

'LITERARINESS' IN M.S. MACHITELA'S POETRY

by

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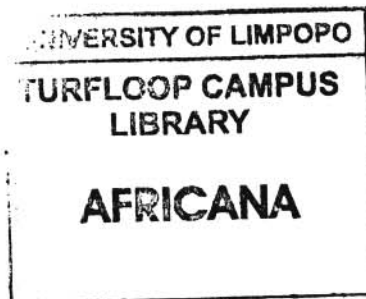
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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not previously been submitted to my University for a degree.

Melokwane
SIGNATURE

30 July 2004
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Mpepedi who serves as a source of inspiration and encouragement, and a cause for my passionate commitment in releasing my potential to the fullest.

My heartfelt thanks also goes to our children Tebogo, Katlego and Kgaugelo, who were always available and prepared to offer a helping hand whenever the need arises. I wish to live to see their potential being released.

To my sister Sylvia Mabona who served as an inspiration from childhood. She always encouraged me to pursue my studies and to commit myself to release all my potential.

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I am personally grateful to the inspiration and motivation of everybody who through his/her commitment and involvement contributed to success of this valuable research work, without whom this research work could have been a failure.

SUMMARY

Chapter One deals with the background to the study, the aim of the study, and the rational for the study, research methodology, literature review and significant of the study.

Chapter Two deals with the theoretical framework

Chapter Three deals with the poetic language.

Chapter Four deals with imagery and symbolism.

Chapter Five is the conclusion and bibliography.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The concept of 'literariness' is of fundamental importance in any study of poetry. The Russian Formalists propounded this concept of "literariness" in the early 20th century.

There is a need to look at the background related to the issue of 'literariness'. Firstly, how the Pre-Formalist theorists in general perceived literature. Secondly, one has to look at the precise meaning and applicability of the aspect of 'literariness' to poetry in particular.

This study has reflected those issues that become significant for the analysis and classification of some literary forms, such as art, in order to distinguish them from those that are not art.

Swanepoel (1990:10) maintains that Russian Formalism is a movement that originated in Russia, which focused its attention on literary text as the work of art. It became active as early as 1915 until about 1930.

Russian Formalism originated as a reaction to Romanticism. It emerged from two groups namely: 'Moscow linguistic circle' in 1915 under the chairmanship of Roman Jakobson and the 'society for the study of poetic language known in the abbreviation (Opajas) in St Pietersburg (patrogrant) in 1916, under the

chairmanship of Viktor Shklovsky. The Moscow linguistic circle consists mainly of scholars of philosophy while other theorists are society for the study of poetic languages.

The term 'Formalist' was first applied derogatively by the opponents of the movement because of its focus on the formal patterns and technical devices of literature, to the exclusion of its social values and subject matter.

Boris Eichenbaum in Lemon et al (1965:107) stated that one of the influential pioneer of this mode of criticism that came to be known, as Russian Formalist was Roman Jakobson. He advocated the principle that the object of the science of literature is not literature, but literariness, i.e. that which makes a given work, a work of literature.

1.1.1 The Pre-Formalist theory

Swanepoel (1990:10) states that, "Before the Russian formalist approach to literature gained dominance, the frame-work for classifying was mainly external to the work of art."

It was a traditional approach developed on an analysis of the historical setting of the art form or the philosophy and beliefs of the author. The latter approach, which is the author-oriented-method, neglected the product in favor of uncovering the writer's biographical and moral concerns.

The Russian formalists have regarded the historical-biographical and moral-philosophical methods of literary inquiry to be inadequate (Swanepoel op.cit.).

It is important to observe and appreciate what has been written in a poem, novel, or drama than to know where and when the author or poet was born.

1.1.2 The Rise of Formalism

In his model of communication, Roman Jakobson maintained that an author is a sender of a message or text, which is communicated to a receiver or reader. A literary work should be understood and analyzed in terms of this model.

Jan Mukarovsky, Rene Wellek, Tomashevsky, and Jakobson extended it to verbal art or poetry (Swanepoel, 1990:10). These theorists were using linguistic tools developed in Prague in 1930 after the Formalist had moved to Czechoslovakia because of the Stalinist pressure. Poetry has literariness that makes it a work of art that differs from the other forms of communication.

This unique nature brought about by literariness comes through what Formalists called 'ostranenie', in the Russian language. This concept implies the making strange, or unfamiliar, of the language used in the poem.

This technique makes the familiar words and expressions in the poem to be unfamiliar or strange so that what is communicated becomes aesthetic. Anything that does not employ 'defamiliarising' techniques and devices cannot be perceived as poetry of good standing.

In his article Nemukongwe stated that Shklovsky, another early theorist of Russian Formalism is one of the first to give a comprehensive statement of this early phase of Formalist poetics that advocates for 'Art as Technique'. According to him, 'Art is a means of overcoming the automatic quality perception'.

He further quoted Lemon and Reis (1965:12) saying that "The technique of art is to make object unfamiliar, to make forms 'difficult' to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object, the object is not important".

1.1.3 The Prague School

Russian Formalists established their theoretical framework outside of the Soviet Union, and extended their influence in Europe amongst linguists, artists, and educators. They contributed to Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas about *langue*, *parole* signified, as Tallis (1975:88) points out.

The New Critics, Structuralists and Marxists posited the view of poetry as "Form... produced by content, is identical and one with it and though the primary is in the side of content, form react on the content and never remains passive"(Eagleton, 1976:21). The forms in a poem are not taken as literary devices just to highlight the content, but to render the messages more effective through unusual or strange means.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to show that the concept 'ostranenie' may be applied in Northern Sotho poetry. The researcher has selected the poet Machitela for the research purpose, because the latter is a young writer, and thus no research has ever been done on his poems. His poems will be used to illustrate the usage of various literary devices.

The aim of this research should be seen in juxtaposition to the following questions:

- What does the concept of 'literariness' mean?
- What are the different types of literary devices?
- How does the concept of 'literariness' fit in poetry study; specifically in Northern Sotho poetry?
- What is the significance of the concepts of 'literariness' in poetry?

1.3 THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The rationale for the study is to show that Northern Sotho poets, such as Machitela, are able to 'defamiliarise' that which is familiar in poetry. 'Defamiliarising' techniques can be used to make poetry artistic. When 'ostranenie' is used in Northern Sotho poetry, it makes poetry the work of art interesting to the reader.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

The following are the methods that will be employed:

1.4.1 Contextual Approach

This approach is of major importance in this study, as it enables both the researcher and readers to understand the context in which 'literariness' occurs.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1992:69) illustrates the significance of context in creative writing by stating that: "Contextualism holds that the work of art always be apprehended in its context or setting, that knowledge of it is much richer if it is approached with this knowledge of contextualizing.

This means that any piece of literature or poetry becomes meaningful if placed in context. Contextualizing information enables one to understand the text better.

1.4.2 Comparative approach

This method compares various works in relation to one another. Swanepoel (1992:2) maintains that: "genre can be compared within literature, with one single genre, between two, three or five writers within specific period, within overriding thematic trends, with related literature".

In the same vein, Praver (1973:169) remarks that: "The comparative approach is an effective method through which one can trace the movement and which

transformation of ideas, while at the same time, widening the narrow experience to which our existence in space and time condemn us by opening up our emotional and intellectual enrichment, a vast store house of imaginative experience”.

1.4.3 Textual analysis

In this method, the researcher will constantly refer to the text to establish as accurate as possible, what an author actually wrote about “literariness”.

1.4.4 Secondary Sources

This will be used in the study to help in establishing the importance and relevance of the subject matter already used by various scholars. This method entails the collection of data from sources such as academic books, other articles such as journals and newspapers and Internet.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no major study based on the Formalist thought on the concept of defamiliarisation especially in Northern Sotho literature. Very few people so far made meaningful attempts in other languages. This field of literature theory is still a toddler. Some theorists contributed to this topic of ‘literariness’. There are also researchers who used this topic to make poetry the work of art.

The concept of 'defamiliarisation' is realized in Milubi's article on the Aspects of 'defamiliarisation' in W.M.R. Singwavhulimu's poetry through the employ of techniques such as 'metaphor', 'symbols,' 'antithesis', 'repetition' and other poetic devices that characterized his poetry.

Milubi states that the Formalists regard literature as a special use of language. He quoted Selden (1988:8) saying:

The Formalists 'technique focus led them to treat literature as a special use of a language, which achieves its distinctness by deviating from and distorting practical language.

Milubi continues to quote Shklovsky, who sees the language of literature in terms of the concept of 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie) i.e. making strange. He believes that poetry differs from the ordinary language because it 'defamiliarises' that which is familiar.

Maake (1994:28) states that, the 'Formalists' objective was mainly to propose a 'scientific' study of poetic language. Central to the Russian Formalists Critical Theories is the idea of 'defamiliarisation' that poetry made 'strange' (Ostranenie) what was familiar in the ordinary speech.

Shklovsky, Jakobson, Eichenbaum and others propagated what came to be known as devices' or technique of poetry. These devices include linkage, parallelism, repetition, figurative language, imagery and others.

There are some of the devices that are much common than the others, namely: metaphor, simile, and pun. These are in contrast to the less common parallelism, alliteration, repetition, assonance, onomatopoeia, apostrophe, anastrophe, as examples to indicate more fully the Russian Formalists' definition of literariness. Defamiliarisation can be attained by usage of various poetic devices

a. Symbolism

Symbolism is a 'defamiliarising' technique that occurs much in poetry.

Abram (1981:195) says: "symbolism is applied only to a word or phrase that signified an object or event which in turn signifies something." Symbolism is when one thing stands on behalf of something.

Okpewho (1992:101) further states that: " a symbol is a concrete or familiar object that is used in reference to or as an explanation of, or an abstract idea or a less familiar object or event".

b. Metaphor

The concept metaphor is described and defined as 'an applied comparison'. Two objects are compared with each other in their totality. One may thus represent the

other to evoke a figurative meaning. In Northern Sotho praise poems, brave man is sometimes referred to as a 'lion' (tau). In metaphor, a word, which in standard language denotes one kind of thing, is implied to another in the identity instead of comparison.

Peet and Robinson (1977:91) define a metaphor as: "language that applies relationship of which similarity is significant feature between two things and so change apprehension of either of both".

c. Simile

The concept of simile refers to a comparison between two distinctly different things, which is indicated by the word "like", "as" or "as if". For example: "O my love's like a red, red rose". (Abrahams, 1957:65)

d. Personification

Abrahams defines personification as an image in which either an inanimate object or an abstract concept is endowed with life or human attributes or feelings.

Barent (1985:105) defines personification as:

"The attributes of human feelings or characteristics to abstraction or to inanimate object".

e. Parallelism

Parallelism constitutes to the rhythm of poetry, can also be regarded as a general term for various forms of repetition.

Cohen (1973:192) defines parallelism as, “ the balancing of equal part of a sentence pattern, or the repetition of words at the beginning of line of poetry”.

f. Linking

Ntuli (1984:194) asserted that: “this usually happens when similar words (or stems or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or end (final linking)”

Schapera (1983:19) defines linking as: “ a word or idea occurring in the second half of a line and is repeated in the first half of the succeeding line”.

g. Repetition

This poetic device is used by many poets to reinforce meaning, or to mark a feeling of excitement or agitation.

Heese *et. al.*, (1978:43) say:

Repetition depends largely on rhyme and rhythm and was probably characteristic of the ancient poetry.

There are some other poetic techniques that many poets employ in their work of poetry such as rhythm, rhyme, onomatopoeia, assonance and others which were not included in this discussion. We have decided to limit our scope, by discussing only few above examples in order to show the concept of defamiliarisation.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is to equip authors of poetry with defamiliarising skills in poetry writing. When authors use words or phrases in poetry, they use them in an unusual or strange form, in order to make poetry to be the work of art. This usage of words in an unusual form is called 'ostranenie'.

'Ostranenie' will help educators to teach poetry in an artistic manner so that it becomes interesting to the learners. The purpose of this study is to show the meaning of the words or expressions as used in context.

Learners will develop the love for poetry when words or expressions in a poem are used in a strange or unusual form.

When learners are taught poetry using the literary devices, those who have interest in becoming writers will become good poetry writers because they shall have

acquired knowledge and skills on how poetry should look like, to become poetry of good standing.

CHAPTER 2

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the theoretical Framework of the Russian Formalist theory of literature and its scientific approach in the analysis of poetry.

2.1 The Russian Formalist Theory

Russian Formalism is a theory associated with the history of Russian Society in the early years of the 19th century. This was characterized by fierce battle and that led to the revolution and formulation of proletarian states, which resulted in different branches of art as well as revolutionary literature. Theories are functions of a specific historical and ideological and intellectual situation. Individuals, socialized within a social situation, develop these theories.

Selden (1986:8) regards Russian Formalism as a “literary theory that views literature as the sum total of all stylistic devices employed in it”.

Milubi (1997:8), quoting Selden, states that Formalists regard literature as a special use of language.

The Formalists’ technical focus led them to treat literature as a special use of language that achieves its distinctness by deviating from a distorting ‘practical’

language. Practical language is used for acts of communication, while literary language has no practical function at all and simply makes us see differently.

The fact that literature differs from 'practical' language is because of its 'artistic' use of language with quality of its own, and this view requires an understanding of the central tenets of Formalists thought.

The earlier phase of Formalism was dominated by Victor Shklovsky who called one of his most attractive concepts 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie: 'making strange'). It must be stressed that the Formalists, unlike the Romantic poets, were not so much interested in the perceptions themselves as in the nature of the devices that produce the effect of 'defamiliarisation'. The purpose of a work of art is to change our mode of perception from the automatic and practical to the artistic.

In *Art as Technique* (1917) Shklovsky, a Russian Formalist gives a comprehensive statement of this early phase of Formalist poetics. He pointed out that the essential criterion of art generally, and of literature in particular, is imagery. He argues that "our perception of familiar things become merely automatic".

In *Art as Technique*, Shklovsky states that 'Art' is a means of overcoming the automatic quality of familiar perceptions. He goes further and quotes Lemon and Reis (1965:12) as saying:

Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one-feel things, to make the stony, stone. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as

they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make object 'unfamiliar' to make forms 'difficult' to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object, the object is not important.

Milubi also adds by quoting Shklovsky, one of the early pioneers of Formalism who sees the language of literature in terms of the concept of 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie). He states that poetry differs from ordinary language in that one would ordinarily speak of 'a beautiful girl', whereas the language of poetry would refer to the same entity as 'a beautiful flower'. Thus the beautiful girl, a familiar object in the literal expression, is 'defamiliarised' through the usage of the image of a flower.

Maake makes a meaningful contribution to the Russian Formalist Theory in the list of theories in his doctoral thesis. He states that:

The Formalists' objectives amongst others were mainly to propose a 'Scientific' study of poetic language. Central to the Russian Formalists Critical theories is the idea of defamiliarisation that poetry made 'strange' (Ostranenie) what was familiar in ordinary speech. (Maake, 1994:24)

He continues to quote Shklovsky who states that it is this aspect of poetry called 'literariness' that makes it different from other forms of discourse. In this context, the habitual is put in a new light, a "sphere of new perception" (cited in Erlich: 176). The perception of that which is made strange is thereby intensified; perception is reinvigorated. For our purpose, a distinction needs to be made

among making the language strange; having language accordingly call attention to itself and its workings; and making a subject strange.

The Formalists were mostly concerned with poetry which they regard as the prime medium which transgressed grammatical rules and certain formal structures which were 'foreground and thus called for attention.

Shklovsky, Jakobson, Eichenbaum and other theorists propagated what came to be known as devices or techniques of poetry. These devices include parallelism, repetition, figurative language, imagery, simile, and others.

2.2 The origin and scientific approach in the analysis of poetry

Russian Formalism was much concerned with establishing a "scientific basis for the theory of literature. Formalists thought of literature as a special use of language" (Selden and Winddowson: 28).

Russian Formalism originated as a reaction to Romanticism. Formalists' studies were established before the 1917 Revolution from two groups, namely, the Moscow Linguistic Circle in 1915 under the chairmanship of Roman Jakobson, and the Society for the Study of Poetic Languages known in abbreviation as Opojaz (the letters stand for The Society for the Study of Poetic Language) in 1916, under the chairmanship of Victor Shklovsky.

The more Structuralist type of Formalism, initiated by Jakobson and Tynyanov, was continued in Czech Formalism (notably by the Prague linguistic Circle), until Nazism brought it to an end. Some of this group, including Rene Wellek and Roman Jakobson immigrated to the United States where they helped to shape the development of New Criticism during the 1940's and 1950's.

The leading figures of the former group were Roman Jakobson and Petr Bogatyrev, who both later help to found the Prague Linguistic Circle in the 1926. Victor Shklovsky, Yury Tynyanov and Boris Eikhenbaum were prominent in Opojaz.

These two groups have different interests and methodological orientation. One group consists mainly of scholars of Philosophy (the Moscow Linguistic Circle) and the other is Society for the Study of Poetic Language.

Maake (1994:29) states that:

The primary objectives of the Formalists amongst others, was mainly to propose a scientific study of poetic Language and this was a reaction to the prevalent general trend of Russian literary Scholarship among them. Symbolist poetic, which focused strongly on religious and philosophical matters.

The term Formalists was first applied derogatively by the opponents of the movement because of its focus on the technical devices of literature to the exclusion of social values and subject matter.

In Russian Formalism, Jakobson recognizes literature as the special qualities that made a literary text different from all other kinds of writing. The Formalists insisted that literary text must be defined as above all an artwork. Literary writing is set apart from other kinds because it uses language in a special, self-reflex way: in Jakobson's terms, literature suppresses the other functions of languages, such as the emotive or the referential, in favor of the poetic functions, by which he meant the capacity of language to draw attention to itself. This self-reflexive is accomplished by variety of means i.e. meter, rhyme, ambiguity, paronomasia, sound symbolism and others.

The Russian Formalists proposed that since literature is "a self-formed social phenomenon", its history must be written in terms of what Boris Eichenbaum called the "dynamics of literary form" which means the ceaseless replacement of one exhausted literary device by new one in an effort to sustain the 'defamiliarisation' of ordinary experience which literature sought to achieve.

The Formalists' critical theories are the idea of 'defamiliarisation' that poetry makes 'strange' (Ostranenie) what is familiar in ordinary speech or the real world. It is this aspect of poetry that makes it different from other forms of discourse its 'literariness'. Literariness makes poetry to differ from other forms of discourse. Formalists were concerned with poetry, which they regard as the prime medium, which transgress grammatical rules. In their concern for defining what made literature different from other forms of discourse, they argued against the traditionally held view in aesthetics that imagery was the distinctive feature of poetry.

Maake states that the Formalists' objective was mainly to propose a scientific study of poetic language. The core of Russian Formalists' critical theories is the idea of 'defamiliarisation', that poetry made 'strange', 'Ostranenie' what was familiar in ordinary speech (1994:28).

Roman Jakobson, pioneer of Russian Formalism, advocated the principle that "the object of the science of literature is not literature, but literariness-that is that which makes a given work of literature". (quoted by Boris Eichenbaum in Lemon *et. al.*, 1965:107)

The Formalists insist that 'how' a work was constructed- that is, what literary techniques and conventions it employs- was of greater importance than what is said, should be the scholarly study of literature and was thus the scientific study of those devices or techniques which distinguish literary discourse from other groups of discourse. (Ryan *et al.*, 1982:17).

It must be admitted that the Russian Formalists were much more interested in 'method' and much more concerned with the establishment of a 'scientific' basis for the theory of literature. They also considered that human 'content' (i.e., emotions, ideas and reality in general) possessed no literary significance in itself, but merely provided a context for the functioning of the 'devices'.

Nemukongwe (1995:23) has also made a study on Russian Formalism. He states that:

The Formalists regard literature as a special use of language. Their aim was to outline models and hypothesis in order to explain how aesthetic effects are produced by literary devices and how the 'literary' is distinguished from and related to the 'extra-literary'.

The Formalists theory of literature is concerned with the writer's technical prowess and craft skill. They avoided the proletarian rhetoric of the poets and artists, but they retained a somewhat mechanistic view of the literary process. They regard literature as a special use of language.

Shklovsky's famous definition of literature is regarded as 'the sum total of all stylistic devices employed in it. He locates the literariness of literature in devices of 'defamiliarisation', amongst them the making strange of familiar objects and acts by removing them out of their familiar contexts.

In *Art as Devices*, Shklovsky and Tomashevsky, as quoted by Selden and Widdowson (1993:30) states that:

The Formalist technical focus led them to treat literature as a special use of language, which achieves its distinctness by deviating from and distorting 'practical' language. Practical language is used for acts of communication, while literary language has no practical function at all and simply makes us see differently.

Tynyanov and others developed a more dynamic view of 'literariness', which avoids this problem. What distinguishes literature from 'practical' language is its constructed quality. The Formalists treated poetry as the quintessentially literary use of language: it is 'speech organized in its entire phonic texture'. Its most

important constructive factor is rhythm. That artistic use of language with quality of its own, and this view requires an understanding of the central tenants of Formalists thought. They drew a distinction between 'poetic' and 'practical' language. The usage of poetic devices in poetry defamiliarise the practical language of our poet. It is the inclusion of such devices in one's work that makes poetic language rich, effective and even interesting.

Jefferson *et. al.*, (1993:38) says:

Poetry differs from ordinary language in that it activates the secondary or collateral meaning of a word simultaneously.

Nowothy (1962) supports Jefferson's view and cites as the characteristics of poetic language as he says that the presentation of a word at more than one level at the same time or alternatively, if one and the same utterance has more than one function in the structure of meaning in which it occurs.

Throughout his case study Maake provided to his readers that the view that literature differs from 'practical' language is because of its quintessential literary use of language, that 'artistic' use of language with quality of its own and this view requires an understanding of the central tenants of Formalist thought.

Sebate states that in poetry, which was the starting point of Russian Formalism thinking, the poet could 'defamiliarise' the arrangements of certain words, and events in order to suit his style of writing. Formalists went further to distinguish

between 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' and state that fabula is the raw material in its original and natural order, while syuzhet is referred to as an arrangement of events through art devices. These two terms 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' refer to the story and the plot respectively.

Maake quotes Selden (1985:12) as saying the following on Formalism Theory of literature:

...plot is not only the arrangement of events, but it also includes all the devices used to interrupt and delay the narration.

What interests Tomashevsky is the artistic transformation of 'non-literary material'. 'Defamiliarisation' changes our response to the world but only by submitting our literary form.

It is the special task of art to give us back the awareness of things, which has become habitual objects of our everyday awareness. The purpose of a work of art is to change our mode of perception from being that of automatic and practical to being artistic.

The formalists were no longer plagued by an unresolved rejection of content, but were aiming to internalize the central principle of 'defamiliarisation', that is to say, instead of having to talk about literature - 'defamiliarising' reality, they could begin to refer to the 'defamiliarising' of literature itself.

Formalism is adopted in this study because it helps us analyze a writer's technical prowess and craft skill (Selden 1985:7). Formalists believe that in any work of art, such as poetry, the poet sometimes deliberately 'defamiliarises' the raw material and objects of familiar actions and words that he uses to build up his poems.

A poet can also defamiliarise his language by the usage of what they regard as 'poetic device'. These devices are some of the tricks of form that the Formalists propose in works of art.

The study of Formalists Literary Theory is approached under the perspective of Russian Formalism, which is regarded as the modern and scientific approach that serve as one of the methods of contemporary literary theories. These theories are used to critique literature, especially poetry, for purposes of analysis.

It was this notion of 'literariness' that made Russian Formalism Scientific and systematic. Shklovsky locate the literariness of a literary text on "The roughened texture of speech sound in verse", Ryan et al (1992: 17) or Jefferson puts it, "the subject of literary science is not literature, but literariness, i.e. that which makes a given work a literary work".

The Formalists while trying to define the basic aim of literary criticism introduced the concept of 'literariness'. They believed that scientific study of a literary text should aim at investigating its distinctive qualities- the qualities that make the text to be regarded as work of literature.

Bennet (1979:49) quotes Jakobson, who wrote in 1919 saying:

The real field of literary science is not literature but literariness, in other words that makes a specific work literary.

He continues to say:

Literary criticism should have as its object, that specific aspect of the literary text, which makes it different from the non-literary series of cultural, forms which surrounds it.

This suggests that, in literature, language is used in a special, artistic way and that this refined way of using language differs from our everyday use. This makes our perception of every day life to be automatized.

Thompson (1976:67) says:

Eventually, this process of automatization would lead us to loss of authentic contact with the outside world, would reduce us to being possessed only of conditional reflex. But here art comes to help us, to destroy automatic and skin-deep perceptions.

To the Formalists 'defacilitation' and 'defamiliarization' (ostranenie and zatrudnenie) are basic modes of communication in artistic presentation. According to the Russian Formalists, artistry can be judged by a poet's use of poetic techniques. It is very important to state that the Formalists focused primarily on poetry, and they maintained that contents of a work of art are not proof of its

'literariness', but that of significance is the manner in which the contents have been arranged. Accordingly, they believed that artistry could only be judged by the usage of poetic devices. These devices would include parallelism, linking, alliteration, imagery, antithesis, figurative language and other tropes, and their focus was on poetry, which became their starting point of departure in their study of poetic language.

The Formalists made original and decisive contributions in the study of 'poetic language'. They drew distinction between 'poetic', and 'practical' language when poetry is studied.

The ensuing discussion will focus on the poetic language. The meaning of poetic language and the technical devices used in poetry to defamiliarise practical language in Machitela's poetry.

CHAPTER 3

3. POETIC LANGUAGE

This chapter concentrates on poetic language and various technical devices of poetry that bring 'defamiliarisation', i.e., 'Ostranenie', in Machitela's poetry. Practical language becomes 'defamiliarised' (estranged) in the language of poetry. Therefore, the language of poetry, which is the focus of this chapter, will henceforth be referred to in this discussion as poetic language.

According to this phenomenon, the day-to-day language is made strange, hence the term 'Ostranenie'. Various technical devices are examined through this chapter to see how they have been realized in the poetic language of the poet in question. These devices are some of the forms that Formalists propose in the work of art.

Formalists differentiated poetry from other forms of literature, such as prose; on the basis of how it is constructed, i.e., through forms and code- or language and literary or poetic language. They believe that in poetry, the practical language that is used for communicating daily activities and experiences transforms into poetic language as a special kind of language usage that finds its identity by deviating from the standard rules and norms of the day-to-day language and grammar.

According to Selden (1988:30), literary language has no practical function at all, and simply makes us see differently.

3.1 What is poetic language

The study of poetic language is subject to systematic and vigorous description, where as it is subjected to various degrees of deviations from the linguistic norm. It is a special and creative way of language as used in an intense manner.

According to Leech (1969:15), “a treasure in which there has been control over all that is best in the language of the past; it is a prescient set off from the ordinary language of the day”.

The inclusion of poetic devices in one’s work makes poetic language rich, effective and even interesting. Poetic language serves as mediator between man and his experiences whereby a poet comments on certain issues and shares with her/his audience valuable information.

Ryan *et al.*, (1982) and Jefferson *et al.*’s (1987) definitions of poetic language do not differ much from one another. They both regard sound texture and rhythm as contributory factors to the practical nature of a language. According to Jefferson *et al.*, (1993:38), “poetry differs from ordinary language in that it activates the secondary or collateral meanings of a word simultaneously”.

Nowothy (1962) agrees with Jefferson’s view and cites as the characteristics of poetic language, the presentation of a word at more than one level at the same time or alternatively, if one and the same utterance has more than one function in the structure of meaning in which it occurs.

In poetry, a poet accords one word to more than one meaning, that is, the meaning of a word does not stop at the edge of the dictionary's definition. A poet may intend that her/his audience understand his poem either from the level of simple meaning or literal meaning- 'denotation' of art, or level of deeper meaning- 'connotation'. When an object, concept or action does not possess characteristics qualifying it to be labelled what the poet says it has, then the existing label is connotative. This concept can be illustrated in praise poems wherein a brave man is said to be a 'lion', and a beautiful girl referred to as a 'flower'.

It was the concept of 'literariness' that made Russian Formalism to be regarded as being both a science and systematic. Shklovsky locates the literariness of a literary text on 'the roughened texture of speech sound in verse'. Ryan *et. al.*, (1982:17) or Jefferson *et.al.*, (1993) say that the subject of literary science is not literature, but literariness, i.e., that which makes a given work a literary work.

Poetic language is also characterized by various poetic devices such as rhyme, rhythm, assonants, alliteration and others, which are discussed below. In poetry, a creative poet enjoys unique freedom amongst other users of the language. Poetic language is licensed to any formal grammatical rules and norms of standard language. In poetry, a poet draws her/his language from the past ages, borrows features from other non-literary users of language, such as poetic diction and others.

The language of poetry must be vital, fresh and surprising, in order to arouse emotions, and become effective. Poetry, which has no surprise, cannot attract our attention. Poetry is therefore vital, fresh and uses a surprising language.

We can, therefore, regard poetic language as 'formed speech' (Ibid: 28). The language should be arranged in a manner that it appeals to all the senses for which poetry makes its lasting appeal. In poetry, it is the 'ordinary', which constitutes main automatized elements, now made strange through art. In the ordinary language, a word is pronounced automatically, but the effect of poetry is to make language 'difficult' or 'oblique' (Ryan *et. al.*, 1982:27). Hence, every day language is made strange (Ostranenie) in poetry.

The fresh, vitality and originality of language, as well as diction, surprises and imagery, are prominent in poetry. Without them a poet can never achieve lasting success. Poetry stands for life and freshness of language, vitality, and resources of experience.

Amongst the chief resources of poetry are the techniques or devices called 'simile' and 'metaphors'. The metaphorical use of language is a dominant characteristic feature of poetic language. Simile and metaphors are ways and means by which poets, who feel that language has become stale, can revitalize it. Metaphors are at the root of language, and poetry extends its range by using them.

It is appropriate to state that, as there is no firm dividing line between 'poetic' and 'ordinary' language, it would therefore seem unreasonable to enforce a clear

division between these two aspects. A poet is free to twist the ordinary practical language with an advantage vested on him. Poetry is ordinary language used or organized differently. One may state that poetic language is every poet's own creation.

3.2 TECHNICAL DEVICES OF POETRY

We shall now focus our attention on the analysis of poetic language with special reference to various poetic devices that are used to defamiliarise the practical language. This will be done with specific reference to Machitela's poems.

3.2.1 Parallelism

Schapera (1983:19) defines parallelism as follows:

It is a correspondence, in a sense or construction, of successive clause of passage...where in each pair lines, the first halves are identical in wording and the second are basically alike in meaning.

Parallelism constitutes the musical or lyrical quality of poetry, and can be regarded as a general term for various forms of repetition. On this, Ntuli (1984:191) says "in parallelism we expect each unit in the first member of a verse to be balanced by another in the second member. If this correspondence is found between all the units, we have a perfect parallelism".

Perfect parallelism is obtained when another unit in the second member balances the first member of a verse. Cohen (1973:192) defines parallelism as “the balancing of equal part of a sentence, the repetition of a sentence pattern, or the repetition of words at the beginning of lines of poetry”. Parallelism is well illustrated in some poems of our poet.

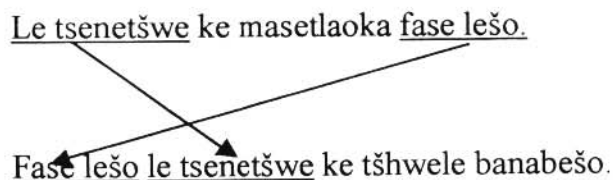
The following stanza from the poem entitled, ‘*Le a hlahlatha*’ (It goes astray) shows parallelism by repetition. Parallelism is observed in the stanza of this poem.

Mepipi ka moka e a na,
Go leba re lebile kae na?
Le tsenetšwe ke masetlaoka fase lešo.
Fase lešo le tsenetšwe ke tšhwele banabešo.
(Machitela, 2003:57)

(All trees are raining’
Which direction do we take?
It is attacked by termites our world.
Our world is attacked by lice my fellow people.)

The phrase ‘*Le tsenetšwe*’ (it is besieged) and *fase lešo* (our world) in line 3 are repeated on line 4. This type of parallelism is what Ntuli calls the left –right oblique line linking.

Le tsenetšwe ke masetlaoka fase lešo.
Fase lešo le tsenetšwe ke tšhwele banabešo.



The sixth stanza of the above-mentioned poem also reveals parallelism:

Nkabe mabitleng bahu ba **tsoga**,
Bo Thobela, boThobejane le bo Thulare ba be ba ka tsoga
Ba tšea dithupula ba gitlanka fase
Dibete tša ba tlabatlaba ba rogaka lefase.
(Machitela, 2003:57)

(If from the graves dead were to raise,
Thobela's, Thobejane's and Thulare's were to raise
And take swords and beat on the ground,
Their livers become irritated and they
insult the earth.)

These lines reflect the final linking by repetition of the verb **tsoga** (raise).

Parallelism is closely linked to repetition and linking.

3.2.2 Linking

Schopera (1965:19) defines linking as “a word or an idea occurring in the second half of a line and is repeated in the first half of the succeeding line”. The linking brings in repetition, which could be significant in heightening the effect.

One could say again, that linking serves to enhance the melodious effect of a lullaby. Milubi (1997:13) comments on linking by saying “linking brings in repetition, which is significant in heightening the effect. One could say equally that linking also serves to enhance the melodious effect of the poem”.

One may distinguish between two types of linking. The first one being vertical linking. On vertical linking, Ntuli (1984:192) says “this usually happens when

similar words (or stems or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or at the end (final linking)".

The following diagram represents vertical linking:

Initial linking



final linking



Repetition at the beginning of a line renders that word as initial linking. **Initial linking** is observed in Machitela's poem entitled 'Ntwa ya tokologo' (The fight for freedom).

Initial linking is observed in stanza 4, lines 4 and 5.

Ge le sobela botlatla ba ile ba ipona.
Ge ba le molokomongwe ba ipona,
Ka mmala bošweu le meririmetelele,
Ka botswea, megabaru le ditshela.
Mmogo go kgetholla ngwana wa mobu ba ipotša,
Mmogo wa kgetelelo mollo ba o gotsa.
(Machitela, 2003:23)

(When the sunset they found foolishness in themselves.
They see themselves to be relatives,
With the colour white and long hairs,
With braveness, greedy and together they told themselves to discriminate the children of the soil.
Togetherness of oppression they make fire of.)

Initial linking appears on lines 5 and 6 with the usage of the word ‘**mmogo**’ (together). Another example of initial linking appears in the poem entitled ‘Mogopo wa lefase 1998’ (The world cup 1998).

Initial linking appears several times in this poem. Most of the stanzas show this type of linking.

Nkabe ke etša nonyana,
Nkabe ke etša nongkgolo seakalalarung,
Ke be ke tla fofela France bošego,
Mosegare ke tšhaba melamo ya mošolopudi.
Ba ka nthokga lephego ka phuhlama,
Ka šitwa go yo bona ntwā’ a mahlomahubedu.
Ka šitwa go yo bona ntwā ya lefase!
(Machitela, 2003:15)

(If I was like a bird
If I was like a big bird hanging on the clouds,
I was to fly to France in the night,
During the day I am afraid of swords of one
who is afraid to herd.
They will break my wing and I will fall down
I become unable to see the fight of red-eyes
I become unable to see the fight of the world.)

The above stanza shows initial linking by the usage of the word ‘**nkabe**’ (if), and the phrase **ka šitwa go yo bona ntwā** (I become unable to see the fight). Linking is used to stress the idea brought by the verb. On final linking, Ntuli prefers Mzolo’s idea whereby the root of the final word is repeated in the final position of the successive line. **Final linking** is also realized in Machitela’s poems as in the word Boroko (sleepiness):

Boroko lehono gona etšwa ka nnete,
O mpotše ya mmakgodiakgokgo nnete,
(Machitela, 2003:34)

(Sleepiness today comes out with the truth,
tell me the real truth)

These lines show final linking with the word '**nnete**'.

Another example of final linking is found in the poem entitled '**Ge ba go seba**' (When they gossip about you). The last two lines of this sonnet show both initial and final linking.

Ge o le motho se tšhabe go sebja ke batho,
Ge o le motho, tseba gore o motho wa batho.
(Machitela, 2003:37)

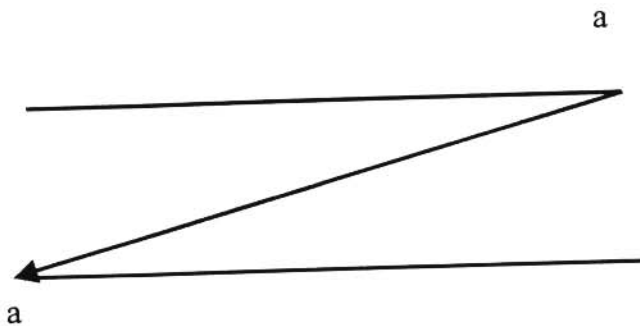
(If you are a person don't be afraid of being
gossiped by people,
If you are a person, know that you are for others
people.)

Initial linking is shown by the repetition of the phrase '**Ge o le motho**' (if you are a person), and final linking by the repetition of **batho** (people). I find Mzolo's view of linking to be tantamount to rhyme scheme. Cope's idea on final linking sounds plausible, although it resembles oblique linking.

Another type of linking is oblique linking.

On oblique linking, Ntuli (1984:195) says "we prefer to call this linking oblique because it can be represented with this line having slant from one side to the other".

A right –left swing type of linking could be represented in the following way:



Oblique linking can be observed in the poem entitled ‘Fola’ (Heal). The second stanza, lines 1 and 2 show oblique linking:

O ikgwerantše le rena.

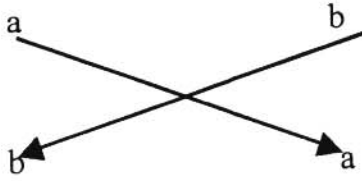
Le rena re kgotselane le wena.

(Machitela; 2003; 43)

(You have befriend us.
And we have befriend you)

The phrase le rena (we) above shows the right-left linking. We prefer to call it oblique linking because it can be represented with lines having a slant from one side to the other. It concurs with Cope’s idea of final linking. Just like parallelism and repetition, linking provides artists with patterns of pleasure and convenience. This type of repetition is meant for emphasizing action.

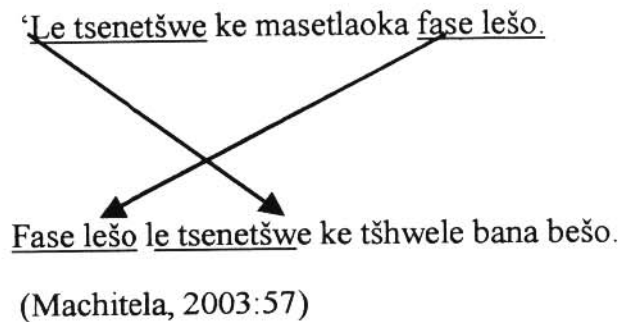
Cross-linking is another example of linking; it can be represented as follows:



This type of repetition is meant for emphasis.

Machitela managed to use cross-linking in the poem entitled '**Le a hlahlatha**'

(It goes astray) in stanza 1, lines 3 and 4.



(It is attacked by termites our world.
Our world is attacked by lice my fellow people)

3.2.3 Repetition

Repetition is used by many poets to reinforce meaning and mark a feeling of excitement or agitation, whether with the sense of the utmost delight or fear (Okpewho, 1992:72). Heese *et. al.*, (1978:43), define it by stating that “repetition depends largely on rhyme and rhythm and was probably characteristic of the ancient poetry”. Repetition can be observed in the poem entitled '*Ge ba go seba*' (When they gossip about you). The last line of this poem shows repetition.

Ge o le motho, se tšhabe go sebja ke batho.
Ge o le motho, tseba gore o motho wa batho.
(Machitela, 2003:37)

(If you are a person don't be afraid of
being gossiped
If you are a person, know that you are for
others)

In the above lines the phrase '**Ge o le motho**' (if you are a person) and the noun **batho** (people) are repeated on the successive line. The repetition of this phrase emphasizes that if you are a person you must know that other people will talk about you.

Another repetition is observed in the poem, '**Mongake**' (traditional healer)

The first three lines show repetition:

Ge o re o ka mphodiša mongake o ne maaka.
O a mphoraforetša ge ore o ka diša motse waka.
Ga o rereše ge ore o ka ntšhoma mošomo ka o
hwetša.
(Machitela, 2003:36)

(If you say you can heal me doctor you are lying
You tell me a lie if you say you can look after my
family
You don't tell me the truth if you say you can work
me out to find a job.)

This phrase 'Ge o re o ka' (if you say you can) is repeated in three successive lines in this poem.

3.2.4 Refrain

Heese *et. al.*, say that refrain depends largely on the rhythm and rhyme and was probably characteristic of the most ancient poetry.

Heese *et. al.*, (1968:43) define the refrain as a line or several lines repeated at regular intervals throughout the poem. Milubi (1997:9) says that “refrain is a line or several lines repeated at regular intervals through the poem. The refrain largely depends on rhythm. It expresses the intensity of feelings of the moment”.

He continues to say that the refrain satisfies our natural love of repetition, gives continuity and enhances the lyrical quality of any poem, be it gay or serious,

Wheeler (1966:256) views it in terms of its functions. He holds that it contributes to the thematic or tonal unity of a poem, and its regular occurrence is a way of marking off structural division. By remaining unchanged, the refrain acts to keep the poem always circling back upon itself.

In his poem entitled ‘**Afrika yešo**’ (our Africa), Machitela uses refrain to echo a strong warning to the African continent to change from its deeds.

Ijoo Afrika! Afrika yešo ijoo!
Ijoo Afrka! Afrika yešo ijoo!
Ga kego hlape diatla Afrika yešo.
Ijoo Afrika! Afrika yešo ijoo!
Nke o fetoge wena Afrika yešo.
(Machitela, 2003:40)

(Hei you Africa! Our Africa hei!
Hei Africa! Our Africa hei!
I don't wash hands on you our Africa.
Hei Africa! Our Africa hei!
Just change you our Africa.)

In the above poem, the phrase **Afrika yešo** (Our Afrika) is repeated several times throughout the poem.

Refrain can still be identified from the poem '**Sello sa leseana**' (An infant's cry).

Ngêê...! Ngêê...! Ngêê...!
Ngêê...! Ngêê...! Ngêê...!
Ngêê...! Ngêê...! Ngêê...!
(Machitela, 2003:48-49)

A refrain pervades the whole poem. The reflected lines in the poem are indicative of refrain.

3.2.5 Alliteration

Alliteration is the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. Abram (1985:7) defines alliteration as the repetition of a sound in a sequence of words. Alliteration is the way many poets enjoy playing upon the same letter for the purpose of achieving some effect in poetry. This term is usually applied to consonants, and it happens when recurrent sound occurs in a conspicuous position at the beginning of either a word or a stressed syllable within a word.

Alliteration is observed in the poem entitled '**Lehu**' (Death):

'Waka moroto o rarela le leoto'.
(Machitela, 2003:28)

(My urine runs around my leg.)

Alliteration and assonance are observed in the above line. **R** is used five times, the assonance **a** appears six times in the same line. Another example of alliteration is observed in the poem entitled '**Konkoriti**' (Concrete):

Sehlabana-se-hlabilwe ka tsena ka
hlaba ke hlagahla.
(Machitela, 2003:46)

(The sloughed was slaughtered and
I got in and slaughter and put deeply.)

hl is used 5 times and the assonance **a** is used 12 times in the same line.

Alliteration and assonance occur several times in most of Machitela's poems. In alliteration, the repetition is on consonants whereas in assonance, repetition is on the vowels. Coupled with alliteration, assonance serves as another feature of repetition. Assonance is the rhyming of vowels within two or more words in the same line. The words involved must be closed enough together to create an effect. A poet uses a combination of alliteration and assonance for aesthetic reasons, as used above, in a poem.

The importance of these devices does not lie in their abundance, but on their function in the work of art, to bring a sense of appreciation. Jefferson *et al.*,

(1993:38) hold that the devices of poetry are to be studied not for them, but for their 'defamiliarising' capacity.

3.2.6 Onomatopoeia

Okpewho (1982:92) defines onomatopoeia as a sound used in conveying a vivid impression. These words are frequently used in poetry and narratives for achieving a strong sensual or dramatic impact.

Abrams (1985:138) describes onomatopoeia as a word, or a combination of words wherein sound seems to resemble closely the sound it denotes, for example; 'hiss' and 'bang'. These sounds are interjected much the same way as we use sounds like 'ouch' or 'ahh' or 'oh'.

Onomatopoeia is a poetic technique that relies on sound. From that sounds of a given word, one finds the idea of the nature of the event referred to. An example of onomatopoeia is observed in the poem entitled; '**Sello sa leseana**' (An infant's cry)

Ngêê...! Ngêê...! Ngêê...!
(Machitela, 2003:48)

The onomatopoeic word **Ngêê!** evokes a different sense perception in the reader's mind. This word makes the readers feel painful about the events that take place. This event brings a sense perception of pain in the reader's mind. This idiophone, as used in the poem, indicates a sign of discomfort in the infant. The infant is dissatisfied about what is happening, hence its cry. Another example of

onomatopoetic word is shown in the poem entitled '**Tumišo go Morena** (Praise to the Lord).

Alalaa! Modimo waka!
(Machetela, 2003:51)

(Praises! My God!)

This onomatopoetic word '**Alalaa!**' (Praises) in the above example evokes a sense of praise to a reader.

Onomatopoeia is a Greek word meaning 'making' the usages of words to recreate the sounds they describe. The word itself represents or imitates the sound of the natural thing. The device is not commonly used in poetry. The usage of these ideophones in poetry is called onomatopoeia. These kinds of words such as **Ngêê...! Ngêê...! Ngêê...!** are called idiophones. Machitela manages to use these devices effectively in his poems.

'Defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie) is the inclusion of literary devices in a poet's work intended to make the poem, through poetic language, to be rich, effective and even interesting. Every day language is made strange (Ostranenie) in poetry by the usage of poetic devices.

There are other poetic devices that many poets employed in their work of poetry such as antithesis, rhyme, rhythm, and others, which are not included in the present discussion, but are still important in the study of poetry.

We have decided to limit our study to these few examples as they are employed in the poetry 'Ge di boa Šakeng' (When they come back to the kraal), to indicate how successful Machitela has been in the realization of the techniques of 'defamiliarisation' in his work.

Aesthetically, characteristics of a good poem are subject to effective and sensitive word choice. The poetic devices depend on word choice and arrangement, which include rhythm and rhyme.

There are other important poetic devices that play a major role in 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie), which are not included in this chapter, but will be the focus of the ensuing chapter. Other poetic device is so important to the point that no poet can write poetry without it. If they are not included, poetry will be dull, unattractive and also uninteresting. Of such poetic techniques are personification, simile, metaphor, imagery and symbolism. If they are used effectively in poetry, they bring about mental pictures, and make poetry interesting.

We conclude this discussion by stating that it is in the employment of some of the techniques of 'defamiliarisation' by a poet, that her/his poetry is not only regarded as attractive and meaningful but also very appealing, rich and effective.

CHAPTER 4

4. IMAGERY AND SYMBOLISM

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the role that imagery and symbolism play in poetry, and to illustrate how Machitela uses these devices to enhance the quality of his work in 'Ge di boa Šakeng'.

There are quite a number of important poetic devices that play a significant role in 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie), which will be the focus of this chapter. Such poetic devices are personification, simile, metaphor, imagery and symbolism. When used effectively in poetry, they bring about mental pictures and make poetry meaningful and attractive. In our discussion, we will concentrate on each of the above mentioned poetic devices, the role they play in poetry to bring about 'defamiliarisation', and further it will be indicated how Machitela uses these skills to enhance the quality of his work.

4.1 IMAGERY

Formalists thinking between the period 1914 and 1930 regarded imagery in literature as one of the acknowledged fact, and one of the major poetic device. The poetic image is only one of the means of intensifying the impressions.

What does the term 'poetic image' mean?

Poetic image is a picture made out of words. Originally, the word image meant ‘a visual picture’. But in the language of literal criticism, its meaning has been extended to include the calling up in the sense like hearing, taste, touch and smell. Lewis (1968:18) says: ‘An image may be presented in a phrase or a verse, by conveying to our imagination, something more than the accurate reflection of an external reality’.

An image can therefore be regarded as a ‘word or cluster of words that stimulate sense perception’. The way in which words are used should appeal to the reader’s five senses, because it is primarily the striking freshness and precision of images that gives the reader the necessary poetic pleasure. Abrams (1971:76) defines imagery thus:

... the objects and qualities of sense perceptions referred to in a poem or other works of literature, whether by literal description, by allusion, or in the analogous (the vehicle) used in simile and metaphors.

Imagery, which uses figures of speech, and symbolism are significant poetic devices and a poet cannot write his poetry without it. A successful poet makes use of words that carry pictures so as to evoke a sense of feeling in the readers. He uses mental pictures that his audience may experience imaginatively; pictures have come to them through his words. Milubi (1997:64) points out that Imagery is a significant poetic device for intensifying, exiting and giving the reader an insight into what is being described. Cox and Dyson (1965:18) regard imagery as: “Anything descriptive and evocative in poetry helps the readers to visualize a sense of a situation”.

On the other hand, Day Lewis maintains that an image is a picture made out of words, and Maake (1994:146) quotes Brooks who says that images are not restricted to evocation of perception through sight, but also evoke all the other senses- touch (tactile), temperature, smell (olfactory), and sound (auditory).

Heese (1978) views an image as a reference to or a description of something concrete by means of which the writer wishes to tell you about. The image enables the poet to describe his object or situation with precision, vividness and force.

Heese and Lawton (1978:62) say:

The words employed by a poet need not be different in themselves from ordinary words used in straightforward prose or everyday speech, but in the context of meaning which stimulates and delights the imagination. His uses of language here is not straightforward because it is non-literal. He is creating, with words what we call an 'image'.

Imagery according to Miller and Currie (1970:63-64) should be understood to mean the part of literary work of art that appeals to more than one sense in terms of another sense creating what they refer to as 'synaesthetic imagery.'

Cuddon (1984:323) agrees with the above view on imagery. According to him imagery is viewed as the different senses to which images may be applied. He further identifies six image patterns as embodiment of symbolic vision, namely; sight (visual images), olfactory (smell image), auditory (hearing images), tactile (touch images), kineasthetic (bodily movement and effect images, and the thematic images)

In 'Ge di boa Šakeng,' Machitela gives a great deal of these sensory stimulations. Through images, he feeds our vision and also makes us active and creative. Imagery, as employed by Machitela in his book is a means of sharing thoughts, which involve the reader in the activity of imagination.

The interpretation of Machitela's imagery will be concentrated in the context in which it is used, namely, (line, stanza of poem) together with the poetry in its wider context. Clement (1966:3) as quoted by Moleleki (1988) states that every image gains clarity and significance only from its context.

Machitela's images are drawn from human experiences such as pain and suffering, sense of courage, natural world and socio-political point of view.

The concentration will now be on image patterns as employed by the poet and how they play a major role in defamiliarising our practical language.

4.1.1 Image relating to human experience

There are different images associated with human experience, where Machitela draws his images from, but the present research will concentrate on one example of pattern.

4.1.1.1 Image relating to diseases

In the poem entitled 'Bo padile 1' (it has not succeeded 1) the poet says:

Bo padile bophelo!
Ka mošate go tlo tamiša ga ba sa tla.
Ka mošate nose ya semana ke moletadikgoro,
Lemapo la ntshe wa le rafa,
Re tla bona mosepelo go šanka.
(Machitela: 2003:54)

(Life has not succeeded!
In the chief's kraal they no more come to greet,
In the chief's kraal a terrible bee is a guard,
If you dig honey,
We will see you not walking properly)

The image evoked in line 5 is related to a very painful and irritating disease that makes a man walk with difficulty. Here the man's private part is painful after making love with an infected woman. The disease is greatly feared and is easily transmitted.

4.1.2 Image associated with traditional belief

There are a good number of varieties of culturally drawn images. But this study will limit itself to only one example:

4.1.2.1 Image related to witchcraft

This is illustrated from the poem entitled ' **Bo gona**' (It is there)

Tšhwene bjala ea hlotla, le sere ke mmagauwane.
(Machitela, 2003:52)

(Baboon brew the beer, don't you ever say it is a joke)

In the African belief system, witches can have super-natural power of performing miracles. In the above line **tšhwene** (baboon) is tough to perform duties, which are normally performed by human beings. This shows that in witchcraft man can teach the baboon to brew beer.

Tšhwene bjalwa e a hlotla,
(Baboon brews the beer,)

In the poem **tšhwene** (baboon) shows an image of witchcraft.

4.1.3 Image relating to worldview

There are different varieties of image related to worldview, but this study will concentrate on only one example.

4.1.3.1 Image of God as refuge

In the poem entitled ‘**Mongake**’ (traditional healer), the speaker says:

Ntese mongake nna ke itshwarelele ka thapelo,
Gobane Yogodimodimo ke Yena fela a fanago ka thapelo.
(Machitela, 2003:36)

(Leave me traditional healer, let me stick to the prayer
because the Almighty is the One who gives us prayer)

The above lines show that if you have trust in God, you have everything. God can also heal you, if you trust him.

4.2 SYMBOLISM

Symbolism is a significant poetic device a good poet cannot write his poetry without. To write without it is like building a house without a foundation. The omission of these devices becomes an exercise in futility. A symbol enriches, rather than impoverishes the poet's work. Symbolism like imagery brings about mental pictures.

According to Okpewho (1992:101) symbolism is

A concrete or familiar object that is used in reference to or as an explanation of, or an abstract idea or a less familiar object or event.

Ntuli (1971:75) defines symbolism as:

...a form of indirect, metaphorical speech meant to carry or to suggest a hidden reality.

A lion for example, symbolizes bravery and, a flower symbolizes beauty. Actions and gestures are also symbolic. The nodding of the head symbolizes agreement and the raising of arms symbolizes surrender.

Symbols may be 'conventional' or 'public', and our poet uses such conventional symbols of which their significance is determined within his particular culture. In poetry, one reader may see symbolism in a poem while another reader may fail to see.

There are different varieties of symbols used by the poet in ‘Ge di boa Šakeng’, but the present research will concentrate on only three types of symbols as used in Machitela’s poetry.

4.2.1 Symbol relating to hope

In the poem entitled ‘**Ntwa ya tokologo**’ (A fight for freedom) there is a symbol of hope:

A se tsorama Mandela a ba komang kanna,
A ikana ka koma tona ya banna
Gore naga yekhwi a ka se e iše timelong;
Kanana ke mo a e išago, bokhutšong.
Batlaiši bale ba go mo tlaiša maloba,
Ba a mo hlankela, lehono ba a moloba.
(Machitela 2003:26)

(Mandela becomes the ruler,
And takes oath with men’s initiation
Saying he will not take this country astray;
Canaan is where he takes it to, peacefully.
Those who ill-treated him some days ago,
They worship him; today they bring praises to him)

In the above poem **Kanana** (Canaan) symbolizes peace. After a black man has suffered a long time under colonial domination, a black man, Mandela, becomes the president. He promises to take his people to a land of ‘Canaan’, which symbolizes a place of peace. After all sufferings, there is hope for peace for Africans, since they are now in power.

4.2.2 Symbols relating to deprivation

In some of his poems Machitela refers to the way the Africans in South Africa have been deprived of their land and their property through racial discrimination. This is an indication that Machitela is a protest poet. With protest poems Machitela wanted to conscientise his fellow African readers and to regain their real image which has been tarnished for so many years of oppression and discrimination.

Bob Leshoai as quoted by Milubi (1988:199) agrees with this view, and quotes the words of Chinua Achebe who says:

I believe it is impossible to write anything in Africa without some kind of commitment, some kind of message, some kind of protest. Even those early novels that look like very gentle recreations of the past. What they were saying in effect was that we have a past. That was protest because there were people who thought we didn't have the past.

In the poem '**Ntwa ya tokologo**' (A fight for freedom) Machitela points a mental picture of deprivation when he says:

Ge le sobela botlatla ba ile ba ipona.
Ge ba le molokomongwe ba ipone.
Ka mmala bošweu le meriri metelele,
Ka botswea, megabaru le ditshele.
Mmogo go kgetholla ngwana wa mobu ba ipotša,
Mmogo wa kgatelelo mollo ba o gotša.
(Machitela, 2003:23)

When the sunset they found themselves to be foolish,
When they see themselves to be one nation,
With their white colour and long hair,
With bulliness, greediness and stubbornness,
Together to segregate the child of the soil,
Togetherness of oppression they make fire.

This stanza illustrates that black people were deprived of their land. The word **'kgetholla'** (segregate) shows that there was racial discrimination, where colonists discriminated black people. The words **'mmala bošweu'** (white colour) and **meriri metelele** (long hair) symbolizes discrimination as blacks were deprived because of colour and length of their hair.

4.2.3 Symbol relating to adversity.

In the poem **'Bo padile ii'** (it has failed ii) the poet describes an unfortunate situation, a state of affairs that exist among his people because of ignorance. He says:

Bo padile bophelo!
O otile o šetše ka ditšhika,
Lefetla o nkgala go goka ntšhi ye tala,
Phiri e mo dikologa mosegare le bošego,
Peu lefaseng nkhokho.
(Machitela, 2003:56)

(Life has failed!
He is thin and veinous,
His bad smell invites green flies,
The wolf rounds him day and night,
He has no seed on earth)

In the above poem **ntšhi ye tala** (green flies) symbolize death and is a conventional symbol of death, which means the individual can die any time.

4.3 SIMILE

Simile is defined as an explicit comparison as compared to metaphor where the comparison is implicit. Simile draws an explicit or direct comparison between two elements that belong to usually dissimilar categories. The two elements consist of the tenor and vehicle where the vehicle is used to qualify the tenor. In the explanatory connective 'bjalo ka, eke ke, e re ke (such as, like) are characteristics of simile. Okpewho (1992:199) defines simile as a comparison achieved by indirect reference (a is like b).

Leech (1969:156) says:

Simile is an overt, and metaphor a covert comparison. This means that for metaphor we can devise a roughly corresponding simile, by writing out tenor and vehicle side-by-side, and indicating by 'like' or other formal indicator, the similarity between them.

Let us illustrate the employ of this technique in Machitela to see how its employment has contributed in 'defamiliarisation'.

In the poem entitled '**Mooki wa go se loke**' (A bad nurse) Machitela says:

O be o tsoma mošomo a šokiša
O otile boka mpša ya tswetši o šišimiša.
(Machitela, 2003:29)

(You were desperately seeking for a job.
Being lean and frowzy like mothering dog)

The line '**O otile boka mpša ya tswetši**', a nurse is compared with a mothering dog because she lost weight, hence the usage of connective 'boka' (like). (Boka) (like) is a characteristic of simile.

4.4 METAPHOR

Comparison through metaphor is indirect, but it implies a resemblance between two things. Because of its inexplicitness, a metaphoric comparison is suggestive. It gives a listener the latitude for imaginative interpretation. The concept 'metaphor' is described as 'an implied comparison'. Two objects are compared with each other to evoke a deeper meaning. In a metaphor, a word that in standard language denotes one kind of thing is implied to another in the form of identity instead of comparison. In Northern Sotho a beautiful girl can be referred to as a flower and a brave man as a lion.

Peet and Robinson (1977:91) defines metaphor as:

Language that applies relationships of which similarity is significant feature between two things and so change or apprehension of either of both.

In a metaphor, the basic is comparison or analogy. It may be a word or expression, which in literal usage denotes one kind of thing, or an action is applied to a distinctively different kind of thing or action, without asserting a comparison.

In the poem entitled; '**Go wa ka**' (To my lover) there is metaphor

Wena letšobana rosa ya Engelane.
(Machitela 2003:33)

(You flower rose of England)

The poet uses a metaphor '**wena letšobana rosa ya Engelane**' (you flower of England), to denote the beauty of the girl, he addresses. Machitela goes further to illustrate this idea of amplifying meaning, by adding the connotation of one word to the connotation of another, when he says:

Tšobana laka nthate, ke realo,
(Machitela, 2003:33)

(My flower love me, I say,)

The words '**tšobana laka**' (my flower) is used to 'defamiliarise' day-to-day language because the ordinary flower is 'defamiliarised' to denote a beautiful girl.

4.5 PERSONIFICATION

Heese and Lawton (1979:63) says:

Personification is a kind of image too; it is that kind of image where the 'something' concrete relates to human beings, while the 'something else' is not human.

Barrent (1989:105) defines personification as:

The attributes of human feeling or characteristics to
abstraction or to inanimate object.

The object in personification can be addressed as if it is a human being, or be made to speak. By so doing the poet makes the reader identify himself with the object, so that the feeling expressed by the object has immediate and direct appeal to him.

In the poem entitled 'Boroko' (sleepiness), the poet uses personification several times.

Boroko batswadi ba gago ke bomang,
(Machitela, 2003:34)

(Sleepiness, who are your parents,)

In the above example, Machitela addresses '**boroko**' (sleepiness) as if it is a human being capable of speaking and hearing. Machitela speaks directly to '**Boroko**' (sleepiness), which is an inanimate and abstract object to perform some special tasks, which are normally performed by human beings.

Another example of personification is realized in the following stanza:

Boroko lehono gona etšwa ka nnete,
O mpotše ya mmakgodiakgokgo nnete,
Gore a lehu ga se tatago?
Kidibalo yona ga se mmago?
(Machitela, 2003; 34)

(Sleepiness today comes out with the truth,
Tell me the real truth,
If death is not your father?
Faintness is not your mother?)

In this stanza 'sleepiness' is given human characters, as if it can speak and carry out instructions, because the poet asks some questions and expect answers.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSION

This research concentrated on the concept of 'literariness' as used by the Russian Formalists. The Formalists treated literature as a special use of language, where literature differs from 'practical' language, because of its artistic use of language.

The Formalists' critical theories use the idea of 'defamiliarisation' that poetry makes 'strange' (Ostranenie) what is familiar in ordinary speech or the real world. 'Literariness' makes poetry to differ from other forms of discourse. The poet is free to twist the ordinary practical language with the special advantage vested in him.

The purpose of this research was to critically analyze the poetic work of Machitela M.S. from the Formalist Theory of Literature, and to see how different varieties of poetic techniques were used to 'defamiliarise' the practical language in 'Ge di boa Šakeng' (When they come back to the kraal). In this research it was not possible to use all the poetic devices, but it was limited to the study of the employment of some of the devices as used by Machitela in 'Ge di boa Šakeng'. The purpose of a work of art is to change our mode of perception from the automatic and practical to the artistic.

The Formalists believed that artistry could be judged by the usage of poetic devices. The poetic devices used in the present research include the following;

parallelism, linking, alliteration and assonance, repetition, refrain and onomatopoeia, to 'defamiliarise' the day-to-day language in Machitela's poetry.

In his poetry Machitela used language as a powerful tool to comment on certain issues such as the human suffering, diseases, racial discrimination and also to share with his audience valuable information, and involve himself in what is happening.

'Ge di boa Šakeng' (When they come back to the kraal) is Machitela's first poetry book. Even though it is his first attempt in poetry writing, it is a very good poetry book, because the poet managed to use different poetic techniques that 'defamiliarise' the practical everyday language.

The above-mentioned poetic devices are not the only ones. There are still other devices, which are important in the study of poetry, but the present research has limited itself to the explanation of those devices employed in 'Ge di boa Šakeng' to indicate how successful Machitela has been in the realization of the techniques of 'defamiliarisation' in his work.

There are other major poetic devices that play a significant role in 'defamiliarisation' (Ostranenie). Those poetic devices are so important to the point that no poet can write poetry without employing them in his or her work. If they are not included poetry will become dull, unattractive and even uninteresting. Such poetic techniques are imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification, and simile.

When they are used effectively, they bring about mental pictures. Machitela used this figurative language in his poetry writing.

Imagery as a poetic technique that creates mental picture evokes all the senses of perception like sight, touch (tactile), smell (olfactory), sound (auditory) and temperature. In his poetry, Machitela gives a great deal of the realization of senses.

Machitela was successful in the employment of devices of poetry, as they are not used haphazardly. This poet demonstrates skills of employing poetic techniques in an artistic manner. He even used astuteness that a simple and familiar phenomenon ends up being 'defamiliarised'. Even though Michitela's poetry book, 'Ge di boa šakeng', is his first attempt in poetry writing, he serves as a model of good poetry writing in Northern Sotho.

In this study, the poet has used symbols and other literary devices to represent ideas. As a recommendation, one would say that for a poet to be successful in poetry writing, it is imperative for one to employ literary devices. Northern Sotho poets will enhance the standing of their poetry if they were to bring 'Ostranenie' in their poetry through the employ of literary devices.

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