

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAYS OF P. LESEYANE

LEBALANG FREEDAH KHUMALO

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by

LEBALANG FREEDAH KHUMALO

B.A. HONOURS

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**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR P.R.S. MAPHIKE
INTERNAL SUPERVISOR: MR R.S. PRETORIUS**

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PREFACE

When I became interested in research into the essay genre, I found to my surprise that there has been no research on this genre in Setswana, and there was no work to which I could turn to give me some idea of what was known in this field. That prompted me to undertake this study.

KEY WORDS

In this study a definition of an essay is given. The following key words are found in this work:

African Languages

Tswana

Essays

Leseyane

New Criticism

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to define an essay and discuss the origin and structure of an essay in African languages and then to examine the general characteristics of Leseyane's essays.

A survey of literature on the essays was carried out as well as an analysis of the essays using New Criticism as a method.

The structure of Leseyane's essays was analysed. Leseyane's essays are written in the conventional form whereby the three parts (introduction, body and conclusion) are linked together. These essays were analysed using a New Criticism as method to show the impact of the three parts in them.

The study also shows how Leseyane employed the stylistic device in his essays. His style reveals that he wants to teach proverbs. He seems to be concerned with imparting what he learned from people of the past to the young people.

The thematic survey shows that Leseyane wrote to educate the reader. Some concluding remarks are made at the end.

CONTENTS

	PAGES
Title page	(i)
Acknowledgements	(ii)
Preface	(iii)
Key words	(iv)
Summary	(v)

CHAPTER 1

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Statement of the problem	1
1.2	The aim of the study	2
1.3	What is an essay?	2
1.4	Genre typification of the essay	3
1.5	The origin of the essay	4
1.6	The structure of an essay	5
1.7	The content of the essay	5
1.7.1	Main categories	5
1.7.1.1	The formal essay	6
1.7.1.2	The informal essay	7
1.7.2	Sub-categories	10
1.7.2.1	Persuasive essay	11
1.7.2.2	Narrative essay	12
1.7.2.3	Meditative/poetic essay	13
1.7.2.4	Dramatic essay	13
1.7.2.5	Argumentative essay	13
1.7.2.6	Descriptive essay	14
1.8	The position of the essay in Setswana	15
1.9	Chapter outline	16
1.10	Approach to the present study	17
1.10.1	New criticism	17

	PAGES
CHAPTER 2	
2.0 FORM IN LESEYANE'S ESSAYS	19
2.1 Introduction	19
2.1.1 Introduction as a formal feature	19
2.1.1.1 Introduction in Leseayne's essays	20
2.1.1.2 Tshwenyane e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela	21
2.1.1.3 Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana	22
2.1.1.4 O se bone majwe go katogana	23
2.1.1.5 Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana	25
2.2 The body as a formal feature	27
2.2.1 Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela	28
2.2.2 Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe	32
2.2.3 O se bone majwe go katogana	34
2.2.4 Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana	35
2.2.5 O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba	38
2.2.6 Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola	39
2.3 The conclusion as a formal feature	41
2.3.1 The conclusion in Leseayne's essays	42
2.3.1.1 Tshwenyane e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela	42
2.3.1.2 Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe	44
2.3.1.3 Phokojwe go tshela o o diretsenyana	45
2.3.1.4 O se bone thola borethe teng ga yone go a baba	46
2.3.1.5 Motho ga a itsewe e se naga	46
2.4 Conclusion	47
CHAPTER 3	
3.0 STYLE IN LESEYANE'S ESSAYS	49
3.1 Introduction	49
3.1.1 Style in Leseayne's essays	51

	PAGES
3.1.1.1 "Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana"	51
3.1.1.2 "Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang"	53
3.1.1.3 "Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe"	55
3.1.1.4 "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana"	57
3.1.1.5 "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo"	58
3.1.1.6 "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela"	59
3.1.1.7 "O se bone majwe go katogana"	61
3.1.1.8 "Motho ga itsewe e se naga"	62
3.1.1.9 "Moremogolo go betlwa wa wa taola"	64
3.1.1.10 "Bodiba ba go ja ngwana wa ga mmago"	65
3.1.1.11 "Ka tlhagolela mookana ya re o gola wa ntlhaba"	66
3.1.1.12 "Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe"	67
3.1.1.13 "Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi"	69
3.1.1.14 "O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba"	71
3.2 Conclusion	71

CHAPTER 4

4.0	THEMATIC SURVEY OF LESEYANE'S ESSAY	73
4.1	Introduction	73
4.1.1	Animal behaviour	76
4.1.2	Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela	76
4.1.3	Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe	80
4.1.4	Phokojwe go tshela o o diretsenyana	82
4.1.5	Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe	85
4.1.6	Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang	86
4.2	Social norms	88
4.2.1	O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba	88
4.3	Social-historical theme	89
4.3.1	O se bone majwe go katogana	89

	PAGES
4.3.2 Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana	92
4.4 Tswana customs	94
4.4.1 Bodiba jwa go ja ngwana mmago	94
4.5 Traditional beliefs	97
4.5.1 Phoko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo	98
4.5.2 Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola	100
4.5.3 Ka tlhagolela mookana, ya re o gola wa ntlhaba	101
4.5.4 Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi	104
4.6 Natural phenomenon	106
4.6.1 Motho ga a itsewe e se naga	106
4.7 Conclusion	107

CHAPTER 5

5.0	CONCLUSION	109
5.1	Introduction	109
5.2	Point of view of the candidate	110
5.3	Concluding remarks	111
6.	Appendix	112
7.	Bibliography	114

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem

Research on the essay genre in Setswana is still largely undone, despite a global interest in the genre. There are, however, a few researchers who have done extensive work on the essay genre in other African languages. The following M.A. dissertations on the essay have been written: "Essay in Southern Sotho" by P.R.S. Maphike, "Essay in Xhosa" by W.M. Kwetana, and "The structure and content of Zulu essays with special reference to those of C.S. Ntuli" by G.S. Zulu. A.M. Dlamini has written an article on the "Differences between a short story and a an essay" (Limj, 1975:76). M.D. Thokoane has presented a paper entitled: "The short story and essay in African Languages" (African Languages workshop - Pretoria, 1994).

The view of literature reveals that more extensive research has been done on the short story as compared to the essay. This fact seems quite peculiar when one considers the similarities that exist between the two literary forms. Dlamini (1975:76) maintains that "both genres

require the writer to limit the length (the essay may even be far shorter than a short story), to keep to the subject; and to arouse the reader's interest and hold his attention".

1.2 The aim of the study

The aim of this study is to establish that Letlhaku le legologolo can actually be classified as a collection of essays, despite the author's classification of it as a short story volume.

1.3 What is an essay?

An essay can be defined as a composition in prose, and it can also be said that it persuades the reader to accept the author's conception of a subject.

Abrams (1985:56) confirms this by saying that "any short composition in prose that undertakes to discuss a matter, expresses a point of view or persuades us to accept a thesis on any subject whatsoever", is an essay.

Shipley (1972:145) expresses the same view about the essay by saying that an essay is "a composition, usually in prose, of moderate length and on a restricted topic". This is in agreement with Maphike's view of the essay as "... showing no conscious attempt at exhausting the subject" (1978:4).

Cuddon (1979:244) also agrees that "an essay is a composition, usually it is a prose which may be of only a few hundred words or book length and which discusses, formally and informally, a topic or a variety of topics".

Williams (1965:285) also feels that an essay is a prose, usually short in length which is devoted to narration, but he adds that "the essayist may use anecdotes to illustrate his point".

From the above definitions, it is evident that the essays seeks to discuss, formally or informally, a topic or any subject. The aim of the essayist is to persuade the reader to accept his view on a topic.

1.4 Genre typification of the essay

The essay is a narrative genre in literature. It is related to the novel and short story because both of these genres rely on narration, but it is usually shorter than a short story in length. According to Dlamini (Limi: 1975:76), an essay differs from a short story in that a short story writer tells a story using characters, plot and setting. The subject matter of the essay is a realistic portrayal of manners, morals or experiences presented by the essayist.

The short story writer assumes that the reader has the ability and background to understand the ground on which the author's observation is based. The essayist, on the other hand, is not concerned with assumptions; he speaks directly to the reader.

Lastly, the title of a short story should arrest the reader's attention in that it is highly suggestive. The title of the essay need not necessarily arrest the reader's attention in this way.

1.5 The origin of the essay

According to Shipley (1972:145) "the word essay means 'attempt', indicating incompleteness and tentativeness". He also mentions that this word was first used by Michael de Montaigne, in France, who published his confessional comments under the title "essais" in 1580. In these "essais", de Montaigne wrote about himself and about the things he liked, (hence the subjective nature of the essay).

When discussing the origin of the essay, William (1965:12) mentions that although Bacon, who is called the father of the English Essay, published his first collection of aphoristic essays in the seventeenth century, the genre has had exponents after the eighteenth century. As he puts it, "it was the eighteenth century periodicals and newspapers which made the eighteenth century essay".

Shipley (1972:106) also mentions in his book that it was in these periodicals that the essay found a new scope and where Addison and Steele gave the essay a new character. In 1709 Steele published a number of compositions which he called "Tatler". The "Tatler" appeared in a penny newspaper called "Tatler", in which he amused and instructed readers with a

series of papers on human affairs. Addison later joined Steele in the "Tatler" and "Spectator".

Some of the American essayists who brought the essay to the level at which it is today are: W. Irving, R.W. Emerson, J.R. Lowell, M. Twain and Charles Lamb.

1.6 The structure of an essay

The structure of an essay comprises literary features such as style, form and content. In this study the structure and form will be taken as one and the same thing. Form consists of an introduction, the body and the conclusion which Maphike (1978:78) calls the conventional form.

1.7 The content of the essay

The content is actually the sense of the essay. It is through the content that the essay is divided into the main categories and sub-categories as follows:

1.7.1 Main categories

The two main categories consist of the formal and informal or familiar types of essays. Shipley (1972:145) explains these two classes with the aid of the following diagrammatic summary:

TABLE 1

Essay	
Formality	Informality
↓ Objectivity Intellectual interest	↓ Subjectivity Interest in imaginative experience
Treatise Monograph Editorial Book Review Biographical-scientific Historical-expository Critical	Article Character Impressionistic Personal-playful Sketch

1.7.1.1 The formal essay

The formal essay is concerned with facts and information, or "truths". Abrams (1985:56) describes the formal essay as "relatively impersonal: and the author writes with authority or at least high knowledgeability and expounds the subject in an ordinary way".

According to Shipley (1972:145), "formal essays are characterised by objectivity and are interested in what is scientific and intellectual", and they are critical. Examples of these are: biographical, historical and critical essays. A more literary conception of the essay does not include all the formal essays. In other words, their general aesthetic and artistic merits are very low as compared to the formal essays. The formal essays are more concerned with facts and they are not interested in what is imaginative.

Maphike (1991:283) says that essays are regarded as formal "because of the writer's serious tone and intent to teach".

In Letlhaku le legologolo formal essays do not feature. Most of the essays are informal, as will be seen later.

1.7.1.2 The informal essay

Ward (1970:x) maintains that informal essays roam at large over anything and everything that interests the writer at the moment, or that happened to come into his mind at the second his pen touched the paper.

He states that in the informal essay the author assumes a tone of intimacy with his audience, tends to deal with everyday things rather than with public affairs or specialised topics, and often in whimsical fashion. He also mentions that familiar essays contain humour, graceful

style, rambling structure, unconventionality or novelty of themes, freshness of form, freedom from stiffness, affection and incomplete or tentative treatment of topic.

According to Kane and Peters (1969:276) "familiar essays are usually written by a literary person for a sophisticated audience who share his sensitivity".

The essay is regarded as a non-fictional form of art and, as alluded to earlier, Maphike (1978:4) defines it as "a prose composition of moderate length, dealing in an easy and casual way with any chosen theme, reflecting the writer's own point of view, often persuasive in nature, but showing no conscious attempt at exhausting the subject". He also defines the essay as "a literary form whereby expression is given of viewpoints relating to subjects that are regarded as important by the writer" (1991:282). This confirms that the essay is a literary artform and is related to other literary genres. These genres are: the novel, short story, drama and poetry.

(a) The Novel

Holman (1980:318) defines a novel as "a prose narrative". He maintains that "the term novel is used in its broadest sense to designate any extended fictional prose narrative". Shaw (1952:257) agrees with this by saying that a novel is "a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organised series of events and setting". He adds that every novel is an account of life, every novel involves conflict, characters, action, setting, plot and theme" (op cit).

(b) The short story

The short story as described by Holman (1980:458) is a relatively brief fictional narrative in prose. It may be distinguished from a novel in that it tends to reveal character through a series of actions or under stress, the purpose of the story being accomplished when the reader comes to know what the true nature of a character is, whereas the novel tends to show character developing as a result of actions and under the impact of events.

Shipley (1972:373), on the other hand, says that "a short story has a definite formal development focusing on a single aspect of the many elements of the novel".

(c) Drama

Drama, as one of the four main genres as perceived by Shipley (1972:105), "means any kind of mimetic performance, and designates a play written for interpretation by actors". Holman (1980:150) goes further by pointing out the three elements that can be distinguished in drama, viz.: (1) a story, (2) told in action, (3) by actors who impersonate the characters of the story.

Shaw (1952:257) says an essay is "a composition in prose or verse presenting in pantomime and dialogue, a narrative involving conflict and usually designed for presentation on a stage".

(d) Poetry

"Poetry is a literature that evokes a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience or a specific emotional response through language chosen and arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm. Poetry may be distinguished from prose literature in terms of form by its compression, by its frequent (though not prescribed) employment of the conventions of metre and rhyme, by its reliance upon the line as a formal unit, by its heightened vocabulary, and by its freedom of syntax" McHenry (1992:524).

What is of interest to us is that the poet does not always address himself to someone. As Maphike (1978:166) puts it, "The poet muses about things, talking only to himself. We overhear him and come to know the things he is thinking about and his impressions of them".

Kwetana (1987:24) says: "what links the meditative essay and poetry is the similarity in the activity in their composition. The mind is allowed to run riot playing with words and ideas".

1.7.2 Sub-categories

According to Kwetana (1987:10), Scholes et al. maintain that "although there are many types of essays, there are no clear cut divisions into purely descriptive, purely narratives, argumentative and purely expository essay: there is a mixture of these elements in a given essay".

Shipley (1972:60) observes that written prose is classified into four forms of composition e.g. exposition, argumentation, description and narration, which almost coincide with the known kinds of essays. This classification of essays is based on the observed similarities to generally accepted literary genres: novel, drama, short stories and poetry. Whilst in agreement that the essay is "closely associated with related other literary genres", Kwetana (1987:05) adds that "the essay is one literary genre which proves to be very elusive and very difficult to delineate and delimit".

1.7.2.1 Persuasive essay

According to Maphike (1978:169) in the persuasive essay, the writer makes a point and supports it. Where persuasion is bold and vigorous and strong support is provided, we have an essayistic essay.

Kwetana (1987:14) gives his opinion about a persuasive essay: "A persuasive essayist may put down first of all the facts that are generally known on a subject and acknowledge their validity, and then continue to show the readers what they do not know about the subject. It is true that he is tough, direct and forceful. He moves from what readers know and readers are taken through the thinking processes of the writer, through doubts and confusions to the higher plains of understanding".

Shaw (1952:284) defines persuasion as a form of argumentation that is designed to convince, arouse, attain a specific goal. Persuasion attempts to prevail on listeners or readers to do

something, to react positively, and to bring such conviction that the recipient will think, believe, and be moved to respond actively". The persuasive essay is, therefore, one in which the writer seeks to have the reader agree with his view on a subject.

1.7.2.2. Narrative essay

Kane and Peters (1969:231) view a narrative work as writing that "develops by analysing a story into the events that compose it and arranging these in time. In its more highly involved forms, such as novels and short stories, narration obviously includes more than a mere reporting of events". They further say that "the essayist depends upon narration to develop illustration and anecdotes". They also maintain that "the meaning of a narrative, like the point in a joke, is best left to the reader, for a well-written narrative clearly implies its meaning".

The essayist presents his story well, selects and arranges its details accordingly, and comments on it to make his point. According to Maphike (1978:167) in a narrative essay an essayist tells a story in order to substantiate or illustrate a point. As the essayist tells the story, the situation moves to a climax and it is followed by its resolution.

He then comments on the story, linking it to the point he is making. Narrative essays, therefore, consist of narration, description, dialogue and commentary (op cit: 167). In a narrative essay the essayist narrates and later comments on what he has narrated.

1.7.2.3 Meditative essay/poetic essay

When discussing this type of essay Maphike (1978:169) says, "in a meditative essay, the essayist retains contact with his reader, he is also meditative throughout. His contact with the reader is strictly that of co-ponderer. Even when he talks to the reader, he is often carried away by his thoughts to the extent of becoming oblivious of his (the reader's) presence". In describing the meditative essay Kwetana (1987:24) says: "In reading about the meditative essay our attention must be shifted from structure to texture. Instead of an actual network running through time (a plot) we are likely to find in meditation an associative movement of the mind".

1.7.2.4 Dramatic essay

Maphike (1978:169) holds that this type of essay is not strictly essayistic. It depends on our inference about the character and the aim of the writer. The essayist can introduce an argument which can lead to some form of resolution. This type of essay is full of dialogue, as in drama. Kwetana (1987:30) says "This type involves two or more characters engaged in dialogue.(as in drama). This dialogue is an imitation of true dialogue, a mental creation, not a recorded conversation". Even if this conversation is recorded, the essayist makes a comment on it linking it to the conversation and gives resolutions.

1.7.2.5 Argumentative essay

Holman (1980:33) holds that argumentation is "one of the four chief 'forms of discourse'", the others being exposition, narration and description. Its purpose is to convince a reader

or hearer by establishing the truth or falsity of a proposition. It is often combined with exposition. It differs from exposition technically in its aim, exposition being content with simply making an explanation".

According to Kwetana (1987:12) the essayist is more essayistic when he writes an argumentative essay with the explicit attempt to address the reader directly and persuade him. Kwetana also mentions that this type has a point to be established and some support for the point, and it drives all the time to that intended goal by points, sub-points and assumptions. The point made may precede, follow or be interwoven with the evidence (op cit:12). The essayist tries at all times to convince the reader by supporting with facts the point that he makes.

1.7.2.6 Descriptive essays

A descriptive essay has as its purpose the picturing of a scene or setting. Kwetana (1987:33) confirms this fact by saying that "in this type things, objects, events, people or ideas are described. The principle of selection operates, and great care is taken in the shifting of the intended effect. After this choice has been made a suitable atmosphere is created, and the essayist describes the aspects he has chosen so intensively that the reader can see, hear, feel, taste and smell what is described. This type also has the essayistic purpose to inform and instruct with the intention to convince and persuade".

Kwetana is in agreement with Shaw (1952:110) that it is: "a form of discourse which tells how something looks, tastes, smells, sounds, feels or acts. It deals with things, people, animals, places, scenes, moods and impressions".

1.8 The position of the essay genre in Setswana

The essay genre in Setswana is unlike that of other Sotho languages; it cannot be counted among the dominant genres. In Setswana, there are only two volumes of essays, namely, Mekgwa le melao ya Batswana, written by I. Schapera, and Letlhaku le legologolo, written by P.S. Leseiane. Letlhaku le legologolo is classified by the author under short stories as stated in the introduction (in English), viz., "Letlhaku le legologolo is a volume of Tswana short stories" (Leseiane, 1986:4).

Today, Letlhaku le legologolo is considered to be the only work we have in Setswana on essayistic writings because Mekgwa le melao ya Batswana contains discourses by different authors on different customs and rites of the different Tswana tribes, which are not really "creative" and may therefore be regarded as documentary essays.

The apparent paucity of the literature in the Tswana language raises questions such as: Why only one volume? Is it because no scientific study has been done of Letlhaku le legologolo? Could Tswana essayists learn from the English literature? Could the English tradition show creative writers the way to write a good essay? It is my contention that the volume of essays

in question provides sufficient proof that the essay form is not inaccessible to Setswana readers and that it meets sufficient literary requirements which could be used to develop further essay writing in Setswana.

Kwetana (1987:10) maintains that "Literariness is that which makes a given work a work of literature". Swanepoel (1990:10), on the other hand, says: "Literariness is *inter alia* brought about by what formalists in Russia called *ostranenie* (making-strange) - a technique or method according to which words, expressions and other devices often used in a day to day language, are 'defamiliarised' or made strange in the literary work, in order to renew their sound and meaning for aesthetic communicative purposes". Ryan and van Zyl (1982:21) state that "literariness is concerned about features and properties which disclose the literary status of narrative texts".

1.9 Chapter outline

Chapter One deals with the introduction to the study.

In Chapter Two the form of the essay will be the focus of attention i.e. the literary features of how the author manipulates form to achieve his goal.

In Chapter Three the style of the essay as a literary feature will be analysed and its impact noted.

In Chapter Four a thematic survey of the essays will be conducted to establish the author's general inclination and attitude.

In Chapter Five a conclusion will be offered; along with the candidate's perspective on matters raised by this study and some final remarks.

1.10 Approach to the present study

A survey of literature on the essay and approaches will be carried out. This will be done with the view to determining the general characteristics of the genre as manifested in Letlhaku le legologolo. An analysis of the essays using the New Criticism as a method, will be undertaken.

1.10.1 New criticism

New criticism is a method intended to be used by readers. The "new critic" preoccupies himself with the process of creating semantic associations by manipulating the internal relations of the text, and by doing textual analysis in order to reveal the meaning and interactions of words, figures of speech and symbols. This is widely known as the "close reading method" or the internality of the text.

The new critics protest against a new way of life and knowledge that rests on fact and inference on fact alone, and their protest takes the form of an insistence on literature as a

valid form of knowledge and as a communication, not of truths of other languages, but of truth which is communicable in no other terms than those of the language of literature itself. That is, "literature is conceived to be a special kind of language whose attributes are defined by systematic opposition to the language of science and of practical and logical discourse" Abrams (1985:223).

The followers of this method believed in the organic theory of literature, according to which the work has a total significance where content and form are inseparable. It is the responsibility of the reader to find the principle of a general rule that allows the work to reveal itself, and such revelation can be done by "close reading" e.g. in poetry imagery, tone, metres etc.

According to Ryan and van Zyl (1982:25) the aim of "close reading analysis was the realisation of the discovery of the aesthetic method as organised in the mind of a sensitive reader".

In these essays the significance of this genre will be achieved by analysing the language and the style, concentrating on words, sentences, figures of speech, proverbs and other literary devices.

The function of this method is to render a lasting contribution to the development of literary criticism by producing a detailed analysis and interpretation of individual literary texts.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 FORM IN LESEYANE'S ESSAYS

2.1 Introduction

Leseyane's essays have a conventional form. These essays have an introductory paragraph which is followed by a body and a conclusion. In his essays Leseyane concludes the introductory paragraphs with a sentence which narrows the subject. This Maphike (1978:78) regards as the conventional form of the introduction, when the writer channels the reader's mind and interest carefully to the subject. Leseyane also follows the technique which enables him to move easily into the body of the essay. This is observed in all his essays.

2.1.1 Introduction as a formal feature

According to Kane and Peters (1969:261) "when writing about a complex and controversial topic, you should make the subject clear as quickly as possible, but begin broadly, focus on indicating your general plan and concluding with a sentence that places you in a position to step easily into the body of your essay". Zulu (1991:25) agrees with the view that the introduction is the beginning of the essay. But Maphike (1978:78) says "the introduction serves to arouse the reader's interest by immediately enabling him to identify the plan and the extent of the essay". If the introduction is not able to catch the attention of

the reader, the reader's interest will be thwarted and he (the reader) will not grasp what the essayist is writing about.

2.1.1.1 Introduction in Leseayne's essays

An analysis of Leseayne's essays, using New Criticism as a method, will be undertaken in this study. The form of the essay will be extensively perceived as a stylistic feature by discussing the impact of introduction, body and conclusion in Leseayne's essays.

Leseayne uses the introduction for different purposes and functions. For instance, there are introductions which refer to the past. Such introductions are historical and they make the reader reflect on past events, some of which are explanatory in nature. In such introductions Leseayne presents the topic and explains it. These functions are observed in several of his essays.

Besides using introductions which are explanatory in nature, Leseayne likes introducing one or two new proverbs in the first paragraph besides the one he uses as the topic of the essay. This characteristic helps in arousing the reader's interest and makes him keen to read on to find out what the essay contains. Such introductions compel the reader to move into the body and conclusion. That is how his essays become conventional. In the following essays Leseayne explains the topic:

- (a) "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger; meaning that a young baboon with a sharp instinct always avoids danger).
- (b) "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana" (The mud-soiled (i.e. shrewd) jackal always has something to eat).

2.1.1.2 "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikelela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

Leseyane commences the essay by mentioning three things, which are 'kitso' (knowledge), 'thuto' (training and education) and 'solofela' (protect). These three things play an important role in the whole essay. He provides the reader with the background on which he is going to base his discussion in the first paragraph. This helps the reader to understand how the young baboon evades danger. Seemingly Leseyane is trying to show the reader that people of the past had deep knowledge about the creatures of the earth, including man himself. They composed this proverb after learning and discovering the ways in which creatures could protect their own lives. This encourages the reader to read on, to know about the experiences of the people.

2.1.1.3 "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana" (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

Leseyane explains the topic and dwells on the word 'phokojwe' (jackal). The reader gets a picture of what type of animal a jackal is. A jackal appears in many folktales as it is known for its cunning and deceitfulness. He starts in this fashion:

"Phokojwe ke sengwe sa dibatana tsa lefatshe
leno, tse di itsegeng thata. Mo dikgannye
tsa batho ba bogologolo ka ga diphologolo tsa
naga, ga go tse dintsi tsa tsona tse re fitlhelang
leina la phokojwe le sa tlhage mo go tsona. Mo
dikgannye tse, re fitlhela gore selo se se neng sa dira
gore phokojwe a itsege thata, ka boferefere le botlhale
jwa gagwe jo bo fetang jwa diphologolo tse dingwe tsa
naga" (p.35).

(The jackal is one of the animals which is best-known
in the world. It appears in almost all the fables told by
people of the past. In these stories we find that
what makes the jackal notorious is its deceitfulness,
it is more cunning than any other animal).

Still on the first paragraph, Leseyane compares the jackal's cunning to the hare's tricky tactics, but indicates the difference in purpose. The hare's cleverness, as Leseyane puts it, does not come near the jackal's tactics because it tricks other animals in order not to kill and eat them, but to save its own life.

He ends the introduction by showing the reader how the hare displays intense cruelty to other animals by causing them to get killed in great numbers by the lion because it wants to save its own life from the lion. This introduction challenges the reader to read on and find out what lies behind the story. Leseyane employs such an introduction in order to arouse the reader's interest.

This technique is observed in "Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe" (Children of a genet walk on the same route, i.e. it is important for children in a family to work together).

In some essays Leseyane writes about the historical events of the Batswana people. This is found in essays discussed below:

2.1.1.4 "O se bone maiwe go katogana (Never be fooled by stones (kings) being apart)

Leseyane deviates from the technique used in the essays discussed above. He does not explain the topic but highlights some of the things he knows about the people of the past.

He mentions that:

"O ne a itse ka botlalo se motho a leng sona, le
 gona a na le kitso e e gakgamatsang ka ga
 diphologolo tse di tletseng lefatshe ka mekgwa le
 mehuta ya tsona e e farologaneng" (p.26).
 (He knew what a human being was like, and had
 astonishing knowledge about the animals which
 were found on earth).

Leseyane goes further to say:

"O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba"
 (p.26).
 (Don't be deceived by the outside of an apple
 (solanum) the inside is bitter).

This proverb and many others show that people of the past had enormous knowledge of natural phenomena. He then concludes the first paragraph by telling the reader that people, both black and white, are of the same origin, i.e. they are created by God. This introduction arouses the reader's interest. The discussion of the history of the Batswana people becomes clearer in the following essay than in "O se bone majwe go katogana" (Never be fooled by stones (kings) being apart).

2.1.1.5 "Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana" (Literally, the darkness of hold my child, i.e. do not trust darkness at the expense of the beloved one)

Leseyane mentions the continuous wars which took place and led to people who were not Tswanas coming into contact with the Batswana people. He further explains that the wars took place because there was always a nation which wanted to dominate the others, to be richer and possess everything on earth. This is indicated as follows:

"Morafe o tlhogo ya ona e neng e ka tlelwa ke
bopelotshetlha ba go fenya merafe le go busa
lefatshe lotlhe" (p.50).

(A race that could be greedy and
desire to defeat and rule the whole
world).

After portraying this historical background, he now writes about Batswana people who are not Tswana by birth:

"Ke gona re fitlhelang mo metseng e megolo ya
Batswana, dikgoro tse dintsi tsa batho ba e seng ba
setso sa batho ba e leng motheo wa merafe o dikgoro
tse di fitlhelwang mo go ona" (p.50).

(That is why in big villages of Batswana people
there are people who were not born Tswana, and
who are the foundation of Tswana communities).

Leseyane uses a linking word 'dikgoro' (communities) which appears in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph and also appears in the first sentence of the first paragraph of the body:

"Dikgoro tse dintsi tse re di fitlhelang mo metseng e
megolo e ...," (p.50).
(These communities which are found in these big
villages ...).

Leseyane concludes the first paragraph in this way so that he can easily step into the body of the essay. He uses this technique in the following essays:

- (a) "Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang" (One who takes out a fly that has fallen into his food is not hungry) i.e. One should accept what is being offered.
- (b) "Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola" (It is the main divining bone that is carved) i.e. One can always be what one wants to be.
- (c) "Bodiba ba go ja ngwana mmago" (The fountain that has swallowed your mother's child, i.e. avoid repeating the same mistake).
- (d) "O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba" (Do not be deceived by the smoothness of the apple (solanum), the inside is bitter).

2.2 The body as a formal feature

In the body the essay elaborates on what he intimated in the introduction. An idea is developed until it reaches a climax. Maphike (1978:79) states that "the idea is developed logically and built up in stages up to the end, which is the climax. In an argument, this may also mark the highest point or the peak of the writer's conviction together with his reader - the point at which his argument is proved in his and his reader's opinion, beyond doubt". In the body of the essay an argument may occur and the essayist is not writing for the sake of writing. He writes to capture the reader's interest and sustain his interest. This will be manifested in the way he handles the theme in the essay. According to Maphike (1978:79) "In many essays, the theme or message is conceived and developed in the body, and carried logically to the conclusion". Like the introduction, the body can be conventional in form. Within this conventional form the body may be classified as formal or informal, depending on the writer's tone and intention.

Leseyane explains the topic in the body. Arguments occur in many of his essays and he provides anecdotes to illustrate a point. He develops the theme in the body until he reaches the climax.

2.2.1 "Tshwenyane e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

Leseyane links the introduction of the essay to the body in this fashion:

"Seane se, le tse dingwe tse di tletseng boammarure jo
bo se nang go okediwa, se bontsha botswerere le bothakga
jo batho ba bogologolo ba neng ba ithutile go bua puo ya
bona ka yona" (p.9).

(This proverb, and many others, contains truth which
cannot be exaggerated, and also shows how skilful and
creative people of the past were in the use of their language).

Leseyane makes the reader aware of the truth and creativeness in the proverb to convince him that he should learn these proverbs because they are an important aspect of his language and they have very important messages for life. Here reference is also made to the proverb used in the topic which was explained in the introduction. Leseyane compares the people of the past with modern people, and makes the following observation about modern people:

"Motho wa gompiono, yo o sa kgathaleleng le yo o sa
iseng gope go itse le go bua puo e ka maatlametlo, ga
a itshwenye ka go epa le go batla se se neng se le mo
mogopolong wa motho yo o neng a ntse a rulaganya diane
tse dintsi tse" (p.9).

(A modern person who does not care nor bother to know and speak this language skilfully, does not care to search or find out what was in the old people's mind when they constructed these many proverbs).

After mentioning this, Leseyane develops the body of the essay further; he states that people of the past lived in happy times because they used the language skilfully, that is why they were so creative:

"Le gona motlha o, ke o morafe wa Batswana
o kileng wa phela mo go ona ka kagiso ka
sebaka se seleele" (p.9).

(And that time was when the Batswana people
lived in happy times for a long time).

This is the advice he gives the reader who has lost touch with his language. Leseyane develops the theme of his essay by showing the reader that some proverbs are rich and full of meaning. He also asserts that it is not sufficient to know the meaning of the proverb only, it is also important to understand each and every word which appears in the proverb. For instance, in the proverb:

"Sakanye a tshela molapo, o a bo a ikantse boditse
jo bophepa" (p.10).

(When a squirrel crosses the river, he banks on his silky hair). i.e. A clever person, whenever he takes a risk, always has something to fall back on.

It is important to know what 'Sakanye' (squirrel) is, and 'a tshela' (crosses); 'molapo' (river); 'a ikantse' (banks); 'boditse' (hair); and 'jo bophepa' (silky) fur.

Leseyane supports his statements by using anecdotes. He relates the story of a herd of kudus that were saved by another from the enemy (the hunter). After seeing how the kudus were saved by another kudu he observed and learned what made some animals run away from him, and others not to fear him. He then advises the reader that he should follow what people of the past are saying, then he (the reader) will save his life and the lives of those who are dear to him. Leseyane continues with his story: the hunter continues to hunt until he finds a herd of kudus. This time he shoots one of them. It is only in this second instance that he learns when a herd of kudus runs away and when it does not run away from the enemy. He illustrates how knowledgeable the people of the past were:

"Selo se ke sona se re bontshang ipelafatso e
mogologolo o neng a na nayo ka kitso ya gagwe, ya
loleme lwa ga mmaagwe, le thuto e o neng a e tshotse
ka ga botshelo ba dipopiwa tsa lefatshe ka kakaretso"
(p.11).

(This is what made the person of the past proud of the command of the mother tongue and his knowledge of God's creation in general).

Leseyane continues to reveal the knowledge that he has about animals and man. He also mentions that although man protects his life like any other animal, he is a demi-god, the only difference between people and animals being that animals use instinct and people use their intellect. He concludes in this way:

"Maikutlo a, ke ona a mogologolo a buang ka ga ona
ha a re: 'Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela"
(p.12).

(These feelings are what the people of the past talked about when they said: 'A young baboon that has a sharp instinct always avoids danger').

Leseyane warns the reader not to attach wrong meanings to the proverb used in the topic as people always do. For example:

"Bana ga ba itlhokomele, le gona ga ba ise gope go
itlhopha metlhala" (p.13).

(Children do not watch after themselves, and they are not concerned about minding their ways). i.e. Today's children suffer from disease which are not known to their parents.

This is not the meaning of this proverb (topic reference). According to Leseyane, the proverb does not refer to children or people who do not care about themselves or who do not mind their ways. He tries to make the reader aware that the meaning of the proverb is also important. When explaining this proverb he says that 'Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha' refers to any person or any animal with a sharp instinct. If such a person or animal responds positively to his feelings he always saves his own life. He warns against disregarding of one's instinct. 'Ikilela' means to avoid danger. Therefore, a person with a sharp instinct always avoids danger.

2.2.2 "Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe" (A bird that flings its wings clumsily)

Leseyane explains how animals protect themselves against their enemies and also how they can make their own medicines or remedies for ailments. Leseyane likes using illustrations to prove a point. He says of the dog:

"... e tsamaela fa go leng bojang jo botala, e feta e
iketla, e bo kgetla ka meno e bo metsa" (p.20).

(... it moves leisurely to a place where there is green
grass, cuts it slowly with its teeth and swallows it).

He gives these illustrations in succession:

"Ha go lwala ngwana wa yona, o tla bona e ya fa
bojannye, e feta e iketla, e bo kgetla ka tsela e le wena

o ka bonang gore ke ya go ruta ngwana gore o

tshwanetse go dira eng ha a lwala" (p.21).

(When it is its young one that is sick, you will see it move slowly to the green grass, cutting it in such a way that one can see that it shows the young one what to do when it is sick).

The hare teaches its young how to evade the jackal and dogs. He gives these examples, building the essay up to a climax by telling them how the wings of the birds are used against the enemy:

"Diphuka tse, di na le tiro e le nngwe mo nonyaneng e nngwe le e nngwe ha go tla gore e iphemele mo sereng sa yona" (p.23).

(These wings have one function with each and every bird, that is, to protect itself against the enemy).

He then states other proverbs which have similar meaning, viz.:

- (a) "Phuduhudu e e molala moleele, e bolawa ke melamu e e seng ya yona (p.23.) (An inquisitive raphicerus can be injured by sticks which are not directed at it) i.e. One should not be inquisitive or hasty because one can find oneself in trouble.

- (b) "Maoto a nong ke diphuka" (p.23). (The wings are the feet of a vulture). i.e. The wings help the vulture to go anywhere.

The meaning of these two proverbs are aligned with the ones mentioned in the introduction, i.e. a person should not be hasty, because he may find himself in trouble.

He explains to the reader what he gained from people of the past and asks the reader to impart this knowledge to the following generation. He is also saying:

"Mo bathong le mo diphologolong, thuto ya ntlha mo
ngwaneng ke gore a itse go solofela botshelo ba gagwe
mo direng tsa gagwe" (p.20).

(Among both people and animals, the first lesson given
to the young one is to know how to protect its life
against the enemies).

2.2.3 "O se bone majwe go katogana" (Never be fooled by the distance between stones (kings))

It sounds like this: "O se bone majwe go katogana, majwe bosigo a etelana" (Never be fooled by the distance between stones (kings), stones (kings) visit each other at night or when it is convenient). This means: never be deceived by the distance between kings because at night (when there is a problem or when it is convenient) they visit each other. This

statement sounds interesting and makes one curious to know how that is possible, and raises questions in the mind of the reader. He explains them in a way that makes the reader more curious: he provides the reader with other proverbs:

"O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba".

(Never be deceived by the smoothness of the apple

(solanum), the inside is bitter). i.e. External

appearances are often deceptive.

This takes the reader slowly to the climax, where he mentions that people, black or white, have the same origin and live on the same earth. But Leseane also advises the reader to study the proverbs seriously and find out what their origin is and finally find out what they convey to him. He sums up by saying that although we are different and have different beliefs, we live in one world.

2.2.4 "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana" (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

Leseane commences the body of this essay with a short story. The story overlaps with the second paragraph of the body. After contrasting the use of tricks by the hare and the jackal, in the first paragraph he explains to the reader why he includes the anecdotes, especially the one where the cock was taken in their last meeting, meaning that the jackal should not kill small animals (the analogy being that everybody should work hard for his living). This comes out clearly in the following example:

"Batho ba, ba tshwanetse go gakologelwa gape
gore molao wa re, 'go tloga ka letsatsi le, o tla
phela ka moputso wa phatla ya gago" (p.48).

(People, must remember that the law says, 'as
from today you shall live by the sweat of your
brow').

Leseyane draws the reader's attention to this because it is a well known fact that some people never want to work hard, but become rich within a short space of time. This reference to the biblical myth of the creation brings it home to the reader that the times of having everything for nothing are past.

Leseyane also mentions the bad things that the jackal does, such as the habit of attacking sheep and eating their tails. He gives all the facts about the jackal to impress his point on the reader, viz., that if a person wants to live happily, he should respect the law and that he should work for his living. Leseyane is over-illustrating in this essay. He gives many anecdotes and examples. He then concludes by giving the reader what the proverb implies: The jackal that hunts seriously is the one that hunts even when it rains; it is not afraid of the mud, hence the proverb 'Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana' (A shrewd jackal always have something to eat). In simple terms no person should be idle without working because:

"Seane se se re gakolola gore sengwe le
 sengwe se motho a ithabisang ka sona mme
 a itse sentle gore se a se dirang se kgatlhanong
 le molao, se tla fela ka go mo tlišetsa botlhoko
 jo bo kana ka monate o a neng a ntse a o ja" (p.47).

(This proverb shows that anything that a person
 gets to please himself, knowing very well that is
 it is against the law, will end by causing him
 misery which is equal to the pleasure that he was
 enjoying).

Leseyane gives these examples to develop the body of the essay. In the body of the essay the essayist elaborates on what he initiated in the introduction. Leseyane employs several techniques when developing the bodies of his essays.

He explains this proverb because he is aware that some people think that the proverb is directed at the jackal and has nothing to do with human beings. Leseyane is telling the reader that if there is any person who has adopted the jackal's tactics, he should refrain from doing that.

2.2.5 "O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba" (Do not be deceived by the smoothness of a solanum)

When Leseyane commences the body of this essay, he uses a linking word, 'nngwe' or 'bonngwe' (oneness) in the last sentence of the introduction and in the first paragraph of the body. He employs this technique to help the reader to connect what he introduced in the first paragraph to the body of the essay.

After using this linking word, Leseyane develops the body of the essay, basing his discussion on both the character and the structure of a person. He tells the reader about the behaviour of a Hottentot and how he gets his living. This is a primitive way of living but unfortunately for a Hottentot it is the best way of getting his living. Ironically, Hottentots think any person who is not living like them is uncivilised.

After discussing the way Hottentots regard other people, Leseyane brings this proverb into the picture:

"O se bone majwe go katogana, majwe bosigo
a etelana" (p.29).

(Never be fooled by the distance between
stones, stones visit each other at night). i.e People
meet when it is convenient for them and share ideas.

Leseyane explains this proverb. The stones symbolise kings who visit one another at night and discuss whatever problem that they have.

2.2.6 "Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola" (Only the main or great divining bone is carved)

After focusing on the subject in the introduction Leseyane completes the proverb by contrasting the divining bone with a person: one is made while the other is self-made. He distinguishes between 'betla' (carve) and 'bopa' (create), and draws the biblical parallel of Saul, focusing on being reformed.

He gives the functions of the bones. He maintains that these bones can predict what is going to happen in one's life and can reveal the truth:

"O ne a tlhotlhomisetsa gore ammarure ditaola di bua ka botlalo. O ne a ntlhalosetsa gore go bua ga tsona ga se ga motho ka molomo. Go bua ga tsona ke ka lewa jaaka ke setse ke lekile go tlhola fa godimo" (p.136).

(He proved to me that the divining bones do not talk in the same way a person does with his mouth. They reveal the problem by the way they fall on the ground).

Leseyane develops the body of the essay by giving these explanations. He then tells the reader that he should not despise the people who use these bones. According to Leseyane,

the people who use these bones are given the power by God to look after people. He is trying to convince the reader by mentioning a few things that make man a demi-god:

"Dikgagamatso tse pedi tse ke buang ka ga tsona tse,
ke phuthatumo (seisalemowa) le polapono (television)"
(p.137).

(These two wonders I am talking about are the radio
and the television).

He then tells the story of a man called Masilo. Masilo was regarded as the ugliest on earth, the most destructive and the most evil person one could come across. People decided to confront him to discuss his problem. After the discussion with this man, he left to settle somewhere else as a changed man. When he died the whole country where he was living bewailed the great loss.

The inclusion of this anecdote allows Leseiane to show the reader that "Moremogolo wa motho o a ipetla", (The great divining of the human one makes itself) and he rounds off his point by saying:

"Ditiro tsa gagwe e ne e sa tlhole e le tse dintsho,
mme e ne e le tse di bosweu bo bo neng bo
tshwana le sefokabolea" (p.40).

(His deeds were no longer black, but were white as
snow).

2.3 The conclusion as a formal feature

In the last paragraph (or in the last portion of the last paragraph), the essayist gives his final resolution or summary of what he has been discussing by concluding the essay. Maphike (1978:79) maintains that "the conclusion is the rounding up of the subject in which the purpose of the theme becomes clear". He also adds that "where it is not the climax of the essay, it follows immediately on the climax". When discussing the conclusion Maphike also mentions that it is usually a forceful (direct or tacit) challenge to the reader, or a solution to some problem or puzzle (1978:79).

Kane and Peters (1969:256) give the function of the final paragraph as an indication that "the essay is finished". In a well-written essay the final paragraphs tell us that the writer has no more to say about the subject, or the subject may demand that the essayist draws a final conclusion. They also give three techniques of ending:

In the first technique there are signal words which are commonly used in English, words such as: "finally, in conclusion, at last" (op cit).

The second technique is: "altering the speed of the final sentence, which requires a little more skill. Usually the change is a slowing down, and often a regularizing, of the rhythm" (op cit).

The third device, which is called figurative closing, means simply that the conclusion is a return to the beginning: "Having set up a word or phrase in the opening paragraph, completing the cycle" (op cit).

2.3.1 The conclusion in Leseayne's essays

Leseayne adopts different techniques in concluding his essays. In some essays he gives the meaning of the proverb when he rounds off his essays. In others he adopts the technique of setting up a phrase or mentioning the proverb at the opening of the essay and swinging back to it at the end. In still others, he gives the resolution in the last paragraph and gives a proverb at the end. This technique, where the essayist gives a resolution in the last paragraph, is observed in:

2.3.1.1 "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

Leseayne gives a resolution in the last paragraph by stating why people of the past had such a good command of their language. The use of these proverbs in their daily lives helped them acquire knowledge and language skills:

"Ka go dira jaana, ba ne ba tla ipoloka mo dilong tse
dintsi tse e leng dira tsa botshelo le kagiso, gone ke
mang yo o batlang go tshela ka mokgwa o e seng wa
boitekanelo le kagiso?" (p.18).

(By so doing, they were going to avoid the many things that are enemies of life and peace for who does not want to live in a perfect and peaceful manner?)

He concludes by referring to the subject of the essay in the following manner:

"Ke mang yo o ka se keng a itumelela go itse gore 'Tshwenyana e e bowa e a ikilela?' Ke mang gape yo o ka se keng a itumelela go itse gore 'Susu ilela suswana, o tle o bone a go ilela?'" (p.18).

(Who cannot be happy to hear that 'a young baboon that has a sharp instinct always avoids danger?' and who cannot be happy to hear that 'when the elder person respects the young one, the young will also respect him?'"

Leseyane not only advises the reader to protect his life, he also advises him to be careful with his language, to use the proverbs and other idiomatic expressions skilfully; and to make them part of his daily language. He also gives the reader an extra proverb besides the one he explained in the essay. Leseyane does this to accomplish his mission, namely, the teaching of proverbs to the new generation. This technique, where the essayist gives a resolution in the last paragraph, is repeated in "Lefifi la ntshwarelela ngwana" (The darkness

of hold my child) and "Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang" (One who takes out a fly that has fallen into his food is not hungry).

2.3.1.2 "Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe" (A bird that flings its wings clumsily)

Leseyane gives the purpose of the wings of the birds in the conclusion, comparing them to children:

"Re a bowa gape, fa morago ga dikgopolo tse
monate tse, go botsa gore ba kae bana ba ba
itseng gore ke diphuka tsa batsadi ba bona?"
(p.25).

(We come back, after these beautiful thoughts,
to ask how many children know that they are
the wings of their parents?)

When a child helps his parents, they can rely on him; he can be regarded as their wings. But when a child does not want to help his parents he can be regarded as the bad wings which obscure the parents' own view.

Leseyane rounds off the discussion by making the theme clear, and the tempo comes down to a halt:

"O tshwanetse ka metlha a iphitlhela a le ka kwa
godimo ga dilo tse di ka nnang difatlhi mo go ene,

mme a tsena mo dikgannye tse di tla felang ka go mo fa tlotlo. Ha o fitlhela batho ba le dikgannye, o se ke wa tsena mo go tsona o sa itse kwa di tswang le kwa di yang teng" (p.26).

(He must always try to be above things that can be an obstruction for him and engage himself in discussions that will end in giving him honour (respect). When you find people in a discussion, do not get yourself involved if you do not know how they started and what direction they are taking).

2.3.1.3 "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana" (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

Leseyane repeats the same technique in the final paragraph. It becomes clear to the reader that Leseyane is nearing the end of the essay; he has nothing further to say about the subject and he draws to the conclusion. This becomes very clear when he says:

"Polelo e, e utlwala sentle le gona ke se melao ya botshelo e leng sona", (p.49).

(This sentence is clear and it contains the law which is the yard-stick of life).

He says this after saying that the proverb could be said in a simple and straight-forward language because it would not appeal to the reader.

2.3.1.4 "O se bone thola borethe, teng ga yona go a baba" (Do not be deceived by the smoothness of an apple (solanum), the inside is bitter)

Leseyane uses the same technique and this is revealed by this sentence:

"Ke ntse ke go rata, mme bophelo ba me bo feta lerato
lo ke go ratang ka lona" (p.73).

(I still love you, but I value my life more than the love
I give you) and it is repeated in:

- (a) "Ka tlhagolela mookana, ya re o gola wa ntlhaba" (I weeded a thorny tree when it grew up it pricked me).
- (b) "Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe" (A civet cat's siblings take the same route, if they don't they fall to the enemy's trap).

2.3.1.5 "Motho ga a itsewe e se naga" (Man is not as predictable as a veld)

In the first paragraph of this essay, Leseyane explains what he means by this proverb, and in the last sentence of the concluding paragraph he says:

"A re gakologelweng gore motho ga a itsewe e se
naga" (p.79).

(Let us remember again that man is not as predictable
as a veld). i.e It is difficult to know a person.

Leseyane uses the technique whereby the essayist sets up a word or phrase in the opening paragraph, then swings back to it in the final paragraph, completing the cycle.

He uses this cycle in "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo" (The medicine that are from far are fetched during the time of visit), where Leseyane tells the reader that even if he/she can go out hunting/working far from home, he should always remember that "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo" (The medicine that are from far are fetched during the time of visit). In "Tau e iphutha metlhala e e le nosi" (the lion narrows its tracks when it is alone, meaning that when a lion moves alone it can always avoid trouble), he does not repeat the whole proverb as it is, but mentions the word 'mafaratlhatlha' (network) which is a word from the proverb when the proverb is completed. For example: "Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi, fa e na le bana mafaratlhatlha" (the lion narrows its tracks when it is moving alone, but when it has cubs they become a network).

2.4 Conclusion

Leseyane's essays are written in the conventional form whereby he links the three parts (introduction, body and conclusion). In most of his essays he uses the linking word so that the reader can move easily into the body of the essay after reading the introduction. He always writes essays which will make the reader think or which arouse his/her interest. For example; in "O se bone majwe go katologana" (Never be fooled by the distance between stones), he mentions that stones visit each other at night. This statement makes the reader

start wondering how it is possible. It becomes clear what is happening after reading about the meaning of the proverb in the body of the essay.

The body of Leseyane's essays is well developed. He uses proverbs as topics of his essays and these proverbs are well explained in the body. He gives both the figurative and literal meanings of the proverbs. During discussion he includes illustrations and anecdotes to drive his point home. His tendency to illustrate proverbs with other proverbs, makes the reader miss his point and focus on the language proficiency.

Leseyane does not follow one method of concluding an essay. He uses the three options of concluding. In some essays he gives the resolution of a problem. In others he completes the cycle in the last part of the concluding paragraph by using a word or the whole proverb which he mentioned in the opening paragraph; and lastly, he alters the speed towards the end of the last paragraph.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 STYLE IN LESEYANE'S ESSAYS

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the essayist is to choose the best way to treat his subject as he sees it. He also has a problem of winning the confidence of the reader. He is helped by his style to attain these two objectives. "New Criticism" as the method will be used to analyse the language and style of Leseayne's essays.

According to Zulu (1991:79) "the understanding of the contents of essays depends on the style of the author. It is the nature of the style which makes essays interesting and easy to read. Usually an interesting essay is characterised by a good simple straight-forward style".

Abrams (1985:181) says style "is the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse, it is how speakers or writers say whatever it is that they want to say".

Kane and Peters (1969:401) say "style is a pattern of linguistic features distinguishing one piece of writing from another, or one category of writing from another".

Style can be classified into three categories: firstly, style which is based on the point of view of the writer. Here style is regarded as a higher active principle of composition by which the writer penetrates and reveals the inner form of the subject.

On "the point of view" of the writer, Kane and Peters ((1969:407) define style as "the writer's way of thinking about his subject and his characteristic way of presenting it for a particular reader and particular purpose".

The second category deals with characteristics of the text itself, attempting an analysis of style entirely in terms of objective investigation of textual features. This also relates to the "close reading" of the new criticism school of thought.

On textual features, Abrams (1985:181) says "the style of a particular work or writer may be analysed in terms of the characteristic mode of its diction, or choice of words; its sentence structure and syntax; the density and type of its figurative language; the patterns of its rhythm; compound sounds; and other formal features, and its rhetorical aims and devices".

Kane and Peters (1969:407) agree with Abrams that to study the creation of style is to study "the organisation of the whole composition, paragraph development, sentence structure, sentence rhythm, diction, punctuation and whatever else contributes to the process of communication".

The third category is based on how the reader interprets the text, and has a bearing on all reader-oriented theories of literature. For the purpose of this study, the "close reading" approach will be adopted.

3.1.1 Style in Leseyane's essays

Leseyane's essays are characterised by simple language and a degree of circumlocution e.g. when explaining something Leseyane does not get straight to the point. He takes some time to come to the point because he give examples and anecdotes which later link to his point. But he sometimes uses linking words very well. For instance when he uses a linking word, he uses it in the last part of the introduction, and uses it in the first paragraph of the body. He does this in:

- (a) "Lefifi la ntshwarelela ngwana" (The darkness of hold my child);
- (b) "Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang" (One who takes out a fly that has fallen into his food is not hungry) and
- (c) "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo" (An important medicine can be fetched from far).

3.1.1.1 "Lefifi la ntshwarelela ngwana" (The darkness of hold my child)

Leseyane gives the historical background of the Batswana people, how their villages were structured so that in times of war people should know how to escape through the private exits. They also had small passages through which they entered or escaped. People used

to roam about at night using these passages. It was dangerous but because they were used to using them during the day they found it convenient to use them even at night.

Leseyane tells the reader that it is dangerous to roam about in the village at night. In order to achieve his goal he tells a story of a couple which lost a child when they came back at night after drinking liquor in the neighbouring village. He concludes the introductory paragraph with a sentence which has the word "dikgoro" (communities) and commences the body with a linking sentence. The word "dikgoro" (communities) appears in the last sentence of the first paragraph and at the beginning of the first paragraph of the body. This technique helps the reader to move easily into the body of the essay.

This helps Leseyane to channel the reader's mind carefully to the subject, namely that people should not roam at night because it is dangerous, and they can be involved in an accident. Leseyane also employs very simple language which the reader understands very well: when the leader of the group which was looking for a lost child bids others good night after a tiresome search, he says:

"Bagaetsho, kana le phirimile ... (p.54).

(My people, it is now dusk ...), meaning that
it is time to give up the search.

Although he is bidding other searchers good night he is doing it in such a way that they should feel that he is not stopping them from searching because he is no longer interested, but because he feels that there is no hope of finding the lost child. The reader, too, feels as if he is part of the group and could have stopped. He or she is convinced that the child would never be found. To convince his readers more, Leseyane repeats the adjectival stem in the sentence:

"Lefifi le lentshontsho, le le ntseng jaana, le sale le
amogela leina la lona ka ona motlha o" (p.54).
(Dark, dark nights such as this, got their name
from that time).

Now the reader understands why the proverb was formulated, and he/she also understands that Leseyane is trying to warn people not to wander at night because most atrocities and violence are perpetrated at night, i.e. forewarned is forearmed, because evil things always happen at night.

3.1.1.2 "Motlhophah-ntsi ke yo o kgorang" (One who takes out a fly that has fallen into his food is not hungry)

Leseyane says when he heard this proverb for the first time he was taken by the sound of the words used in the proverb. He says he then looked for the key word in the proverb, namely "-ntsi" (fly). An explanation of this key word in the proverb will help the reader grasp the meaning of the proverb which can be said to be "the one who is selective is the one who is

a self-sufficient person", one who has everything in abundance. For example, affluent people will always choose expensive clothes with prestigious labels. For the reader to understand the proverb, it is important for him/her to know where the proverb originates. Leseyane says the proverb used in the topic originates from the cattle post:

"Nna ntsi ke modisa wa kgomo ka ke phela ka mafsi
le boloko ba yona. Yo o mpatlang o tshwanetse go
batla fa moraka wa kgomo o leng teng" (p.105).
(I, the fly, look after cattle because I live on their
milk and dung. If you are looking for me, you must
go where there is a cattle post).

At the cattle post there are countless flies. They fall into milk and food. When one abandons one's food, it is said that one is not hungry. If a person is hungry and needs strength to work he cannot be fussy about flies in the food. After the explanation Leseyane cites another proverb:

"Kana ga tse 'tsie e thata ka moswang'" (p.105).
(They say, 'a locust gets strength from the food
in its stomach').

This second proverb implies that there is no animal or person who can work when he/she is hungry. This second proverb also helps the reader understand the first one. One who chooses what to eat, forgets that for one to fulfil any activity one has to have something in

one's stomach. Hence, one who is not choosy will never be stranded. This is reconcilable with the English proverb "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth".

3.1.1.3 "Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe" (A bird that flings its wings clumsily)

It becomes clear to the reader that the wrong deeds of children always place parents in trouble. But before Leseyane shows this to the reader he tells him or her that there are two different types of birds. There are birds which walk and those which fly. In his discussion he repeats the word 'diphuka' (wings) (p.22) nine times and the word 'nonyane' (bird) six times on the same page. He repeats these words to emphasise the importance of the wings in the bird's life. These wings are also used to protect the bird against its enemies. Leseyane also makes the following analogy:

"Maoto a nong ke diphuka" (p.23).

(The vulture's wings are its legs).

He then explains what he means by saying that a human being uses his feet for travelling while a bird uses its wings; hence the analogy, the bird's wings are its legs.

Leseyane maintains that an animal protects its life against the ills of life but it also protects itself against certain ailments. He shows the reader how a dog heals itself when it is not feeling well. He relates consecutive actions which follow in unbroken order in this fashion:

Fa gongwe o a tle o lemoge gore mpya ya gago ga e

je monate, mme ha o ka ela tlhoko mo go yona nako

e o tla bona e floga, e ema, e tsamaela fa go leng
 bojang jo botala, e feta, e iketla, e bo kgetla, ka
 meno e bo metsa" (p.20).

(Sometimes you have noticed that it will move
away, wait, move towards a place where there is
 green grass, go slowly, cut it, with its teeth and
swallow it).

This portrays extreme caution. It reinforces what he said to the reader about taking precautions against ills, and impresses on the reader that in life one should always handle things with care.

He also enumerates what he regards as enemies in the life of any creature:

"Tse kgolo tsa dira tse, ke bolwetsi, tlala le ntwa"
 (p.20).

(The greatest of these enemies are disease, hunger
 and war).

Leseyane concludes by once more alluding to the wings as being very important to birds. He then gives the reader the meaning of the proverb in real-life context. He maintains that by "the bird that flings its wings clumsily obscures its own vision (topic reference)" it is meant that children who do not behave well in the community put their parents in a

predicament because they are regarded as "the wings" which obscure "the birds" (the parents') vision. As the wings are the legs of the birds, they (children) are regarded as their parents' legs (the second proverb). This is a very picturesque way of showing what damage children's misdemeanour does to their parents' reputation or image.

3.1.1.4 "Phokojwe go ja o o diretsenyana" (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

Leseyane tells the reader that a person who works hard will always have something to eat or at hand (in the form of food or money). He also shows the reader that there are people who live on their wits instead of working hard for a living. He introduces a dialogue between a cock and a jackal. The jackal pretends to be converted and is no longer a threat to small animals, and the cock reminds the jackal about the decision that was taken at their previous meeting. By telling this story, Leseyane reminds the reader about people who think that they are cleverer than others but who are caught doing wrong things. He alerts the reader to be careful, and not to trick others because he will be caught napping. Leseyane uses a periodic sentence of seventeen lines (p.40-41), in which he explains how the jackal is respected by man himself, and should try to maintain that respect. He repeats himself in the sentence and this makes it too long. He is not economical with words. What is noticeable in this long sentence is the lack of usage of conjunctions. In the same essay he uses a short sentence which consists of seven words, viz. "O phela feela jaaka modidi wa modidi" (p.44) (He lives like a very poor person). The long sentence spoils Leseyane's style because the reader cannot remember what he was reading after reading seventeen lines. The

reader is left confused. The significance of the short sentence is, however, to show emphasis by the use of the same sound in "modidi wa modidi" (a very poor person).

3.1.1.5 "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo" (An important medicine can be fetched from far)

The reader gathers that good things or important ideas can be obtained from elsewhere when one has gone out on a visit or some expedition. This may also mean that solutions to problems may be obtained from unexpected sources. He commences the essay in this manner:

"Polelo ya motho wa bogologolo e re, 'pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo'" (p.79).

(The saying of the people of old goes, 'an important medicine can be fetched from far', meaning visiting other countries is important because one can come back with great ideas).

Leseyane chooses to be non-committal in this introduction by stating that this was said by the people of the past. The reader will continue reading the essay having this in mind. When he explains this proverb he uses comparisons between a poem and a hymn to show rhythm and rhyme, in proverbs. He uses 'Sedi la ka mponesetse tsela' (p.88) (Lead kindly light). This shows that when these proverbs were constructed there was a certain pattern followed. He then cites the proverb:

"Ngwana yo o sa leleng, o swela mo tharing"

(p.89).

(A child that does not cry, does not get attention), to show the rhyme pattern in proverbs which the reader can enjoy like he/she enjoys music.

Leseyane says that he gives these examples because he wants to make the reader aware that when the man of old constructed these proverbs, it was not in a dream. He (person of the past) put in some effort to form them carefully and wisely. The purpose of this proverb is to make people aware that one should always air one's views concerning things which worry one.

3.1.1.6 "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

This means that animals or people who take heed of their feelings (instincts) warning them against something can avoid trouble. The non-committal technique is also observed in this essay. He starts the essay in this fashion:

"Motho wa bogologolo yo o neng a tlhama seane

se, o ne a tlhagisa ka botlalo boteng jwa kitso ya

gagwe ka ga botshelo ba dibopiwa tsa lefatshe, go

akaretsa le ene motho ka nosi" (p.9).

(The person of the past who formulated this

proverb, revealed his profound knowledge of the creatures of the earth including man himself).

The essayist puts it as if he is not the one who is saying this. This helps catch the reader's interest and to challenge his thinking.

In his discussion it is noticed that Leseiyane over-used the past tense 'o ne'. It is repeated ten times in just one paragraph (p.16). It does not enhance the quality of his style or help drive any point home; instead it bores the reader because almost every sentence in the paragraph begins in this fashion.

In explaining the proverb, "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger), he tells a story of baboons. He concludes the story by saying that in a group of animals (or people) only one has a sharp instinct (feelings). He says:

"Maikutlo a, ke ona a mogologolo a buang ka ona
ha a re 'Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela'"
(p.12).

(These feelings, are the ones people of the past refer to when they say, 'the young baboon with a sharp fur evades danger').

According to Leseayne, it is not every baboon that has this feeling. The one that has the feeling should be sensitive and respond to its instincts, then it will save its own life. This means that clever people will always seize the opportunity for survival. To the reader he says, make hay while the sun shines. This is a very vivid, graphic presentation by Leseayne.

3.1.1.7 "O se bone majwe go katogana" (Do not be deceived by the distance between stones, they do visit each other at night)

Leseayne gives the full proverb which is "o se bone majwe go katogana, majwe bosigo a etelana", meaning: do not be deceived by the distance between stones; they do visit each other at night. Leseayne takes the reader along to discover the meaning of the proverb. In his discussion the essayist is found to be talking from personal experience as he tells stories and anecdotes. He uses first person narration. This gives the reader the feeling that the essayist is part of the action, and the situation is believable to the reader, because he is reading about actual experience. This makes the essay very lively.

Leseayne poses questions to the reader and provides answers for them. This is noticed when he introduces the proverb: "O se bone majwe go katogana, majwe bosigo a etelana" (Never be fooled by the distance between stones (kings)).

"‘A rure selo se se ka diragala?’ Karabo e nna le
wena re ka e lebelelang ke e e reng, ‘ga go ka ke ga
nna selo se se ntseng jalo’" (p.29).

(‘Can such a thing happen?’ The answer that you
and I expect is that, ‘there is nothing like that’).

This creates more questions in mind of the reader and arouses his interest. If the answer is, it cannot happen, why is Leseyane asking? This urges the reader to think along with him. From this literal level he rises to the figurative level, where the stones symbolise kings.

He then comes out clearly with his point which is about kings who meet at night and discuss problems they have and possible solutions, and disperse as though nothing has happened. This can also mean that people meet when it is convenient for them and discussion or share ideas. The underlying message here is "no man is an island".

3.1.1.8 "Motho ga a itsiwe e se naga" (Man is not as predictable as a veld)

Leseyane says it is an undisputable fact that man is not as predictable as a veld. Contrasting man with the veld, he mentions/alludes to landmarks that can be described to help a traveller find his way, as opposed to a human being who is difficult to know because "Motho ke mofsa o bowa", meaning that (a human being is slippery like the fur of a squirrel).

He feels that proverbs which say it is easy to tell if a person is telling a lie or not, viz:

"Motho o tshwarwa ka lefoko, mme kgomo
e tshwarwa ka lonaka" (p.77).

(Man is caught or apprehended by his word,
a cow is caught by its horns.

It is unreliable. He seems to have a problem with this proverb because he says:

"Go nnete gore kgomo e tshwarwa ka lonaka
ga go nnete gore motho o tshwarwa ka
lefoko" (p.77).

(It is true that a cow is caught by the horns
but it is not always true that a person is caught
by what he says).

He contrasts this with another proverb which says:

"O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go
a baba" (p.77).

(Do not be deceived by the smoothness of an
apple or solanum, the inside is bitter) i.e. It is
difficult to know a person.

This proverb was coined because the people of the past discovered that it is difficult to know a person. He uses the word "sitwa" (unable) which is Southern Sotho instead of the word "palelwa" (unable) for emphasis. This series of complementary and contrasting proverbs serve to show Leseyane's eagerness to reach deep down into the reader's thinking.

He insists that he cannot know a person because even he cannot even know himself. He also says that one will always change because of one's brains and intelligence. This is a very forceful way of saying "judge not a book by its cover".

3.1.1.9 "Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola" (The great divining bone is carved)

Leseyane starts the essay in this fashion:

"Seane se se reng, moremogolo go betlwa wa taola,
wa motho o a ipetla, ke se sengwe sa diane tse dintsi
tse ka tsona mogologolo o neng o supa kitso le
nonofo ya gagwe mo go diriseng mafoko a loleme
lwa ga mmagwe" (p.125).

(The proverb that says, the great divining bone is carved, but man carves himself, is one of the many proverbs in which people of the past wanted to show their knowledge and their proficiency in the use of their mother tongue).

From the outset Leseyane states the proverb as evidence to this effect. The reader is now interested to know the aim of the writer or to know the embedded meaning of the proverb. By explaining the proverb Leseyane encourages the reader to search for the meaning of other proverbs that he uses in the discussion. When Leseyane uses this topic he wants to show the

reader that man is the architect of his own fortune, i.e. one can always be what one wants to be, or what one is content to be.

3.1.1.10 "Bodiba ba go ja ngwana wa ga mmago" (A pool that ate your mother's child should be avoided)

The full proverb is "Bodiba ba go ja ngwana wa ga mmago, e re o bo bona o bo sikologe". Leseyane starts by explaining the proverb. He gives the reader a broad picture of "bodiba" (a pool or a deep river bed). He is longwinded in his explanation of this word, giving the history of the Motswana. By the time the reader finishes the paragraph, he knows that dangerous animals are believed to live in this pool, how "tshitlho" (medicinal mixture) is prepared, and how important the mixture is to the Batswana children. Leseyane also mentions that in this pool there is a "kgogela" (a mythical water snake).

After explaining the word "bodiba", he explains the work "sikologa" (make a detour). According to Leseyane, you make a detour only at a place which is dangerous. When he links the two, he says the pool, in which there are dangerous creatures, should be avoided. The reader immediately understands that anything that can be dangerous should be avoided.

Leseyane also alludes to how animals communicate, when the jackal alerts its young against the enemy, it whistles, meaning:

"Sera, tshabang!"

"Tshabang! Sera ke seo!" (p.145).

(Run away! there is the enemy!).

What the jackal says to the young ones, is what the proverb says to us. Leseiane mentions this to make the reader aware that when people of the past advise you to avoid dangerous areas or situations, do so because even animals (the jackals) survived by obeying the instructions of their elders. This is powerful way of portraying the need to heed warning.

3.1.1.11 "Ka tlhagolela mookana ya re o gola wa ntlhaba" (I weeded a thorny tree, when it grew up it pricked me)

Leseiane starts by explaining the proverb literally. It means that one looks after a thorn tree, waters it until it becomes a big tree, and when it is fully grown, one cannot get wood from it because the thorns will prick one. But there are other things one can get from this tree like the bark and the bast. When Leseiane explains how a Motswana gets this bast from the tree he uses syntactic slots with consecutive action in this essay:

"Monna ha a bolola a ya go itaya kgofati, o batla fa
a ka bonang teng sekgwa sa maokana a a godileng
sentle a tlhomoga a a reme, a a fotlhe, a a khume
lodi" (p.158).

(When a man leaves his home to go and fetch bark,
 he looks for a forest of all matured thorn trees, cuts
them, cleans them, and strips their bark).

The reader becomes interested to know the functions of this bark in the life of a Motswana, and this helps him/her to read on until he/she gets the real meaning of the proverb. The reader also gets to know that in Setswana a son-in-law will be accepted because of certain tasks that he performs for his in-laws. The thorny tree symbolises the child, who is brought up by his parents, nursed and nurtured by them until he is a big man. When they expect him to look after them he turns away from them or rejects them. This proverb is generally used in reference to any unfulfilled expectations of parents or disappointments. Leseyane uses this symbolism to show that problems can occur in child-rearing. This can be based on the example of a son-in-law who is expected to respect his in-laws and prove to them that their daughter is secured and safe. When he is with them he is expected to perform some tasks efficiently. If he fails to fulfil those duties he is regarded as a thorn that pricks the owner of the tree. This example shows that parents have high hopes about their children which sometimes are unfulfilled and this can frustrate them greatly.

3.1.1.12 "Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe" (The civet cat's siblings take the same route if they don't they fall into the enemy's trap)

Leseyane deviates from his common style of starting his essays by referring to what the old people said.

He explains the proverb and gives the reader a full account of the animal "tshipa" (civet cat) and how it is hunted. The arrangement of words in this proverb confuses people. This confusion prompts Leseyane pinpoint mistakes which a Motswana child makes when speaking his own language. He mentions word which are problematic to the reader, such as: "bofana" (intertwine) (p.185); "rakana" (meet) (p.185); "lebana" (direct) (p.185); "bofagana" (intertwine) (p.185).

He says these words show whether or not a person knows the Setswana language. Such words show that a Motswana child confuses the use of the verb in the causative, passive and reciprocal forms.

Leseyane advises the reader to be more conscious and careful when using Setswana words because he/she may be using a wrong word or a word with a different meaning from the intended one. The arrangements of words in this proverb causes confusion to the reader. Leseyane clarifies this by stating clearly that:

"... ha bana ba motho ba tshelela mo teng ga
kutlwano le lerato, ga go na.selo se se ka tsenang
mo magareng a bona go senya botshelo ba bona.
Fela ba ka kgaoganngwa ke phaphang le
letlhwaano, ga go thata gore dira di tsene mo go
bona di ba nyeletse" (p.189-190).

(... if siblings live where co-operation and love reign, there is no enemy that can come between them to destroy their lives. But when they are divided by differences and hatred, it is not difficult for enemies to infiltrate them, and destroy them).

The young of the civet, which always keep together, symbolise a close family (or comradeship) which Leseyane seeks to encourage. It is significant that he has, this time, not used the many available Setswana proverbs to complement his topic proverb. The ideas are presented in simple albeit figurative language, and go down well with the reader.

3.1.1.13 "Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi" (The lion narrows its tracks when it is moving alone)

Leseyane starts with a lengthy comparison between the cruel lion and gentle elephant. He then states the proverbs in full, namely: "Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi, fa e na le bana mafaratlhatlha", meaning that the lion narrows its tracks when it is moving alone, but when it has cubs they become a network. This actually means that a person can be influenced by others to do bad things, and find him/herself in trouble.

In this essay Leseyane is inclined to use long sentences. In the following sentences, the underlined portions could be omitted without a change in the sense of the sentence:

"Tau e e iphutha metlhala e le nosi gonne ha e le
nosi jaana, e kgona go tsamaya fa e itseng gore fa
e tsamayang teng, ga e kitla e wela mo kotsing" (p.198).

(A lion narrows its track⁵ when it is alone because
when it is alone, it is able to move where it knows
that where it goes, it cannot get into any trouble).

Leseyane says that the lion cannot avoid its pursuers if it moves with its cubs, but if it moves alone it is able to make its tracks difficult to be detected:

"Gape e tla re ha a tsamaya jaana, ya dira motlhala
 wa yona matswakabele gore go se ka ga nna bonolo
 mo balatedi ba yona go e tsaya ka motlhala o o
 tlhamaletseng" (p.199).

(And when it moves it will make its tracks
 embroiled so that it cannot be easy for its
 pursuers to track it).

Leseyane advises the reader to guard against people who can do exactly what the lion is doing, e.g. thieves can make difficult for their pursuer to catch them by removing their tracks. This analogy with the lion is also a way of putting it vividly that "too many cooks spoil the broth".

3.1.1.14 "O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba" (Do not be fooled by the smoothness of the solanum because the inside is bitter)

The explanation the reader gets is that one should not be fooled by the beauty of a solanum because the inside is bitter. This summons the old experience with the incongruity between appearance of fruit and the taste. Here reference is made to the appearances of people which do not always reflect their character. Leseiane compares a human being to this fruit. He says:

"Motho ke sera se segolo go feta dira tsotlhe
tsa botshelo" (p.62).

(Man is the worst enemy in life).

He compares man to the solanum because it is beautiful and it lures a person to fetch it. When one has it in one's hand, one can easily be tempted to taste it and then be frustrated by its bitterness. Here the reader cannot fail to grasp the warning to be wary of being deceived by appearances. In other words, "all that glitters is not gold".

3.2 Conclusion

Although Leseiane has a variety of ways of beginning his essays, most of his essays begin with this phrase, "Motho wa bogologolo a re" (A person of the past says), or something with a similar meaning. When he concludes he always states a proverb.

Leseyane's style reveals that he wants to teach proverbs because in his book there are more than fifty proverbs, most of which are explained in the essays, and the topics of his essays are also proverbs. He repeatedly uses words such as "kitso" (knowledge) and "ithuta" (learn) in his essays. He seems to be more concerned with imparting what he learned from "Batho ba bogologolo" (people of old) to the young people, so that this knowledge can be transmitted from one generation to the next, and so that Tswana culture can be preserved and the teaching of proverbs continue. In the fourteen essays Leseyane uses more than thirty proverbs and idioms to enrich his language and also to explain certain things related to the topics (that is, fourteen proverbs provided). Leseyane explains proverbs that are used as topics. This encourages the reader to search for the meanings of the other proverbs that he comes across in the discussion.

The only problem with Leseyane's style is that, when sharing his experiences with the reader, he becomes long-winded, he uses a lot of anecdotes to illustrate his point and gives too many examples. He uses very long sentences and repeats himself throughout the discussions. However he does use simple language which the reader understands easily, and he addresses the reader directly.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 THEMATIC SURVEY OF LESEYANE'S ESSAYS

4.1 Introduction

According to Cohen (1973:198) "the theme is the essential meaning or main concept of a literary work". Marckwardt (1977:527) defines theme as "the main subject of discussion". Cuddon (1982:695) agrees with this statement by saying: "theme of a work is not its subject but rather its central idea which may be stated directly or indirectly." Shipley as quoted by Maphike (1978:14) says the theme "is the underlying action or movement, as the general topic of which the particular story is an illustration", and also regards theme as a "subject of writing, thought, conversation or argument" (op cit:14).

In this study all these facts will be considered. It is by means of an analysis of the theme using the "new criticism" as a method that one is able to understand Leseyane's work.

The contents of Leseyane's essays show that he discusses a variety of subjects. Leseyane's essays can be divided into six themes. This is not a cut and dried classification, however, because these subjects overlap with themes found in other essays. He deals with themes

which cover aspects such as, animal behaviour; social norms; Tswana customs; traditional beliefs; socio-historical themes and natural phenomena. The subject of writing is merely based on sub-themes, but the didactic theme, which is the underlying message in all the essays, dominates the whole collection of essays.

TABLE 2

The purpose of the table below is, therefore, to offer a classification of Lesevane's essays as well as overlapping themes.

Animal Behaviour	Social Norms	Socio-historical	Tswana Customs	Traditional Beliefs	Natural Phenomenon
1. Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha.	1. O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba.	1. O se bone majwe go katogana.	1. Bodiba jwa go ja ngwana wa ga mmago.	1. Phoko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo.	1. Motho ga a itsewe e se naga.
2. Nonyane e e mephuphutho mebe.		2. Lefifi la ntshwarele ngwana.		2. Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola.	
3. Phokojwe go tshela o o diretsenyana.				3. Ka tlhagolela mookana, ya re o gola wa tlhaba.	
4. Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe.				4. Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi.	
5. Motlhapha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang.					

4.1.1 Animal behaviour

Under this theme Leseyane writes about observed animal behaviour and circumstances of different kinds of animal behaviour. In different essays of this category, he shows that human behaviour or social norms can be interpreted in terms of such behaviour. Animal behaviour is used as desired model for humans, or an example of what not to do. It is, therefore, not surprising that many Tswana proverbs are based on observed animal behaviour. Essays in this category invariably incorporate the didactic. The following essays fall into this category:

"Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

"Nonyane e e mephuphutho mebe" (A bird that flings its wings clumsily)

"Phokojwe go tshela o o diretsenyana" (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

"Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o le mongwe". (A civet cat's siblings take the same route, if they don't they fall into the enemy's trap)

4.1.2 "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger)

It is a didactic essay which incorporates natural phenomena. In this essay Leseyane satirises contemporary people who are indifferent to the aim of the people of the past in creating proverbs:

"Motho wa gompieno, yo o sa kgathaleng yo o sa
iseng gope go itse le puo e ka maatlametlo, ga a
itshwenye ka go epa le go batla se se neng se le mo
mogopolong wa motho yo o neng a ntse a rulaganya
diane tse dintsi tse" (p.9).

(A modern person, who does not bother and who
does not want to speak his language properly, does
not care to find out what was in the mind of the
person who created these many proverbs).

Leseyane's tone is very harsh. He sounds angry with these people and says to the reader, know your language and speak it well. This harshness is felt in words such as: 'yo o sa kgathaleng' (who does not bother) and 'ka maatlametlo' (properly).

Leseyane would be very pleased if there was a person who could motivate a modern person to love and study his own language. He sounds very disappointed when he comes across a person who does not know the meaning of the proverb:

"Sakanye a tshela molapo, o a be a ikantse
boditse jo bo phepha" (p.10).

(When a squirrel crosses a river, it banks on
its clear fur). i.e. A clever person, whenever he
takes a risk, has something to fall back on.

According to him, it is important to know the meaning of this proverb, and one should also know what each and every word in this proverb means. As he puts it:

"... mme kana, se ga se a lekana gone se se tlhokwang
ke mongwe le mongwe yo o tlhoafaletseng go itse
Setswana, ke tthaloso e e tletseng, ga lefoko lengwe
le lengwe le le mo se sengwe le sengwe sa tsona
diane tsa Setswana" (p.10).

(By the way, this is not enough because what is
important to any person who wishes to know
Tswana is the full meaning of each and every word
in these Setswana proverbs).

Leseyane's essays are highly didactic. He not only gives the reader proverbs, he explains them and also gives the reader the figurative meanings of the proverbs. It annoys him to see people not knowing what a proverb implies.

"Bana ba tshipa ba tsaya mmila o e mongwe, ha ba
kgaogana, ke dira tsa mogotlha" (p.10).

(The civet cat's young take the same route, when they
don't they fall (prey) to the enemies' trap). i.e Unity
is strength.

When he explains this proverb to the reader, Leseyane says children of a civet cat are vulnerable to any danger if they do not remain together. But the structuring of words in this proverb gives the impression that it is the children of a civet cat that become the enemies of the trap if they do not take the same route. Leseyane says people of the past preferred this arrangement because they knew exactly what happened if children of the civet cat did not remain in the same group. This shows that it is important for family members to be united.

Still on this subject, he gives the reader another proverb:

"Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha e a ikilela"

(p.13).

(A young baboon with sharp fur (i.e. a sharp instinct) evades danger).

He mentions the proverb when he realises that some people do not think about the aim of the people who created these proverbs. He then explains the proverbs to the reader. He maintains that a sharp fur that the person of the past talks about, is something that is deep, which cannot be seen by any person. It is for this reason that we find that there are not many people who can explain this proverb correctly.

Leseyane talks strongly to people who cannot interpret this proverb correctly. His tone and strong emotions are discernible in the following:

"Ke sekgopi go bua boammarure, mo Motswaneng
 yo mongwe le yo mongwe yo o ratang, le gona yo o
 tlotlang loleme lwa ga mmaagwe, go utlwa le
 dubakanngwa ka mokgwa o re a tleng re utlwe
 batho bangwe ba bua seane se ka ona" (p.13).

(It honestly angers one for any Motswana who likes
 and respects his mother tongue to hear people
 speaking it in the manner in which we often hear
 them use this proverb).

Although Leseyane mentions animals in all the proverbs he uses in this essay, it is didactic in the sense that Leseyane warns and chides. He also gives the reader examples which will help him/her to understand them better. The proverb used as the title of this essay teaches the reader that the inner feeling is a strong weapon. One does not need knives and axes to win a battle if one listens to the inner feeling that tells one to avoid taking a wrong decision.

4.1.3 Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe (A bird that flings its wings clumsily)

"Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe" (A bird that flings its wings clumsily) has a didactic theme and Leseyane also brings in natural phenomena which include dreams and birds. The discussion is based on two proverbs which both include birds. The dreams convey Leseyane's ideas. Leseyane tells the reader that the vulture's wings are its legs, meaning that

the child is the parents' legs, because he can run faster than them and does the work more effectively than the parents. Because he is thinking of what children can do for their parents he dreams about it. This is revealed in this proverb:

"Maoto a nong ke diphuka" (p.23).

(Literally: the vulture's legs are its wings).

The introduction of the natural phenomenon in this essay does not change the tone of the essay. The essay remains didactic. Leseiane warns the reader that when one finds people in the middle of a discussion one should not just join before finding out what they are discussing, because this can land one in trouble. He mentions this proverb in his discussion:

"Nonyane e e mephuphuthomebe e

iphatlha ka diphuka tsa yona" (p.18).

(The bird that flings its wings clumsily obscures its own vision)

i.e. Those who like interfering often get into trouble.

Leseiane then introduces another proverb:

"Phuduhudu e e molala moleele e bolwa

ke melamu e e seng ya yona" (p.23).

(A raphicerus with a protruding neck falls

victim to faulty attacks, meaning that a

person who interferes in other people's affairs

lands in trouble).

Leseyane introduces this third proverb to reinforce the first one. The two proverbs still include the social norms. Leseyane advises people to mind their own business. People who like interfering in other people's affairs land in trouble.

4.1.4 Phokojwe go tshela e e diretsenyana (A shrewd jackal will always have something to eat)

Leseyane satirises people who want to benefit using others, but he gives a solution to those problems. Although the proverb deals with shrewd jackal which always has something to eat, it does not mean that to work hard for a living one should kill or commit crime.

Leseyane uses the hare to satirise people who steal from others. The hare once tricked other animals in order to survive. It later tricked the lion and the lion got killed.

"Mo motlhang o mmutla o kileng wa direla
diphologolo tse dingwe setlhogo se se botlhoko
ka go di bolaisa tau ka palo e kgolo, e ne e ntse e le
ha o batla tsela ya go sireletsa botshelo ba ona gore
bo se ka ba nyelediwa ke tau" (p.36).

(One day the hare did a cruel thing to the other
animals by making the lion kill them in great
numbers. It wanted to save its own life by hoping
that the lion would not kill it).

This is not a good way of protecting oneself. According to Leseyane, there are animals or people who are worse than the hare:

"O (phokojwe) tla di garamela, e re ha di iteega
lethekga, a kgetha e piripitlwa, a e emolela mo go
tse dingwe, a eta a e kgabetla mogatla, a o ja e ntse
e tsogile gore a be a o fetse (p.40).

(It (the jackal) will attack them (the sheep), when
they run away, it will choose the fat one, isolate or
separate it from the others, and follow it, eating its
tail bit by bit whilst chasing it, until it finishes it).

The essay depicts animal behaviour but clearly refers to people who live on their wits instead of working hard for a living. He also mentions that it is important for people to live in harmony, people should respect other people's property and should not behave irresponsibly. Leseyane recommends that:

"Pheko e e ka dirang gore lefatshe le nne ka gale mo
kagisong le mo kutlwanong ha rona baagi mo go
lona re ka ithuta mokgwa o montle o o tlotlegang
wa go rata le go tlotla ditsabangwe ka rona jaaka re
tlotla ditsarona" (p.4).

(What can set the world at peace at all times is
if we its inhabitants can learn the good ways of

respect and love for each other, and respect other people's property).

Leseyane concludes the essay by saying:

"Seane se, se kgobokantse molao le mokgwa wa botshelo ka botlalo, se huparetse bontle le monate wa puo ya Setswana; se supa maatlametlo le botswerere jo motho wa bogologolo o neng a ikgatla go bua loleme lwa gagabo ka bona; le gone se kgotshe boteng ba kitso ya motho wa bogologolo ka ga dibopiwa tsa lefatshe (p.49).

(This proverb contains the law and the way of living in the true sense, it has harnessed the beauty and the pleasant language of Setswana. It shows the ingenious and the skilful way in which the person of the past was able to speak the language and had a fundamental knowledge of the past about creatures of the earth).

After making his point, he regresses to his obsession: the Tswana language.

4.1.5 Bana ba tshipa ba tsamaya mmila o le mongwe (A civet cat's siblings take the same route, if they don't they fall into the enemy's trap)

Leseyane gives a description of 'tshipa' (civet cat) so that when the reader reads about it, he can be able to form a vivid mental picture of it.

"Tshipa ke sebata sa selekanyo sa katse ya moroba.

E mmala o modilodi jaaka nkwe, le gona e merafe

e mebedi fela jaaka yone nkwe (p.17).

(A civet cat is a carnivore the size of a cat.

It has a spotted colour like the leopard, and it has stripes like a leopard).

A description is also given of a group of vultures going out hunting. When they find a carcass, they just devour the meat. This is the picture Leseyane gives to the reader:

"E tla re mo nakong e khutshwane wa bona a

kotame a dikaganyeditse setopo sa phologolo jaaka

e kete batho ba kgobokanetse go fitlha moswi".

(In a short space of time you will see them sitting

on their haunches round a carcass like people gathered

to bury a corpse).

After showing animal behaviour, Leseyane shows his concern with how people conduct themselves as far as the Tswana language is concerned. He reprimands the young people who do not make any effort to learn the language or speak it well. He maintains that this very language is being spoken by many children in schools and these children do not care whether the Tswana they are speaking is correct or not.

4.1.6 Motlhopha-ntsi ke yo o kgorang (One who takes out a fly in his food is not hungry)

This proverb implies that one should not be too selective; one should accept what is given to one. Leseyane advises the reader to know the meaning of proverbs by looking for the key word 'modi' (root). In the proverb he decides on the word 'ntsi' (fly):

"Nna ntsi, ke modisa wa kgomo ka ke phela ka
mafsi le boloko ba yona. Yo o mpatlang o
tshwanetse go batla fa moraka wa dikgomo
o leng teng" (p.105).

(I, the fly, am the shepherd of the cow as I
live on its milk and dung. Whoever wants me,
should look for me where the cattle graze).

Leseyane shows the origin of the proverb. The proverb originated from the cattle post. But today this proverb includes many places. Leseyane then gives examples of a boy who came from a very poor family and worked for a wealthy white man who treated and paid him

well. When the white man went abroad, the boy could not work for any other person because he wanted someone of the same status. The boy lost all that he had earned from his former master and became poor again. A kind man gave him a job but the boy wanted the same treatment as the man's children. He later decided to marry his master's daughter.

He went to a traditional doctor to get a love potion which could make the girl fall in love with him.

Leseyane teaches the reader that one should not look a gift horse in the mouth. The meaning of the proverb becomes clear to the reader, and he now understands that a needy person should not be too selective, he/she should accept what is given to him/her. A good beginning can spoil a person but the reader should remember that it is not everything that starts well that ends well. Expect disappointments or mishaps in life.

The subject includes social norms. It demonstrates people's ways of living. "Motlhophantsi ke yo o kgorang" means that one who takes out a fly that has fallen into one's food, is not hungry, which implies that one should accept what is being offered with an open heart. This is a harsh analogy but it stresses that "beggars should not be choosers".

4.2 Social norms

This theme is based on cultural patterns and social behaviour of the Batswana people. For example in "O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba" (Do not be deceived by the smoothness of the apple (solanum) the inside is bitter), Leseyane compares a beautiful solanum which is bitter to a beautiful woman who is not pure. This theme portrays the way people were living. Parents used to choose wives for their sons. This theme includes a didactic dimension.

4.2.1 O se bone thola borethe teng ga yona go a baba (Do not be fooled by the smoothness of the solanum, the inside is bitter)

The proverb has a didactic message. The figurative meaning of this proverb is that things which always appear beautiful from outside, are not always beautiful inside. The meaning of this proverb is that all that glitters is not gold.

Leseyane gives an example of a beautiful woman who had a sexually transmitted disease. Nobody could reconcile this disease with the beauty of this woman.

The unfortunate part is that this woman got married to a stubborn boy who would not allow his father to choose a wife for him according to Tswana custom. Leseyane advises the reader that it is important to listen to experienced people if one does not want to find oneself in trouble. Leseyane's handling of subjects like social norms, customs and traditional themes

overlaps in the same essays, but this cannot be avoided because the three cannot be divorced from one another.

4.3 Socio-historical theme

Leseyane has written two essays on this theme and they both deal with the social life of the Batswana people and also provide the reader with the historical background of the people. Although the two essays are based on natural phenomena, viz., animals, rivers, they also touch on the social behaviour of the Batswana people. This is depicted in "O se bone majwe go katogana" (Never be fooled by the distance between stones (kings)) and "Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana" (The darkness of hold my child).

4.3.1 O se bone majwe go katogana (Never be fooled by stones being apart)

This implies that people need one another in times of difficulties. Literally, this proverb means that one should not be fooled by the space or distance between stones; at night they visit one another. Leseyane advises the reader to help other people so that it can be reciprocated in times of difficulty. Leseyane explains what he means by "oneness of the world." In this essay he says:

"Ga go motho yo ka tlhago a gopolang kampo a
dumelang gore o kwa tlase ga yo mongwe" (p.28).

(There is no person who thinks or who believes himself to be less than another).

From the above it seems that everybody is important. Every person needs to be given the respect he deserves. In the eyes of God we are equal and we are all important: White, Black, Indian and Bushman. But it has come to Leseiane's notice that people undermined Bushmen, and they (Bushman) in turn undermined other people. He states it directly in:

"Mosarwa o bitsa botlhe ba ba kwa pele ga gagwe ka tswelopele 'Basarwa', ke go re batho ba kemo e e kwa tlase ga gagwe" (p.29).

(The San regards everybody who is more civilised than himself as 'Bushman', that is to say one who is lower than himself).

Leseiane repeats the proverb:

"Utlwang tlhe gore a reng! O se bone majwe go katogana, majwe bosigo a etelana" (p.29).

(Listen to what he is saying! Do not be deceived by the distance between stones (kings); stones (kings) visit each other at night).

The aim of this proverb is to give a good historical background to the reader and link it to the rest of the essay. After reading about the origin of Setswana names, it becomes easy for the reader to understand why the Batswana villages were constructed at the foot of certain mountains. The aim was to build a strong fortress so that when there were adverse conditions, people would be able to seek refuge on the mountains. This information helps the reader to understand the proverb which Leseyane explains by comparing the kings to stones. The Tswana kings loved each other and they had to devise various means of helping each other when there was trouble; stones do not visit each other but the kings visit each other to exchange information and goodwill.

This essay also includes Tswana customs. It is customary to give people names after certain events. Leseyane mentions the names which originated from certain events in this essay:

"Maina a a tshwanang le Monageng, Matlapeng,
Sekgweng, Moruo, Tau, Phiri le a mangwe, a re
bontsha gore Monageng o ne a tsalelwa mo go ona.
Go ne go nna jala ka ga Matlapeng, Sekgweng le
Moruo (p.22).

(Names such as Monageng, (in the caves), Matlapeng
(at the stones), Sekgweng (at the forest), Moruo
(rearing), Tau (lion), Phiri (hyena) and others,
show us that Monageng was born in a cave in which

people sought refuge. It applies in the same way to Matlapeng, Sekgweng and Moruo).

4.3.2 Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana (The darkness of hold my child)

Leseyane sketches the historical background of a Batswana life from the olden days. He does not mention the origin of Setswana names. But he gives the reader a good picture of what really happened. He says there were always wars because there were people who always wanted to be above others:

"Ha re batlisisa se e neng e le motswedi wa
kgotlhang e e neng ya kgaoganya merafe ya Afrika
ka tshaba le tshabana, mo metlheng e e fetileng, re
fitlhela gore se se neng se lwelwa mo bogologolong
boo, ke selo se le sengwe le se se lwelwang ke merafe
ya gompieno". (p.50).

(When we seek the source of conflict which divided
the nations of Africa into races and smaller ethnic
groups in the past, we find that what they were
fighting for in the past is what nations are still
fighting for today).

In his discussion he mentions that there were secret passages between houses. People used the passages during adverse times. Even the children were taught how and when to use these

passages. One day a hyena took a small child from its mother whilst using one of these passages. Hence the proverb:

"Lefifi la ntshwarelele ngwana ke ale" (p.50).

(Do not trust darkness at the expense of the beloved one).

This incident became a moral lesson for the Batswana people and they stopped roaming about at night, especially after drinking. As Leseyane says:

"Tiragalo e, e ne ya nna thuto e kgolo mo bathong
gonne go tloga ka nako e ngwana o neng a latlhega
ka yona, batho ba ne ba tlelwa ke poifo ya go lala ba
ebela mo motseng ba setse bojwalwa morago" (p.54).

(This occurrence became a very good lesson to
people because since the time the child was
snatched, people became afraid of roaming about in
the village at night looking for liquor).

Leseyane warns the reader about the dangers that lurk in the night. The theme is didactic.

4.4 Tswana customs

Leseyane writes about the observed and accepted behaviour amongst the social group. The observation of culture and the way of doing things was passed from generation to generation. Under this theme he writes: "Bodiba jwa go ja ngwana wa mmago" (The pool that ate your mother's child should be avoided).

4.4.1 Bodiba jwa go ja ngwana mmago (The pool that ate your mother's child)

At the beginning of this essay Leseyane explains the word 'bodiba' (a pool in a river bed) and he also mentions that dangerous water animals live in this part of the river. He mentions animals like mythical snakes, crocodiles and rhinoceroses only at the beginning of the essay.

Leseyane discusses the ways, the social norms of the Batswana people, and their general behaviour towards these water animals. The reader wonders why a Motswana used to sacrifice his life fighting these animals (Leseyane mentions the mythical snake). There seems to be a need for one of these snakes to be killed to save the nation. This person would fight for his life. He would end up dead or killing the snake. It was a strenuous task but they used to do it because of their concern for their people:

"Tiro e, ga se e nnye gonne ga se gantsi motho ya a
tla tle a bolaye noga e, yona e se mo dire sepe. Fa
gongwe o tla a e bolaile mme le yona e mo kutlile

mo a se keng a tsaya sebaka se seleele a ise a swe"

(p.142).

(This is not an easy task because it was rare for the person to kill this snake without it harming him.

Sometimes he would kill it or it would strike him to such an extent that he would not live for a long time, but would die soon afterwards).

This fighting of dangerous water animals was generally accepted behaviour by Batswana people and it was taken as part of their custom. Leseayne maintains that it happened because of the love and the concern for the family and relatives. That was the spirit that prevailed in those times. That love could be described as:

"Lorato lo, ke sengwe sa diphiri tse dikgolo tse ene
modiri wa legodimo le lefatshe a saleng a di dira
kwa tshimologong, gore e tla nna tse di tla itsiweng ke
ene a le nosi" (p.144).

(This love is something which is a secret of the Creator of heaven and earth who made it in the beginning so that it be known to him alone).

The implication here is that what is created by God cannot be changed by man. Leseayne mentions this to the reader in order to change his mind and convince him. The main aim is

to show the reader how the people of the past used to coin proverbs from observations in their culture, their beliefs and nature. This can only be discovered if one looks for his aim with this proverb:

"Jaaka ke setse ke boletse ka ga boteng le bophara
ka kitso ya Motswana wa bogologolo mo lolemeng
lwa gaabo, le mo go tsa botshelo ba lefatshe ka
kakaretso, ke santse ke batla go itse gore a go teng
mongwe mo gareng ga letshweti la barutegi le
batlhalefi ba morafe wa Batswana, yo a ka direlang
loleme lwa ga mmaagwe se mogologolo o kileng a
se lo direla ka diane tse" (p.146).

(As I have indicated, the Motswana of the past
had a deep and broad knowledge of as far as his
language was concerned and in life in general. I still
want to know whether there is anyone among the
educated Tswana people who can do for their mother
tongue what the people of the past did with these
proverbs).

Leseyane is trying to revive the spirit of the old Motswana's ways in the new generation. This again shows that customs overlap into social life. Leseyane then directs a question to the reader:

"... ba kae ba losika lwa gagwe ba ba leng teng
 kajeno, ba ba tsamayang ka ditsela tse, le ba ba
 tshegeditseng ditaolo tse o neng a di ba tlogelela?"
 (p.146).

(... is there anyone who has relatives today, who are
 following these ways, and who are keeping to the
 instructions he left for them?).

Old people made rules and they expected children to follow them. For example, they coined proverbs and any person who takes the advice of these proverbs will be saved.

Leseyane wonders what makes people stubborn and not willing to follow instructions. It is because of this stubbornness that one finds oneself in trouble for not taking the advice embedded in the proverb. The essay now becomes didactic because it warns the stubborn people that if one cannot avoid dangerous places (which killed mother's child), one will get killed. In conclusion it becomes clear that people of the past were concerned about the lives of the younger generation.

4.5 Traditional beliefs

The Batswana, like other nations, have traditional beliefs. Leseyane touches on this in his essays. He speaks of divining bones, the son-in-law who is subjected to an endurance test

where he must collect bast for recognition, and the belief that elephant dung can be used to cure children, which may also mean that a person may come with new ideas from a journey he undertook. On this theme he wrote "Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo" (An important medicine can be fetched from far) and "Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola" (The great divining bone is carved).

4.5.1 Pheko ya gole e tsewa ka motlha wa tsholo (An important medicine can be fetched from far)

According to Leseiane it was Tswana tradition to bring medicines when people have gone to war. He discusses these medicines which can only be dug out when people have gone to war. If they have gone to a place where there are elephants, they may bring elephant dung.

They also have medicines for different things, for protecting corn, and for fortifying boys before they go to their traditional school. Leseiane maintains that these are good medicines. The only problem is that there are no longer traditional doctors who can use them correctly. Traditional medicines, if used properly by true traditional doctors, can be of value. Leseiane refers to the medicine charm (which is dug at war) to show the reader that things that are helpful to man come the hard way. The Motswana believed in 'pheko' (medicine charm used for protection or healing). They used these medicines to such an extent that if a boy did not behave well he would be given some of it to calm him down. Ingredients of the good medicine were dug out when people had gone out to war. That is why they have a proverb with a literal meaning:

"Pheko e e kgakala e tsewa ka sebaka sa
go ilwe letsholo" (p.87).

(The medicines that are from far, are fetched
during the time of a visit).

It becomes evident that Leseyane does not concentrate on one subject. In this essay the traditional belief intersects with social norms. Leseyane congratulates the Tswana youth of the past because they never used knives to kill each other. The bad habit of using knives came with foreigners. He claims that modern youth copied these ways from them.

Leseyane emphasises that proverbs, just like songs, are didactic. They serve to encourage and motivate the young generation. They can be used to remind the young generation of what their grandfathers or their heroes used to do. These songs can be sung in ceremonies. They can also be used to motivate the youths to attempt great things in their lives, as in:

"Mo ditirong tse go bokwa diganka le dinatla tsa
bogologolo, maikaelelo a ditirelo tse ke go tsosa mo
dipelong tsa ba losika lo lofsa, dikeletso tsa go
tshwana kampo go gaisa diganka le dinatla tsa
merafe ya bona, ya bogologolo ditirong tsa go
babalela le go aga bagabona" (p.81).

(In the ceremonies, brave men and experts of the
olden days are being praised, but the aim of these

ceremonies is to arouse the desires in the youth to do likewise or better than those brave men and experts of the nation who protected and built their culture).

Leseyane compares the proverb to songs. Songs have rhyme and rhythm and if one enjoys songs, one will enjoy proverbs too. They will become part of one's language:

"Diane tse, di nna jaaka letswai mo puong ya
gagwe, gone ka molodi wa tsona, di kgona go dira
gore mongwe le mongwe wa bareetsi ba gagwe a
nne tsebentlha" (p.80).

(These proverbs are like salt in one's language,
because their melody captures the listener's
attention).

Finally, the embedded message of the proverb is that one gets advice or new ideas from unexpected sources.

4.5.2 Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola (The great divining bone is carved)

The whole essay is about traditional practices. After reading this essay, the reader gets the impression that Leseyane was a traditional doctor. Besides discussing the number of divining

bones, he gives the function of the bones and concludes by telling the reader that traditionally the doctor communicates by means of interpreting bones.

The message Leseyane gives to the reader is that whatever one does, one has to do it very well. That is why the reader can mistake Leseyane for a doctor himself. By saying to the reader a great divining bone is carved, the human one makes itself, is clearly saying that one can be what one wants to be. He seems to have done a lot of research on this subject. Before he gives the reader the meaning of the proverb, he tells him how divining bones are made. He also mentions that a Mopedi traditional doctor has many divining bones while a Motswana one has only five which he knows very well. He mentions the first three: 'Moremogolo'; 'Laro'; and 'Thakadu'. But both traditional doctors have something in common: the first five bones in each doctor's repertoire have the same names. Leseyane discusses Batswana traditional doctors in the whole essay. He is trying to persuade the reader to work hard for whatever he wants to achieve.

4.5.3 Ka tlhagolela mookana, ya re o gola wa ntlhaba (I weeded a thorny tree, when it grew up it pricked me)

Every nation has its own tradition and customs. According to the Tswana tradition, a son-in-law has to obey certain laws and show respect to his in-laws. He will only be taken as a son-in-law after performing certain tasks for his in-laws. This message is clearly stated in:

"Ha mokgwenyane a ise a iteye kgofati a isa kwa

bogwe, ga a ise a wetse nngwe ya ditiro tse dikgolo

tse bagwegadi ba gagwe ba di lebeleletseng mo go ene" (p.158).

(When a son-in-law has not fetched bast (fibrous bark) and taken it to his in-laws, he has not done one of the most important tasks he is expected to do).

Leseyane tries to alert the reader to these traditional practices because they earned respect for a person such as a son-in-law. People should not feel ashamed to do what is expected of them. The meaning of this proverb is that if you tend a thorny tree, when it grows up it will prick you; which implies that if you bring up a child or you help someone when he is in trouble, the next thing he does is desert you. The son-in-law had to show his father-in-law respect (he could not drink liquor with or in front of his father-in-law; he could not enter his father-in-law's house without a jacket on).

The son-in-law must make sure that their daughter is well looked after. The son-in-law used to fetch the bark from the thorn tree and remove bast from it, then the bast was wrapped around the corpse in such a way that the corpse appeared to sit on its haunches. Today they use a shroud which is ready made.

Besides some tasks performed by the son-in-law, there are other natural phenomena which are part of people's life. Death is one of these things which cannot be avoided:

"Ke eng se lefatshe lotlhe le se tlotlang le gona le se boifang go gaisa loso lwa motho? Ke eng se lefatshe le ka se dirang go reka loso lwa motho ka sona?" (p.158).

(What is more respected and feared than death in the whole world? Is there anything that can be exchanged for death?).

Death is a natural phenomenon, and because it will always be there, Leseyane is advising the reader that he should prepare for it so that when it strikes he should be ready. Preparing and dressing the corpse is not new to the Motswana. There was nothing sophisticated for the Motswana to use when dressing a corpse but he tried to give the dead the best he could afford. This is expressed by the words:

"Ba ne ba baakanyetsa mmele wa moswi; ba o phuthe ka maatlametlo le kelotlhoko e kgolo jaaka ba ne ba ka direla mmele wa motho yo o tshelang, go o baya mo bobipong" (p.158-159).

(They prepared the corpse, wrapped it skilfully and carefully like they would have done for the body of a living person).

The son-in-law was important because it was his task to get the bast which was used to wrap the corpse. Leseyane takes great pains to remind the reader about some Tswana traditional

practices. His main problem is that the younger generation does not seem to appreciate what their fathers have done. This is expressed by the words:

"Kajeno ba kgaogana le batsadi ba bona ba ise ba
rutege sepe ka ga mekgwa le melao e e leng yona
matshego popego le a merafe ya segabona" (p.162).

(Today they depart from their parents without
knowing the customs which are the foundation of
the structure and solidarity of their nation).

Leseyane then gives the meaning of the proverb used in the topic. After raising a child, one cannot be certain whether he will become one's enemy or not. The implication is that one does not waste time when one brings children up because they are expected to look after one when one is old.

4.5.4 Tau e iphutha metlhala e le nosi (The lion narrows its tracks when it is moving alone)

When explaining the proverb Leseyane says that children will always put their parents in a difficult situation with their wrongful deeds and he also mentions that:

"Tsa tlhagalela basimane kwa madisong, tsa feletsa
kwa gae" (p.205).

(What happens to the boys at the grazing places
always affects the fathers at home).

When he develops the body of the essay Leseyane compares the life of man and animal. All the wrong deeds of man are punishable, unlike animals which act according to the law of the jungle. He also mentions what lifts the way of life of a human being to the top, to stand over other animals, because to them power, aggression and bravery are the law.

Leseyane advises the reader directly that he/she cannot live like animals.

There should be a difference between animals and people. Man should try to be above things that lower his dignity. This makes the essay didactic.

He continues the discussion and warns the reader that it is important to know what is happening around him and it is also important to know which animals are dangerous and which are not. He tells the reader that the lion is the most feared animal in the world: where its tracks are seen, it is as fearful as if the lion itself were seen. There is no person who can walk there

freely. Although the lion is fearful, and is always avoided, it can only be put into trouble by its young ones.

Besides the two subjects (animal behaviour and social norms), the essay is didactic. It is clear in the essay that Leseyane tells the reader that it is important to know what is happening around him. The embedded message in the essay is that you cannot judge a book by its cover.

4.6 Natural phenomena

It is easy to know the veld because of the markers, e.g. stones, but it is difficult to understand a person due to many modes of existence inherent in him. He is a psychic being, and controlled by emotions. Suffice it to mention that man is unpredictable because of his intellect. On this theme Leseyane has written "Motho ga a itsewe e se naga" (Man is not predictable as a veld). This theme includes social behaviour.

4.6.1 Motho ga a itsewe e se naga (Man is not as predictable as a veld)

The natural phenomenon Leseyane is talking about in this essay is a piece of veld which has stones, hills, rivers, roads as markers. These things become markers if you want to direct a person to this particular place. But he also compares man with the veld, and suggests it becomes difficult to know a person like it is possible to know the veld. A person is unpredictable. As he puts it:

"Re ne re bolela kwa tshimologong ya kgannyana e
gore ke boammarure jo bo tletseng gore motho ga a
ka ke a itsewe e se naga gonne ka nosi ga a kgone go
ikitse" (p.78).

(We stated at the beginning of this story that man is
not predictable like the veld because he does not
even know himself).

Leseyane is telling the reader that he should not take a human being for granted, a human being has vast and deep feelings. The reader is advised to be honest with himself and be honest with others. Leseyane is saying to the reader that because human beings cannot be trusted, be careful when you deal with them. The essay touches on social behaviour.

4.7 Conclusion

It seems Leseyane writes to educate the reader about something. His aim is also to motivate and influence the reader to have an interest in his language, to arouse interest in the reader's mind, to search for the meaning of proverbs that are used in Tswana. His main concern is the culture that is disappearing and he is trying to stop this from happening.

Although Leseyane's essays are characterised by verbosity and circumlocution, they are didactic. They are useful to the speaker of the language in the sense that they give answers to some of the questions concerning the origins of Tswana traditions, customs and proverbs.

Leseyane communicates with each reader in many ways in his essays. He educates, satirises and reprimands the reader, but always remembers to give him both the literal and figurative meanings of proverbs. In the literal meaning he reflects on empirical observations of phenomena and animal behaviour. In the figurative meaning he seeks to show similarities and contrast, and exploits these to focus the reader's mind on the positive traits to follow or the undesirable negative traits. After reading Leseyane's essays, the reader will never regret

doing so because he/she will encounter more than forty proverbs and most of them are explained in the discussion. This empowers the reader as far as knowledge of proverbs is concerned. One also gets the correct meaning of the proverbs and the given example, although sometimes it seems as if the writer does not know when to stop explaining. This leads to long essays and the writer seems to become garrulous. The meaning of "Tshwenyana e e bowa bontlha" (A young baboon with a sharp fur, evades danger), as one of the examples, is given in one of the essays, which is the inner feeling but not the wrong deeds of the young people. The difference is clearly distinguished.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In discussing Leseyane's essays it becomes evident that there is something that compelled him to write these essays which are didactic and which have a strong moral dimension.

Leseyane is repeatedly saying it is his wish to see or hear the young generation speak Setswana correctly. He gives several examples in which he shows that the modern speaker of the language is not mindful of errors. He satirises any person who does not care for his or her language. The fact that he decided to use proverbs as topics of the fourteen essays he wrote, shows that he also wants to impart the knowledge he has about these proverbs, and he also wants to teach the young generation the proverbs. That is why he takes the trouble to give them so many proverbs in his book. His essays help to motivate and influence the reader to have an interest in his own language. Leseyane discusses proverbs in his book; he also shares some experiences he had and he is continually speaking about the Tswana culture which is disappearing slowly.

Leseyane's essays are longwinded but educative, they are characterised by simple language which makes it easy for everybody to read them. They also adhere to the general requirements for the essays. They are persuasive, they portray good morals. The essayist (Leseyane) speaks directly to the reader.

Leseyane gives the reader the cultural background of the life of the Batswana people. He wants it to be preserved and be kept for the future generations.

Leseyane writes about many things he learned from people of the past and he persuades the reader to learn about them and there is no way that the reader can ignore his advice.

5.2 Point of view of the candidate

When one looks at the history of Tswana books it becomes clear that there is very little published on the essay genre. In Setswana this is the only volume of essays. One cannot say that Mekgwa le melao ya Batswana by I. Schapera is an essay book because it contains a number of discourses on different customs and rites of different Tswana tribes which are regarded as documentary essays.

The writing of Setswana essays has been neglected. This volume, Letlhaku le legologolo, was written in 1963, and it is still the only volume. Batswana people were very fortunate in that Setswana was one of the earliest of the Southern African vernaculars to be

developed into a literary language, when the first Christian missionaries like Robert Moffat produced scriptural writings and translations in the language.

The most important among these are the Holy Bible and Bunyana's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1848). Yet today, more than a century after this foundation was laid for a written literature, Setswana still has one essay book. Most of the other vernacular literatures, some of which are considerably younger, are doing well as far as this genre is concerned.

5.3 Concluding remarks

Tswana essays are not well represented as far as this genre is concerned. Leseyane should be saluted for being a pioneer in this field.

This work has been written to encourage Tswana authors to write more essays. All the essays appearing in this volume are didactic. There is a glaring lack of variety in kind and theme: there is a dearth of descriptive, narrative, dramatic, and meditative essays, and philosophical or argumentative essays should be written to encourage more people to write, because such essays broaden the mind of the reader and make him think differently.

Because Leseyane wrote his essays using proverbs as topics, his essays are to a large extent culture-orientated. Although he explains the proverbs in the essays, some of them are difficult for the reader to interpret. It would be interesting to see an essay volume with more flexible day-to-day subjects, which touch on the more complex urban milieu.

6. APPENDIX

Leseiane Photo Phillip, also known as Philemon, was born on the 19th June 1896 in Bierkraal, in the district of Pilanesburg. His nickname was Mmuasekgowa (Speaker of the white man's language). He was married to Boikanyo Christina Moloto. They had two children, a son, Lesele David and a daughter, Shiela Ntshadi. He lived during the kingship of chief Kalafi Sedumedi. He was a member of the Anglican Church.

Philemon grew up under his parent's care in Letlhakeng, a village between Moruleng and Silkaatskop. He was committed to the people of his society and adhered to the customs of his tradition. The elders who he listened to are the ones who showed him the didactic life of the Tswana people and gave him the knowledge of the meaning and origin of the proverbs.

He studied primary education at Letlhakeng and completed an Education Diploma at Pietersburg in 1918. After completing his diploma he taught at the following districts: Kagiso High School in Pietersburg district, Ramolelo Primary School in Rustenburg district and Tlhakong Primary School in Mabieskraal.

After teaching for a number of years he was promoted to a principalship in 1930 at a primary school. The schools in Mabieskraal united in 1931, he was then appointed principal. All the standard six children attended school at Mabieskraal.

In 1934 a high school was built under Philemon's leadership. The children participated in the building of the school by making bricks.

In 1937 a standard seven class was introduced and due to his motivation and initiative, a community hall was built in 1938. In 1944 a high school was erected by the community.

He wrote the following books:

Reading book for standard five and six, published in 1935.

Reading book for standard four, published in 1941.

Reading book for standard three, published in 1944.

Reading book for standard two, published in 1942.

Reading book for standard one, published in 1951.

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