] maabane.**
 (I saw/consulted a/the doctor yesterday.)
- (b) **Ke tla bona [ngaka] gosasa.**
 (I will see consult a/the doctor tomorrow.)

In the above sentences as well, (175) (a) can never be non-specific since the speaker saw a/the doctor. The NP may be definite or indefinite, but it may not accept a non-specific reading. Because (b) represents what may potentially happen, both specific and non-specific readings are possible.

The two examples above suffice to show that the occurrence of the past tense together with the semantics of the verb may prevent non-specific interpretation, whilst the future tense accepts both specific and non-specific readings.

5.8 CONCLUSIONS

The observations in this chapter bring to light some facts about the full noun phrase in Northern Sotho, in relation to definiteness. In the first instance it is noticed that the full noun phrase in Northern Sotho is bare. It does not contain any articles that may mark definiteness. The noun in Northern Sotho possesses only a class prefix and no preprefix. Given the lack of two grammatical features that are generally associated with the encoding of the feature [+Def], investigation has to go beyond the structural features of the noun itself.

The noun occupies two major positions in the structure of the sentence, viz. the subject position and the object position. The two positions exhibit marked differences in how they relate to other elements in the sentence. One major difference between the two is that the

NP subject has obligatory agreement with the verb; but the NP object does not. An exercise has been undertaken in this chapter to investigate the interpretation of the subject position in order to determine if it is only definite, indefinite or ambiguous. It has been established that all three readings are possible in this position. It has also been established that a generic reading, where applicable, is the most probable. Therefore, the full subject NP can be ambiguous unless there is enough information, contextually, to direct the reading one way or the other.

It has also been observed that except for a generic reading, the subject position tends to prefer a specific reading, definite or indefinite. Lyons' (1977) observation that what is uppermost in the speaker's mind at the time of utterance would serve as his communicative point of departure explains this position well. However, it could be concluded that when it comes to non-generics this position exhibits a strong inclination for specifics, definite or indefinite. Generics appear comfortably in the subject position because the semantics of the verb used to express a permanent characteristic or regularity disambiguates, and therefore makes them the most likely candidates.

The NP object has no compulsory agreement with the verb. In its basic position the NP object can be ambiguous between definiteness and indefiniteness. It can take a generic reading as well.

Because of potential ambiguity, the correct interpretation of nouns in Northern Sotho is enabled and achieved by the use of disambiguating linguistic elements that assist in tracing the referent or making it clear that it is not necessary to trace any referent. Besides these disambiguating elements, which have been dealt with in chapters three and four, context is crucial in guiding interpretation. If context, linguistic or physical, does not offer enough background for the interpretation of the noun and disambiguating elements are not used the utterance will sound odd and hence be inappropriate as a communicating tool.

The conclusion drawn from the observations in this chapter is that the Northern Sotho full NP in the subject position is usually the topic. The topic is usually known to be generic or definite. It has also been observed that definites and generics are the most likely occupants of this position. Specific indefinite NPs follow. For communication to be relevant there should always be a disambiguating element such as context or a nominal modifier

where ambiguity is threatened. Otherwise, redundant modifiers amount to unnecessary overspecifications and are avoided where there is no threat to correct interpretation.

FOOTNOTES:

¹ **Nae** should be **naye**.

² Bible translations according to The King James (KJV) Bible - <http://www.bibledatabase.net/>

It should be noted that in the Northern Sotho version **mohlwa** has not been personified.

³ **Mageu** is a light, slightly sour, drink made from porridge and flour.

⁴ **Malopong** is at a ceremony where people with ancestral spirits dance and communicate with ancestors.

⁵ **Moše** is an accepted shortened form for **moše wa mawatle** (overseas).

⁶ Traditionally the appearance of the new moon marks the birth month of an infant; and it is therefore a measure of its age. When the new moon appears after the birth of an infant, the infant would be taken out and shown the moon with the words: '**Kurrr!! Mogwerago šole!**' (Kurrr!! There is a member of your age group!). Children were known to be of the same age because they were **kuruetšwa** at the same time, i.e. they have been shown the same moon. The new moon also marked the time at which other events took place – a few people who could read and write would easily deduce the date from so & so's **mokuruetšo** (the event).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 AIM

This chapter aims at presenting the main findings of this study regarding definiteness in Northern Sotho. Noun phrases in this language are examined in terms of factors that may guide the speaker to choose a certain noun phrase for a particular discourse situation, and also as regards what the NP means and how the hearer interprets it. Chapter two contains a review of the existing literature on the topic. Data on the subject has been analysed in three chapters, i.e. chapters three, four and five. Chapter three examined definite expressions in Northern Sotho as well as factors that contribute to the reading of them. Chapter four discussed noun phrases that are incompatible with definiteness, their semantic-pragmatic interpretations and the syntactic positions they may occupy, while chapter five investigated possible interpretations of the bare noun phrase in various syntactic positions.

6.2 DEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

6.2.1 Definition

The expression of definiteness is based on the speaker's presupposition that the hearer is in a position to make a unique identification of the referent, based on their shared knowledge about the referent and the situation of utterance. Definiteness can be pragmatically determined, or some semantic-syntactic factors may influence the reading.

6.2.2 Definiteness and pragmatics

Pragmatics concerns itself with the meaning of utterances as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the hearer in a particular context. Pragmatics plays a crucial role in definiteness because the meaning of an utterance can only be understood when the whole situation of utterance is taken into consideration.

6.2.2.1 Context and presupposition

Features of the external world which impact on the speaker's choice of an utterance and the hearer's interpretation thereof are referred to as context. Reference not only concerns the relationship between a linguistic element and a 'thing in the world', but also the participants in the communication process, and the environment and conditions under which utterances are made. Sharing and understanding the context of utterance makes the speaker assume that the noun phrase he chooses in order to identify a referent will be interpreted unambiguously by the hearer. This assumption made by the speaker prior to expressing an utterance about the hearer's ability to interpret the utterance as intended is called a presupposition.

There are contexts which function as bases for the speaker's presupposition that the addressee will be able to arrive at a unique identification of the referent of a definite NP. Such contexts are termed situational contexts, and they are distinguished as the immediate situation and the broader situation. The former refers to the immediate physical environment in which the referent of a definite noun phrase may be locatable. The referent may be visually accessible or the NP may be making the addressee aware of the availability of a uniquely identifiable referent in the immediate physical environment. The following example may represent an utterance by one pupil to another in a classroom. The speaker's pencil has just broken and the hearer's spare pencil is on the desk:

- (1) **Nkadime [phensele].**
(Lend me the pencil.)

A certain group of people may share common knowledge of a uniquely identifiable referent in their environment. For example:

- (2) **O rekele [nkhakhane] maswi.**
(You should buy milk for the cat.)

With regard to the broader situation, it is not necessary to perceive the referent by one's senses in order to be able to identify it. The referent of the noun phrase may be known by both the speaker and the hearer to be the only one in the broader situation that fits the

descriptive content of the definite noun phrase. Example (3) illustrates definite reference stemming from the broader situation:

- (3) **Le se ke la tloga le se la botša [kgoši].**
 (Do not leave without telling the king.)

The speaker and the hearer may be residents of the same village; therefore, the NP **kgoši** refers unambiguously.

The general knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer also forms the basis for definite reference. The speaker and the hearer's shared knowledge of the universe makes **letšatši**, in example (4) below, definite:

- (4) **[Letšatši] le tsene ka marung.**
 (The sun is above the clouds.)

The speaker's presupposition in (4) is that the hearer shares his general knowledge of the universe, and will therefore be able to make a unique identification of the referent.

6.2.2.2 Existential presupposition in Northern Sotho

Existential presupposition underlies the act of definite reference. When a speaker utters a definite noun phrase he presupposes the existence of the referent of the noun phrase. A Northern Sotho utterance like,

- (5) **[Thelebišene] e timile?**
 (Is the television off?)

presupposes that there is a television set. For every definite noun phrase, therefore, the starting point is a prior assumption that such a referent does exist. The statement below presupposes the existence of a phone; it also presupposes that the phone is ringing:

- (6) **Araba [mogala].**
 (Answer the phone.)

Definite reference presupposes that it is the only phone in the situation of utterance, or that it is the only one that is ringing. With utterances such as (5) and (6) the speaker takes it for granted that the hearer is aware of the existence of a particular referent, and he is also aware that he is in a position to make a unique identification of the referent.

6.2.2.3 Transparent contexts

Transparent contexts are non-opaque contexts. The contexts provide ambiguity with regard to reference, without there being any operator that may be responsible for creating the ambiguity. A definite noun phrase may have a referential or an attributive reading. The following examples illustrate:

- (7) **Nke le boneng gore monna yola o tagilwe bjang! Ge a fihla gae a le bjalo [bana] ba tlo reng?**
 (Just have a look at how drunk that man is! What are the children going to say when he arrives at home like this?)
- (8) **Monna yo ke sebody sa go lahlwa. Ke gore [mosadi] o no kgotleledišwa ke go nagana gore go ba MmaMangmang go na le mohola.**
 (This man is so lazy. The wife probably merely tolerates him because she thinks that it is useful to be Mrs So-and-so.)

The NPs **bana** and **mosadi** in examples (7) and (8) are regarded as definite. Although they do not exhibit a grammatical genitive structure, both are understood as the man's children and man's wife, respectively. They are both ambiguous between the referential and attributive readings. In terms of the referential reading **bana** in (7) refers to the man's children, of whom both the speaker and the hearer are aware. As far as the attributive reading is concerned the speaker himself is not aware of the existence and identity of the man's children. The basis for the choice of the NP is 'if he has children'. The same applies to example (8). The NP **mosadi** will have a referential reading if the existence of the man's wife is presupposed. The speaker will in that case be basing his utterance on a presupposition that the hearer will be able to arrive at unique identification of the referent as it is intended. The speaker may not be able to do so, and similarly does not expect the hearer to make such an identification. In the latter situation the NP has an attributive reading – the basis for the utterance is 'in case the man has a wife'.

6.2.2.4 Anaphoric reference

A noun phrase refers anaphorically if it is co-referenced to another noun phrase that has been mentioned before. The first mention of a noun phrase generally has indefinite reference, but a second mention referring to the same or associated referent with a previously mentioned noun phrase has definite reference. The first NP is called the antecedent and the subsequent co-referenced NP is termed an anaphor. Anaphors are definite because they are always linked to a familiar NP, and as such, their referents are uniquely identifiable within the relevant universe of discourse. An anaphor may refer to the same entity as the antecedent. Pronouns and determiners are frequently used anaphors in Northern Sotho. In cases such as example (9) below, it is assumed that the referents of AgrO-**mo** (him/her) and absolute pronoun **yona** (it) have been mentioned previously, and the pronouns therefore have uniquely identifiable referents:

(9) **Le seke la [mo] fa [yona].**

(Do not give it to him.)

Full NPs do also appear as anaphors, in contexts where pronominals cannot sufficiently do so. Such cases arise when the antecedent is a conjoined NP consisting of more than one noun from the same class; and in cases of associative anaphoric reference. When the anaphor has a different referent from the antecedent's, but the two are associated, this is called associative anaphoric reference. Examples (10) and (11) illustrate:

(10) **Go thwe kgalekgale go kile gwa ba le [monna le mosadi]. Ba dula thitong ya thaba. [Mosadi] a na le hlogo ye kgolo...**

(It is said that long long ago there was once a man and a woman. They lived at the foot of a mountain. The woman had a big head...)

(11) **Bjalo ka ge o šetše o badile [Kgorong ya mošate le Megokgo ya bjoko], o ka ahlaahla setaele sa [mongwadi].**

(As you have already read Kgorong ya mošate and Megokgo ya bjoko, you may analyse the author's style.)

In example (10) **mosadi** (woman) refers anaphorically to one part of the conjoined NP **monna le mosadi** (man and woman). Using a pronoun in this case will not provide unique identification since both NPs forming a conjoint are in the same nominal class, i.e. class 1.

Mongwadi (author) in (11) refers anaphorically by association. There is no prior mention of the NP, but the speaker and hearer's shared knowledge facilitates association with the previously mentioned **Kgorong ya mošate le Megokgo ya bjoko**, the titles of two novels by the same author.

Another form of anaphoric reference is cataphora, i.e. when the anaphor comes before the antecedent. Cataphoric reference appears in clauses where the genitive **a** is followed by the complementiser phrase. E.g.:

(12) **[Taba] [ya] [gore ke kgale o mo nyaka] e a makatša.**

(The fact that you have been looking for him/her for a long time is surprising.)

The definiteness of the NP that appears first, viz. **taba**, is effected by the following complementiser phrase that is preceded by the genitive: **[ya [gore ke kgale o mo nyaka]**.

The pragmatic factors discussed above accord definite reference to a bare NP in Northern Sotho.

6.2.3 Definiteness in syntax and semantics

Other linguistic elements may be incorporated in the noun phrase to give it definite reference. It is the semantic content of the linguistic element as well as the syntactic environment in which it occurs that accord the NP such reference. Such linguistic elements perform other functions in the language. Nominal modifiers appear in noun phrases for this purpose.

6.2.3.1 With definite nominal modifiers: demonstrative, quantifiers

Nominal modifiers that are applicable as regards definiteness are the demonstrative and quantifiers.

The demonstrative:

The demonstrative guides the hearer to locate the referent of a noun phrase in the physical or non-physical environment. The demonstrative's basic function is deixis. It may

appear with or without the head noun. The demonstrative is inherently definite, by virtue of its root **a**, which has the feature [+Def]. Another feature of the demonstrative is [\pm Prox], which informs the hearer of the proximity of the referent with respect to the speaker and/or the hearer. With three basic positions, the Northern Sotho demonstrative is able to help the hearer locate the referent referred to by the definite expression. The three positions have suffixes that express proximity and remoteness. Position 1a is nearer to the speaker than to the hearer (**-no/-khwi**), position 2 is nearer to the hearer than to the speaker (**-o/-we/-uwe**), and position 3 is equally far from both (**le/-la**). Position 1 has no suffix and the status of proximity is derived by default in relation to other positions. For example:

- (13) **Hlatswa [leho [leo].**
 (Wash that wooden spoon.)

In the event of there being more than one wooden spoon, the demonstrative **leo** singles out a particular spoon for reference. Gestures may also be used to reinforce identifiability. The demonstrative informs the hearer that the wooden spoon is nearer to him than it is to the speaker. The head noun may not appear, and the demonstrative may function pronominally.

Another function of the demonstrative is non-deictical. The demonstrative may be used anaphorically to trace discourse referents. In the non-deictic function as well, the demonstrative highlights the status of the referent as being familiar. For instance:

- (14) **[Yeo] a re e lese.**
 /That one let us leave it/
 (Let us leave that one.)

Yeo may not refer to a physical location as in (14). There may have been a mention of a particular entity of nominal class 9 previously, and **yeo** refers to it anaphorically.

The demonstrative copulative identifies the locality of the referent. Like the demonstrative, suffixes indicate the location relative to the position of the speaker and the hearer. E.g.:

- (15) **Selepe [sese].**
 (Here is the axe.)

Quantifiers:

The quantifiers that are discussed in chapter 3 introduce an element of uniqueness or inclusiveness to the noun phrase.

Absolute pronoun: The absolute pronoun may appear with or without the head noun. In both positions it is linked to a familiar noun, and therefore the referent is uniquely identifiable. Examples:

- (16) (a) **Ke rata [yona [kolobe].**
 (I like (it) pork --- specifically.)
 (b) **Ke rata [yona].**
 (I like it.)

Universal quantifier: **-ohle** and **ka moka** are manifestations of the same meaning. They may also appear with or without the head noun to express inclusive reference. An NP with **ka moka** or **-ohle** refers to all members of a set expressed by the noun phrase. With regard to singular nouns reference is made to an entity in totality, as the following example illustrates:

- (17) **Mphe [dipuku [ka moka].**
 (Give me all the books.)

Emphasisers:

Co-ordinated -ngwe has an inclusive quantificational interpretation. It can appear both with the head noun and pronominally. E.g.:

- (18) **[Komiki [ye nngwe le ye nngwe] e na le mkgoko.**
 (Every cup has a handle.)

Co-ordinated -mang also has an inclusive quantificational interpretation. Like co-ordinated **-ngwe** it can appear both with the head noun and pronominally. E.g.:

- (19) **[Mang le mang] yo a nyorilweng a tle.**
 (Everyone who is thirsty should come.)

Reflexive emphasiser: **Ka + bo + N**(absolute pronoun) has definite reference. The absolute pronoun contained in the structure makes unique reference to a familiar referent. There is always a referent that matches the absolute pronoun part, which is already familiar to the hearer. Another form for the same meaning is **ka noši**.

- (20) (a) **Dikgomo di re go hlahlelwa di be di gangwe ke [modiši [ka boyena].**
 (b) **Dikgomo di re go hlahlelwa di be di gangwe ke [modiši [ka noši].**
 (After being driven into the kraal, the cows are milked by the herder himself.)

Inclusive quantifier:

The inclusive quantifier takes the form **ka + Prefix + Numeral** (more than one). The prefix resembles the nominal prefix of the relevant class. Inclusive quantification includes the total number of members involved. Notice the following example:

- (21) **[Bana [ka babedi] ba sepetlele.**
 (Both children are in hospital.)

The relevant set in (21) is a total of two children, and reference is made to both/all of them.

Ordinal numbers:

The ordinal numbers **mathomo** (first) and **mafelelo** (last) preceded by the genitive express 'the first' and 'the last', respectively. They locate the referent expressed by a singular noun phrase, and make it identifiable by the addressee. With regard to plurals a numeral needs to be involved for inclusiveness.

Possessive:

Two possessive types that are relevant to definiteness are: possessive with **gona** and inalienable possession. A possessive with **gona** is used to trace discourse referents. It signals to the hearer that the referent has been introduced earlier in discourse, and is therefore familiar, as the following example illustrates:

- (22) **[Morula [wa gona] o entšwe.**
 (The morula tree in question has borne fruit.)

Inalienable possession is definite by virtue of the referent's being a body part or a close relation of a known referent. Inalienable possession can, therefore, be located and uniquely identified. Structures like (23) (a) below, where the possessive construction is in the subject position, may be altered. The possessum may take a post-verbal syntactic position as adjunct, as in (b). The possessum in both syntactic positions is regarded as definite; it is locatable and uniquely identifiable.

- (23) (a) **[Nko [ya ngwana] e rurugile.**
 (b) **[Ngwana] o rurugile [nko].**
 (The nose of a/the child is swollen.)
- (24) (a) **Ngaka e bua [mpa ya mosadi].**
 (b) **Ngaka e bua [mosadi mpa].**
 (A/the doctor cuts open a/the woman's tummy.)

The construction in (24)(b) will be ungrammatical with non-agent subjects as illustrated by example (25) (b) below:

- (25) (a) **Ngaka e bona [mpa ya mosadi].**
 (b) ***Ngaka e bona [mosadi mpa].**
 (A/the doctor sees a/the woman's tummy.)

Definite NPs within clauses:

A relative with **-latela** and a copulative with **(n)noši** ensure the unique identifiability of referents.

- (26) **Ga ke nyake namune yeo; ke nyaka [ye e latelago].**
(I don't want that orange; I want the next one.)
- (27) **Ke [meetse [a nnoši]; ge o sa nwe ona o tla nwa eng?**
(It is the only water; what will you drink if you do not drink it?)

6.2.3.2 Proper names

The speaker uses a proper name for uniquely referring to a particular individual that he expects the hearer to identify uniquely as well. In the case where there might be more than one referent more descriptive material is added to ensure unique identifiability:

- (28) **Na o bone [Ranti]?**
(Have you seen Ranti?)
- (29) **Na o bone [Ranti [wa boMoshe]?**
(Have you seen Ranti of Moshe's family?)

6.2.3.3 Pronouns

Pronouns are used if the full noun phrase is familiar and it is unnecessary to repeat it. Because they always link to familiar referents, pronouns have definite reference.

pro-AgrS is primarily an agreement morpheme. When the subject is known and unnecessary repetition is avoided, pro-AgrS coindexed with agreement of inflection refers unambiguously. pro-AgrS always reflects the nominal class of the referent. For instance, in example (30) below, the referent is in the plural and is expected either to have the feature [-human], or if it is [+human] the noun contains additional descriptive content, e.g. the referent may belong to a specialist field or exhibit a certain physical or psychological condition :

- (30) **[pro; [di_r[a-fiša]**
[+8/10] [+8/10]
(They are hot.)

Pragmatic factors may overrule this reading only for nominal class 2, where pro-AgrS may be used for conventionally fixed expressions.

pro-AgrO's basic function is pronominal; it is not an agreement marker. If it co-occurs with the NP, it precedes the verb and the NP appears post-verbally. pro-AgrO marks the status of the co-occurring object as the topic, and hence definite. When the object clitic appears with an empty *pro* it refers anaphorically to an already established referent. Example (31) illustrates the two occurrences of pro-AgrO:

As co-occurring object clitic:

- (31) (a) **Badiši ba a [di] hloriša [ditšhwene].**
 ((The) herdboys abuse the baboons.)

As empty *pro*:

- (b) **Badiši ba a [di] hloriša.**
 ((The) herdboys abuse them.)

The absolute pronoun may function pronominally in prepositional phrases with **ka**, **ga/go**, **ke**, **a** and **le**. The absolute pronoun in this position refers anaphorically to a familiar referent. The following example illustrates this point:

- (32) **Tloga [go [sona].**
 (Move away from it.)

Possessive pronouns also indicate grammatical person and class. Possessive pronouns take two forms, individual and communal possession. Communal possession is a form of inalienable possession as well. In both forms possessive pronouns refer unambiguously:

- (33) **Koloi [ya [gagwe] e tletše makhura.**
 (His car is full of fuel.)
- (34) **Koloi [ya [gabo] e tletše makhura.**
 (His family's car is full of fuel.)

The individual referred to by the possessive pronoun is familiar to both discourse participants, hence possessive pronouns have definite reference.

6.3 INDEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

6.3.1 Definition

Indefinite reference indicates to the hearer that he is not expected by the speaker to make unique identification of the referent of the noun phrase. The identity of the referent of an indefinite noun phrase is of no relevance in discourse. When an indefinite noun phrase is uttered, reference is made to a proper subset of the potential referents. It indicates to the hearer that other potential referents are excluded from reference. Lyons (1999) points out that with indefinite noun phrases the speaker signals to the addressee that the referent of the noun phrase is not part of their shared familiarity; and that the hearer is being newly introduced to it. Indefinite noun phrases were discussed in this study according to Lyons' (op. cit) distinction between simple and complex indefinites.

6.3.2 Simple indefinites

Simple indefinites are explained by Lyons (op. cit) as noun phrases that can make indefinite reference without assistance from nominal modifiers. Northern Sotho uses noun phrases whose semantics is incompatible with unique identifiability. Such noun phrases generally indicate unknown or unspecified individuals or localities. The following examples illustrate simple indefiniteness in this language:

- (35) (a) **Mmagwe o dula [bofengfenyane].**
(His mother stays somewhere/at some unspecified locality.)
- (b) **?[Bofenfenyane] go dula mmagwe.**
(At such-and-such a place stays his mother.)
- (36) (a) **O robotše? O tla ja [lefeela].**
(Are you asleep? You will eat nothing.)
- (b) ***[Lefeela] le kae?**
(Where is nothing?)
- (37) (a) **Nkhunyana e rata [nnyenyane].**
(A/the puppy loves what-you-call.)
- (b) **[Nnyenyane] o re ke go bitše.**
(What-you-call says I should call you.)

- (38) (a) **Mongatse wo o o filwe [ke [mang]]?**
 (By whom were you given this hat?)
 (b) ***[Mang] o go file mongatse wo?**
 (Who gave you this hat?)
- (39) (a) **Ke bone [monnatsoko] a sepelasepela ka mo morago.**
 (I saw a certain man walking about at the back.)
 (b) **[Monnatsoko] o mphile letšoba lehono.**
 (A certain man gave me a/the flower today.)

Examples (35) – (39) illustrate some of the acceptable and non-acceptable occurrences of indefinite noun phrases in Northern Sotho. Indefinite noun phrases are either specific or non-specific. With both specific and non-specific indefinites the hearer is not expected to make unique identification of the referent. With regard to the speaker, he may or may not have a uniquely identifiable referent in mind when making an utterance. The referent of a specific indefinite noun phrase is familiar to the speaker, while that of a non-specific NP is not. What has transpired from this distinction with regard to Northern Sotho is that specific indefinite NPs are grammatically acceptable in the preverbal subject position, the post-verbal subject position and as the complement in prepositional phrases. Non-specific indefinites are acceptable in the object position, as the complement in prepositional phrases, in cleft sentences and in subject inversion. In the subject position non-specific indefinites appear to be generally ungrammatical. In certain non-conventional uses they are acceptable, e.g. as echo-questions, or if they are preceded by a verbal phrase with **-re**. The two instances weaken non-specificity, by suggesting that the speaker has heard of the NP before.

6.3.3 Complex indefinites

Some nominal modifiers are semantically incompatible with definiteness. When such modifiers appear in the noun phrase, this makes the latter indefinite. Noun phrases that contain modifiers like these are termed by Lyons (op. cit) as complex indefinites. Some of the nominal modifiers responsible for indefinite reference are summarised below:

Complex indefinite with **mang** and **mong**

Quantifier **mang** is derived from interrogative **mang**. It never exhibits agreement with the head noun. Example (40) illustrates the occurrence of **mang**:

- (40) (a) **O šeba ka [mohlare [mang]]?**
 (What kind of *morogo* are you eating (porridge) with?)
 (b) ***[Mohlare [mang] o bose?**
 (c) **Ke [mohlare [mang] morogo wo le o kgelego?**
 (What kind is the *morogo* that you picked?)

An NP with quantifier **mang** is ungrammatical in the subject position. The speaker himself cannot identify the kind/type. **Mang** enquires about the type, sort, nature or characteristic behaviour of the referent of the head noun.

Along with **mang** there is the quantifier **mong**, which is derivative from interrogative **eng** (what). It manifests only as **mo-ng** and **ba-ng**, the contracted interrogative (**-ng**) suffixed only to class prefixes 1 and 2. The quantifier, therefore, always agrees with the head noun. The interrogative in this context enquires only about the gender of a person or persons. The following examples illustrate the issue:

- (41) (a) **Ngwana [ke [mong]]?**
 (What gender is the child?)
 (b) ***[Mong [ngwana] wa gago?**
 (c) **[Ke [mong] ngwana wa gago?**
 (What gender is your child?)
 (d) ***Ke [ngwana [mong] yo ba mo swerego?**
 (e) **Ke [ngwana [wa [mong] yo ba mo swerego?**
 (What gender is the child that they hold?)

Mong cannot appear in apposition to the head noun. Structures with **mong** mainly include the copulative prefix.

Complex indefinite with -ngwe

-ngwe is an adjectival stem. It means (an)other, different, a certain or some. **-ngwe** can appear with its head noun, and it can also appear pronominally if the noun phrase is

familiar. Only when it appears with the head noun can the meaning ‘a certain’ be achieved, as the following examples illustrate:

- (42) (a) **[Monna [yo mongwe] o e tšere.**
(A certain/another man took it.)
- (b) **[Yo [mongwe] o e tšere.**
(Another/a different one took it.)
- (c) **Re tla e fa [yo [mongwe].**
(We will give it to another/a different one.)

Indefinite NPs with **-ngwe** have specific reference; therefore, they are grammatical in the subject position as well.

Complex indefinite with šele

Šele conveys the meanings: different, other, not the one, which are not compatible with definiteness. Its use indicates to the hearer that the referent talked about is not the one that he can, or is expected to, identify. It also means foreign, which is not necessarily indefinite. **Šele** can appear with or without the head noun, and it always agrees with the latter. Consider the following examples:

- (43) (a) **Ke kgeila [puku [e šele].**
(I tear a different book.)
- (b) **Go kgeigile [puke [e šele].**
(It is a different book that is torn.)
- (c) **Go kgeigile [e šele].**
(It is a different one that is torn.)
- (d) **Ke puku [e šele] ye e kgeigilego.**
(It is a different book that is torn.)
- (e) **[Puku [e šele] e kgeigile.**
(A different book is torn.)

Šele appears less frequently in the subject position than in the other positions.

Complex indefinite with -fe

The quantifier **-fe** is an interrogative that always agrees with the head noun. It can appear with or without the head noun. **-fe** means ‘which one(s)?’. It can also appear in a statement to express doubt about the identity of the referent, that is, the speaker himself cannot identify the referent. **-fe** can appear in the following syntactic positions:

- (44) (a) **Ke e fe [ngwana [ofe]]?**
(Which child must I give it to?)
- (b) **Ke e fe [ofe]?**
(Which one must I give it to?)
- (c) ***[Nswana [ofe] o tlile?**
(Which child came?)
- (d) **Go tlile [ngwana [ofe]]?**
(Which child came?)
- (e) **Ke [ngwana [ofe] yo a tlilego?**
(Which child is it that came?)

Example (c) may be acceptable as an echo question. Other than this, NPs with **-fe** appear in the post-verbal positions and cleft sentences.

Complex indefinites exhibit the same ‘avoidance’ of the subject position as simple indefinites if they have a non-specific reading. Specific indefinites, both simple and complex, are grammatical in all syntactic positions.

6.3.4 Generics

Generic noun phrases do not refer to individuals, but to classes of individuals. A noun phrase has a generic reading if the proposition in which it occurs concerns a kind, a genus. The predicate with generic noun phrase also expresses characteristics rather than events. Such NPs that refer to a kind are called kind-referring NPs. The following is an example of such an NP:

- (45) **[Tlou] e na le ditsebe tše dikgolo.**
(An elephant has big ears.)

The statement may not concern any particular elephant, but it states that it is characteristic of elephants to have big ears. Genericity can also involve reference to a regular occurrence. E.g.:

(46) **Ke ja [morogo].**

(I eat morogo.)

In (46) the speaker may not be eating anything at the time of utterance. (46) may only comprise a report about a regular event, summarising a series of regular episodes.

6.3.5 Idioms

Like noun phrases in generics, NPs in idioms are not targeted at particular individuals for reference. Furthermore, the expressions are figurative. The following examples illustrate:

(47) **Go bula [ditsebe].**

(Lit. To open ears --- to understand; to listen attentively)

The noun phrase **ditsebe** applies to any situation that may be appropriate. The interpretation of NPs in idiomatic expressions and in proverbs is similar to the ones in generics as far as uniqueness is concerned.

6.4 AMBIGUITY IN DEFINITENESS IN NORTHERN SOTHO

With no articles or any other marking of grammatical definiteness, the noun phrase in Northern Sotho may be ambiguous as to definiteness and indefiniteness. Except for the pragmatic conditions discussed in chapter three, it will not be easy to distinguish definite from indefinite reference as far as bare noun phrases are concerned.

6.4.1 Bare NPs with verb and copulative

A bare NP may appear in the subject position of a verb or copulative. With regard to whether the verb is transitive or intransitive there is no effect on interpretation, as the following examples illustrate:

- (48) **[Mosadi] o roba legong.**
 (A/the woman breaks a/the firewood.)
- (49) **[Mosadi] o na le mae.**
 (A/the woman has eggs.)
- (50) **[Tihatse] ke mosadi.**
 (The witness is a/the woman.)

The referent of **mosadi** in example (48) may be uniquely identifiable to both discourse participants; and if that is the case the noun phrase has definite reference. It is also possible that only the speaker may be familiar with the referent, in which case, reference is indefinite but specific. Another case which reinforces the fact that the subject position takes both definite and indefinite NPs is the class 9 situation. With its own agreement morphology, a class 9 noun may be ambiguous, and only when it appears with class 1 morphology does reference become definite. Copulative verbs seem to accept generic and definite readings, and not indefinites, in the subject position, generic being the most readily acceptable, cf. (49). For definite reference there need to be pragmatic grounds to support the reading. For instance, the subject in (50) is interpreted as definite. The noun phrase that is semantically identifying appears in the subject position of the identifying copulative, presupposing the existence of the referent.

Transitive verbs take objects. The object position is also an ambiguous position as regards definiteness. In example (48) above the NP **legong** appears in the object position. It can be interpreted as either definite or indefinite. There is no grammatical restriction that may block one reading and allow another.

6.4.2 Bare locative NPs with verb and copulative verb

As far as locatives are concerned, they are illustrated by the following examples:

- (51) **[Moeding] go a fiša.**
 (In a/the valley it is hot.)

The NP **moeding** in (51) is ambiguous as to definiteness and genericness.

- (52) **Teye e [tafoleng]**
 ((The) tea is on a/the table.)

The table may or may not be familiar to the hearer. A strong inclination to definiteness is not necessarily due to the syntactic position, but it is due to the pragmatics of the situation. The nature of an utterance and the circumstances under which it may be uttered contribute to the possible familiarity of the referent.

6.4.3 Small/large numbers

A modifier indicating smallness or largeness in terms of number or amount may appear in the noun phrase. Such modifiers do not lead to the identifiability of the referent. If referents are identifiable, this will be because of pragmatic factors, for instance, if the referents being talked about are visually accessible. Examples:

- (53) **Ba re topetše [mafela [a se makaenyana].**
 (They gave us a few mielies on the cob.)
- (54) **Ba re topetše [mafela [a mmalwa].**
 (They gave us several mielies on the cob.)
- (55) **Ba re topetše [mafela [a mantši].**
 (They gave us many mielies on the cob.)

In all three examples the hearer is not provided with inclusive quantificational information by the linguistic environment. How small or how big the number is can only be conveyed by non-linguistic means. The ambiguity of the modifier in (54) is also due to the fact that the speaker's and/or hearer's expectations with regard to number or amount also play a role.

6.4.4 Nominal modifiers

Other nominal modifiers are also not able to resolve the ambiguity of the Northern Sotho bare noun phrase on their own. If the following modifiers are to successfully resolve the definiteness/indefiniteness ambiguity, the pragmatic factors discussed in chapter 3 must come into play.

Cardinal numbers:

- (56) **[Pudi [e tee] e wetše ka meetseng.**
 (One goat fell into the water.)

The cardinal number **e tee** does not say anything about the identity of the referent. If it is to accord the NP **pudi** definite reference, this can only be attained pragmatically. The content of the previous discourse, how many goats there are in total, the condition or state of the goat and of other goats in relation to their possibly falling into water, etc., all may impact on the interpretation. If definite reference is intended and it is achieved it will not be because of the cardinal number.

Adjectives:

- (57) **[Roko [ye khwibidu] e galogile.**
 (A/the red dress has faded.)

The same argument advanced in (56) applies here. The adjective itself cannot secure unique identifiability, unless pragmatic factors do so. Definite reference will depend on, for instance, how many dresses are potential referents.

Descriptive possessive:

The descriptive possessive functions semantically the same as the adjective and the relative; they differ in structure. The interpretation of example (58) will therefore be similar to that of (57).

- (58) **[Roko [ya matšoba] e galogile.**
 (A/the floral dress has faded.)

The same problem of unique identifiability is evident with relatives as well.

Nominal relatives:

- (59) **[Roko [ye botse] e galogile.**
 (A/the beautiful dress has faded.)

Verbal relatives:

Direct:

(60) **[Roko [ye [e galogilego] e botse.**

(A/the faded dress is beautiful.)

This could be any faded dress, the speaker expressing dislike for strong colours, or it might be that the speaker and the hearer are both familiar with a particular faded dress, which is the topic of discourse. Whether reference is definite or not will be dependent on those factors, and not on the relative.

Indirect:

(61) **[Roko [ye [re [e ratago] e galogile.**

(A/the dress that we like has faded.)

With regard to the indirect relative, however, the presence of an object clitic brings in a suggestion that there is a dress familiar to both participants that fits the description.

Possessives

The possessive is not definite *per se*. The reading of **pudi** (goat) as the possessum in example (62) is dependent on the number of goats that the speaker's uncle owns. Prior knowledge concerning the referent also plays a part in disambiguation. Otherwise the goat in example (62) will only be known as one belonging to the speaker's uncle, but it may not be uniquely identifiable.

(62) **[Pudi [ya ramogolo] e timetše.**

((My) uncle's goat is lost.)

6.4.5 Subject inversion

Subject inversion (SI) occurs when the basic word order is altered, and the subject leaves its basic position to appear post-verbally. The vacated subject position is then filled with

existential **go** coindexed with agreement of inflection. Subject inversion occurs with both intransitive and transitive verbs. It has emerged that right-dislocation of the subject NP does not impact on definiteness. The move is necessitated by pragmatic factors of focus. As far as definiteness is concerned, the reading will be contextually determined. The preposed NP is focused upon, indicating that it is this referent and not another expected referent that is involved, as the following examples illustrate:

- (63) (a) **[Basadi] ba a Ila.**
 ((The) women cry.)
- (b) **Go Ila [basadi].**
 (It is (the) women that cry.)

6.4.6 Opacity

Opacity-creating operators such as intentional verbs, the negative, the interrogative, etc. present a proposition in such a way that it becomes ambiguous. The scope ambiguity created by these operators affects the sentence as far as specificity is concerned. Specific NPs can be either definite or indefinite, whilst non-specific NPs are only indefinite. On the one reading the NP may be specific, i.e. there may be a particular individual to whom the speaker refers. In the following example the sentence is ambiguous, and the extension directs the reading to be either specific or non-specific. (a) has a specific reading while (b) is non-specific:

- (64) (a) **Ramaite o nyaka go fa moswaramarapo sešupanako --- eupša o a se gana.**
 (Ramaite wants to give a/the master of ceremonies a/the watch --- but he refuses to take it.)
- (b) **Ramaite o nyaka go fa [moswaramarapo] sešupanako --- eupša ga se gwa hlwa go tsebja gore go tlo kgethwa mang go sepediša modiro.**
 (Ramaite wants to give a master of ceremonies a/the watch --- but it is not yet known who will be chosen to direct the programme.)

Opacity-creating contexts are ambiguous as to specificity and non-specificity, and in a way as regards definiteness and indefiniteness. Specifics can be definite, but non-specifics cannot.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

A bare noun phrase (subject and object) in Northern Sotho may be ambiguous between definiteness and indefiniteness. Pragmatic factors, i.e. an existential presupposition, transparent contexts and anaphoric reference contribute to the unique identifiability of the referent of a bare noun phrase. Determiners such as the demonstrative and possessive with **gona/ntshe** refer unambiguously. Proper names have unique reference. The pronoun is an efficient tool of anaphoric reference. Indefinite noun phrases in Northern Sotho are not prevented from appearing in the subject position. However, non-specific indefinites exhibit ungrammaticality in this position; unless they are intended as echo-questions. To be grammatical, in the subject position a verb with **-re** may be employed to induce specificity. Non-specific indefinites are grammatical in cleft sentences and in subject inversion. The two syntactic environments do not, however, block definite and specific noun phrases. Subject inversion is used in Northern Sotho for focus.

The general organisation of information in this language is such that an NP subject is more likely to be the topic than not. As a result NPs in the subject position tend to be either generic or definite. The fact is that in discourse there is generally a 'point of departure' or a topic under discussion, which is expected to be identifiable by the hearer as well. NPs in this position will most likely represent given or old information. Identifiability and uniqueness/inclusiveness are central to definite reference. If the predicate allows generic interpretation it removes any questions regarding identifiability, since generics represent a whole genus. The full NP in this position will therefore most likely be understood as generic or definite.

It should, however, also be noted that not every NP subject is the topic. NPs not previously mentioned and which have no relation to what has been discussed before may appear in the subject position as first mentions. Often in such cases the whole utterance is in focus. The NP or the whole utterance would then form the basis or context for whatever related utterance is to follow. It has since emerged from this study that the subject position allows specific indefinites as well. Therefore generic, definite and indefinite bare NPs can occupy

the preverbal subject position in Northern Sotho. Pragmatic factors play an important role in definite reference.

Depending on how long ago a particular NP was mentioned in the discourse, and whether or not it can still be accessible to the hearer, a bare noun phrase may not refer efficiently. The speaker should use disambiguating modifiers (which have been discussed in chapters 3 and 4). The importance of such referent tracing strategies/devices in an unarticled language such as Northern Sotho cannot be overemphasised.

BIBLIOGRAHY

- Abraham, W., Epstein, S. D., Thráinsson, H. & Zwart, C. J. (Eds.) 1996. *Minimal ideas*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Co.
- Aissen, J.L. 1992. Topic and focus in Mayan. *Language* 68: 43-80.
- Allan, K. 1983. Anaphora, cataphora and topic focusing: Functions of the object prefix in Swahili. In Ivan R. Dihoff (Ed.). In *Current approaches to African Linguistics* 1: 322-335, Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Allan, K. 2001. *Natural language semantics*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Beibele* 1951 (15th Impression, 1985). Cape Town: Bible Society of South Africa.
- Błaszczak, J. 2001. *Investigation into the interaction between the indefinites and negation*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag GmbH.
- Bokamba, E.G. 1971. Specificity and definiteness in Dzamba. In *Studies in African Linguistics* 2: 217-38.
- Bosch, S.E. & Taljaard, P.C. 1993. *Handbook of IsiZulu*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Cann, R. 1993. *Formal semantics: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carlson, G. 1977. *Reference to kinds in English*. Ph.D Dissertation. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.
- Carlson, G. 1989. On the semantic composition of English generic sentences. In G. Chierachia, B. H. Partee, and R. Turner (Eds.) *Properties, types and meaning*. Volume 2: Semantic Issues, 167-192. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Carlson, G. & Pelletier, F.J. (Eds.)1995. *The generic book*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chafe, W.L. 1976. Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics, and point of view. In *Subject and Topic*: 25-55. New York: Academic Press.

- Chesterman, A. 1991. *On definiteness. A study with special reference to English and Finnish*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chierchia, G. & McConnell-Ginet, S. 1990. *Meaning and grammar: an introduction to semantics*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Cienki, A., Luka, J. & Smith, M.B. 2001. *Conceptual and discourse factors in linguistic structure*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
- Cole, D.T. 1975. *An introduction to Tswana grammar*. Cape Town: Longman Penguin.
- Collins English dictionary 21st century edition, fourth edition 2000*.
- Cruse, A.D. 2000. *Meaning in language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dahl, Ö. 1970. Some notes on indefinites. In *Language* 46: 33-41.
- Dekker, P., Van der Does, J. & De Hoop, H. (Eds.) 1997. *De Dag: Proceedings of the Workshop on Definites*. Utrecht: LEEd.
- Demuth, K. & Harford, C. 1999. Verb raising and subject inversion in comparative Bantu. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 20.1: 41-61.
- Demuth, K & Mmusi, S 1997. Presentational focus and thematic structures in comparative Bantu. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*.18: 1-19.
- Diesing, M. 1992. *Indefinites*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Diessel, H. 1999. *Demonstratives: form, function and grammaticalization*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Doke, C.M. 1955. *Zulu syntax and idiom*. London: Longman.
- Du Plessis, J.A. & Visser, M.W. 1992. *Xhosa syntax*. Pretoria: Via Afrika.
- Du Plessis, J.A. & Visser, M.W. 1996. *Northern Sotho syntax*. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Enç, M. 1991. The semantics of specificity. In *Linguistic Inquiry* 22: 1-25.
- Fretheim, T. and Gundel, J.K. (Eds.) 1996 *Reference and Referent Accessibility*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Gianto, A. 2000. [Review of the book 'Definiteness' by Christopher Lyons]. *Language* 76.2: 494.
- Givón, T. 1976: Topic, pronoun and grammatical agreement. In *Subject and Topic*: 149-188. New York: Academic Press.
- Givón, T. (Ed.) 1983: *Topic continuity in discourse: a quantitative cross-language study*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Givón, T. 1997: *Conversation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Green, G.M. 1989. *Pragmatics and natural language understanding*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Gregory, H. 2000. *Semantics*. London: Routledge.
- Grice, H.P. 1975. Logic and conversation. In *Syntax and semantics Vol. 3* New York: Academic Press.
- Hawkins, J.A. 1978. *Definiteness and indefiniteness: a study in reference and grammaticality prediction*. London: Croom Helm.
- Hawkins, J.A. 1991. On (in)definite articles: implicatures and (un)grammaticality prediction. *Journal of Linguistics* 27: 405-42.
- Heim, I.R. 1982. *The semantics of definite and indefinite noun phrases*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.
- Hickey, L. (Ed.) 1998. *The pragmatics of translation*. Clevedon: Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Hurford, J.R. & Heasley, B. 1983. *A course in semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jackendoff, R.S. 1972. *Semantic interpretation in generative grammar*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Kadmon, N. 1992. *On unique and non-unique reference and asymmetric quantification*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Kadmon, N. 2001. *Formal pragmatics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

- Kasher, A. 1989. *Cognitive aspects of language*. Amsterdam: Elsevier Science.
- Kearns, K. 2000. *Semantics*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Lasnik, H. 1999. *Minimalist analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Leafgren, J. 2002. *Degrees of explicitness*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Lombard, D.P. 1985. *Introduction to the grammar of Northern Sotho*. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.
- Louwrens, L.J. 1981. Relevance of the notions 'given' and 'new' discourse information in the study of North Sotho syntax. *South African Journal of African Languages* 1.1: 21-49.
- Louwrens, L.J. 1983. Definiteness and indefiniteness in Northern Sotho. *South African Journal of African Languages* 3.1: 23-41.
- Louwrens, L.J. 1991a. A functional interpretation of some agreement in Northern Sotho. *South African Journal of African Languages* 11.3: 80-83.
- Louwrens, L.J. 1991b. *Aspects of Northern Sotho grammar*. Pretoria: Via Afrika.
- Lyons, C. 1999. *Definiteness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, J. 1977a. *Semantics Vol 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, J. 1977b. *Semantics Vol 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons, J. 1981. *Language and linguistics: an introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Maes, F. 2003. *Specifying referents in instructive discourse: the role of cognitive and situational constraints*. Talk delivered at Colloquia Linguistica, Department of Linguistics, Unisa on 28 November 2003.
- Matsepe, O.K. 1968. *Megokgo ya bjoko*. Pretoria: J. L. Van Schaik.
- Matsepe, O.K. 1972. *Letšofalela*. Pretoria: J. L Van Schaik.
- Mey, J.L. 2001. *Pragmatics: an introduction*. Second edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Mojapelo, M.L. 1997. *Weather verb constructions in Northern Sotho*. Unpublished MA thesis. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Mokgokong, P.C. M. 1975. *Context as a determinant of meaning with special reference to Northern Sotho*. Unpublished D. Litt et Phil. thesis. Pretoria: Unisa.
- Mokgokong, P.C. & Ziervogel, D. 1975. *Pukuntšu ye kgolo ya Sesotho sa Leboa*. Pretoria: J. L. Van Schaik.
- Motuku, H.Z. 1968. *Magang*. Johannesburg: Educum.
- Mouton, J. 2003. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Northern Sotho Terminology & Orthography* No. 4. 1988. Pretoria: Government printer.
- Nunberg, G., Sag, I.A. & Wasow, T. 1994. Idioms. *Language* 70.3: 491-538.
- Nurse, D. and Philippson, G. (Eds.) 2003. *The Bantu languages*. London: Routledge.
- Phala, N.I. (Ed.) 1995. *Mphatlalatšane*. Pretoria: Kagiso Publishers.
- Poulos, G. & Louwrens, L.J. 1994. *A linguistic analysis of Northern Sotho*. Pretoria: Via Afrika.
- Reuland, E.J. and ter Meulen, A.G.B. (Eds.) 1987. *The representation of (in)definiteness*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Rouchota, V. 1994. On definite descriptions. *Journal of linguistics* 30: 441-475.
- Spencer, A. 2000. [Review of the book 'Definiteness' by Christopher Lyons]. *Journal of Linguistics* 36.1: 180-185.
- Sperber, D & Wilson, D. 1986. *Relevance: communication and cognition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- The King James (KJV) Bible. <http://www.bibledatabase.net/>
- Thomas, J. 1995. *Meaning in interaction: an introduction to Pragmatics*. London: Longman
- Van Wyk, E. B. 1967. Northern Sotho. *Lingua* 17: 230-261.

- Von Heusinger, K. 2004. *The composition of meaning: from lexeme to discourse*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia PA: Benjamins Publishers.
- Webelhuth, G. (Ed.) 1995. *Government and binding theory and the minimalist program*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wilkinson, A.M. 1991. *The scientist's handbook for writing papers and dissertations*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Wilson, G. 1978. On definite and indefinite descriptions. *Philosophical Review* 87.1: 48-76.
- Yule, G. 1996. *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ziervogel, D., Lombard, D.P. & Mokgokong, P.C. 1969. *A handbook of the Northern Sotho language*. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.