
Capturing Cultural Glossaries: Case-study I*

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Abstract: This article is a presentation of a brief cultural glossary of Northern Sotho cooking terms. The glossary is mainly composed of names for utensils and ingredients, and action words for the processes involved in the preparation of cultural dishes. It also contains names of dishes tied to some idiomatic expressions in a way eliciting cultural experiences that can lead to an understanding of indigenous knowledge systems. The article seeks to explore ways of capturing cultural glossaries to feed into the national dictionary corpora by using a case-study approach to investigate the processes that led to the generation of this specific school-based project. A number of issues that surfaced in this project, can possibly serve as models for the collection of authentic glossaries that can support dictionary making in African languages.

Keywords: CULTURAL GLOSSARY, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, CULTURAL TERMINOLOGY, CORPUS, AUTHENTIC GLOSSARY, CONTEXTUALISATION, MARGINALIZED LANGUAGES, OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION, PERFORMANCE INDICATOR, ASSESSMENT CRITERIA, RANGE STATEMENT, TRADITIONAL DISHES, LANGUAGE VALORISATION, SIMULTANEOUS FEEDBACK, COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH, STRUCTURAL APPROACH, METONYMY

Opsomming: Die totstandbrenging van kulturele woordversamelings: Gevallestudie I. Hierdie artikel is 'n aanbieding van 'n kort kulturele woordversameling van Noord-Sothokookterme. Die woordversameling bestaan hoofsaaklik uit die name van gereedskap en bestanddele, en handelingswoorde vir die prosesse betrokke by die voorbereiding van kulturele geregte. Dit bevat ook name van geregte wat verbind is met sekere idiomatiese uitdrukkings wat op 'n manier kulturele ervarings oproep wat kan lei tot die verstaan van inheemse kennisstelsels. Die artikel probeer om maniere te ondersoek waarop kulturele woordversamelings in die nasionale woordeboekkorpusse ingevoer kan word deur 'n gevallestudie benadering te volg om die prosesse te ondersoek wat tot die ontwikkeling van hierdie spesifieke skoolgebaseerde projek gelei het. 'n Aantal resultate wat uit hierdie projek voortgekom het, kan moontlik as modelle dien vir die tot-

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standbrenging van oorspronklike woordversamelings wat woordeboekskopping in die Afrikatale kan ondersteun.

Sleutelwoorde: KULTURELE WOORDVERSAMELING, INHEEMSE KENNISSTELSELS, KULTURELE TERMINOLOGIE, KORPUS, OORSPRONKLIKE WOORDVERSAMELING, KONTEKSTUALISERING, GEMARGINALISEERDE TALE, UITKOMSGEBASEERDE ONDERWYS, PRESTASIEAANDUIDER, WAARDEBEPALINGSKRITERIA, RANGSTELLING, TRADISIONELE GEREGTE, TAALSTABILISERING, GELYKTYDIGE TERUGVOER, KOMMUNIKATIEWE BENADERING, STRUKTURELE BENADERING, METONIMIE

Background

A classroom-based project within an outcomes-based education (OBE) approach is the setting for the work reported here. The considered strength of this project is the creation and use of a meaningful context for the collection of a valuable glossary. The project has demonstrated that contextualisation can be used as a good organising tool for the collection of other glossaries. The school setting, within which the project was carried out, provides a fertile ground for an activity of this nature. The environment (of the school) is dominated by rural settlements, which are even more relevant and useful as authentic sources for cultural embodiments.

Of particular interest to researchers is the fact that projects of this nature have the potential to capture and record cultural words that would otherwise be lost. This task seeks also to investigate how glossaries like these can help to realise and implement innovative methodologies and concepts such as De Schryver and Prinsloo's (2000: 1) proposal of 'simultaneous feedback' to support lexicographic work. As the project had a different target, the compiling of a glossary was a 'secondary' and not 'primary' product thereof. It is this distinctive feature (of being a 'secondary' product), whose further implications have to be investigated.

The case-study approach is found to be more suitable to a project like this as lessons learnt while compiling this brief glossary, will be more clearly spelt out. It is the exploration of these lessons that will eventually be used to propose a possible and authentic model for collecting other glossaries of this nature.

Outcomes-based Education Environment

The rationale behind the project is based on the argument that it will not be easy for the formerly marginalized languages to capture cultural terminology in a corpus built mainly from written texts and frequency lists. It is therefore argued that such an approach to corpus building has the potential of creating gaps in a way that may necessarily exclude cultural terms. The provision of a model for the collection of cultural words and the initiation of similar projects

reported here will address these gaps.

There have been great changes in the education system of the country in recent years. The teaching of Northern Sotho was also affected as the Department of Education brought about changes that lead to the teaching and learning of languages moving away from the structural to the communicative approach, especially for grade 10-12 learners. The first examination within this approach had been written at the end of 2002. In the communicative language-teaching approach the 'greatest challenge in the profession is to move significantly beyond the teaching of rules, patterns, definitions, and other knowledge "about" language to the point that we are teaching our students to communicate genuinely, spontaneously, and meaningfully' (Brown 1994). The adoption of this kind of approach in language teaching, it is believed, will help implement outcomes-based education (OBE).

What all this means for educators is that in order to be successful you, together with your learners, have to take full responsibility for the careful planning and management of your classroom instruction and assessment of learning. Within this OBE approach, the focus is on the final result of each learning process. According to Van der Horst and McDonald (1997), learners must take an active part in learning. Their critical thinking should be developed together with their reasoning and reflection. Learning should be relevant and connected to real life. In the communicative approach to language teaching, learners are therefore encouraged to work together for example in group discussions and projects.

In the structural approach, a learner would be given an idiom like 'legotlo le lefa ka setopo' (an eye for an eye). Questions asked would include:

- What is the meaning of the idiom?
- Construct a sentence using the idiom to show that you understand it.

This type of question has no direct reference to the real life situations of the learner. In the communicative approach, questions should be carefully designed to be meaningful. Learners can be asked to:

- Demonstrate the real meaning of the idiom by contextualising it through storytelling;
- Write a paragraph about their own attitude towards the idiom;
- Relate the idiom to topical issues such as the country's constitution and related global debates;
- Give their viewpoint from their religious background;
- Show a connection towards real life and provide short case-studies — when do people use the idiom?; under what circumstances is the idiom relevant?

The type of questions given in the communicative approach must probe the mind of the learner into more thinking. In order to respond to such questions, the learner has to search for experiences in real life. It is not just the content (as in the wording of the idiom and the terminology used) that is of interest in a learning environment like this, but attitudes and values are also to be taken into consideration.

It is within such a teaching and learning environment that the project with which this article deals, was developed. This article reports on what was initiated as a response to the OBE approach within the teaching of Northern Sotho as a language. The goal of the educator in the broadest sense was to teach semantics. In order to contextualise the content and make it meaningful, identifying various Northern Sotho traditional dishes was used as a starting point. In the structural approach, learners would be expected to name the dishes, or be provided with descriptions of a dish so that the learner can provide the suitable name (the match column A to B type of questions). A demonstration of this kind is given in the following example:

Column A (Description of the dish)	Column B (Name of the dish)
Meetsana ao re šebago ka wona go tšwa nameng yeo e apeilwego (The watery substance coming from cooked meat and used as a relish)	mothotho/moro (gravy)

Within the OBE approach, outcomes as outlined in the policy document from the Department of Education (1997) have to be achieved. For this, Specific Outcome 3 (SO/3) that states learners are to (be made to) respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values, was used. The performance indicator will be that learners uncover important aspects of style and move towards the ability to discern and describe more subtle features of the language. The assessment criteria will therefore focus on the learner's development of a vocabulary to support impressions. In the range statement, emphasis will be on knowledge, i.e. something related to history, social conditions, human experiences, etc.

For the project described here, learners were divided into groups to prepare various traditional dishes of their choice. All the preparations were done in school. A period during every day of a week was given to complete the project. The group monitored the process of preparation, and its stages were recorded on a daily basis. Some of the learners reported at school as early as 5 a.m. to work on their dishes. It was an experience for both learners and educators to go through this process for a week. There was a lot of excitement, which kept the motivation high. Some of the dishes like 'sekome' were equally new to some of the learners as to some of the educators. With the help of this dish, the following Northern Sotho idiom made more sense to many in the school: 'Šiki-

ša dira le molapo, mphago wa dira ke meetse.' (The literal translation is that soldiers were always to walk next to a stream/river because they use water as their provision for a march.) 'Sekome' was prepared as a special provision for soldiers during war. It is very light to carry and after taking a small amount one will drink a lot of water and then one's hunger is satisfied for a longish period. It can also be used as a snack.

Through this project, a useful glossary of traditional dishes was compiled. Working with high-school learners made this endeavour, which turned into a research project, possible. There was no need for employing field-workers to collect the words. The learners had to gather information from members of their own community and this gave the project such a high level of authenticity. It is within this framework that this article argues for more projects of this nature to collect the wealth of information that would otherwise be lost. The excitement this exercise brought to the learning of the language was evident in the level of motivation that impelled the project. Learners experienced it as an affirmative process to contribute to a knowledge of their language beyond the boundaries of their textbooks and the experience of their teachers.

There are many benefits involved in encouraging and nurturing this type of work which has the potential for research into indigenous knowledge systems. The particular language will enjoy a much-desired growth. Learners are motivated, acquiring a lot of knowledge about a certain topic. With the necessary funding and initiative, more projects can be undertaken and topics such as traditional dress, ceremonies, dances and medicines can be researched in a more focused way to capture cultural glossaries within an authentic environment.

Language Valorisation

A very unique opportunity for the valorization not only of Northern Sotho, but also of other African languages is the transfer of traditional, almost archaic terminology to much-needed names for modern innovations, and as such contributing to terminology work necessary for these languages. This involves the process of metonymy (Carstens 1999). It has already been used in many languages, Northern Sotho included, for language expansion. One such example of the transfer of traditional terminology to modern innovations is 'dish', the concave reflector used especially for radar and radio telescopes. Instead of creating a new term, the word 'dish' has been used metonymically.

In Northern Sotho several terms from traditional initiation processes (as practised in the initiation school) have been applied in this metonymic way. When Western type of schooling was introduced into the Northern Sotho environment, such terms as 'mphato' (which came to mean 'standard' as in standard one, two, etc.) were transferred from their traditional meanings to the new ways of education. The same applies to 'go aloga' or 'dialoga', which refer to graduation or graduates.

Another special feature of metonymy is its potential to reveal the traditional and cultural circumstances under which a proverb or idiom was formulated. Together with this, the etymologies of words and their variations can be better understood.

There is a great variety of cultural terminologies still to be uncovered through processes such as those outlined above. A possible application of these terminologies lies in the expansion of the African languages. The use of a process like metonymy in word creation is undoubtedly preferable to the artificial coining of words.

Glossary

What follows is the presentation of a glossary of traditional dishes, and the utensils involved and processes used in their preparation. It is to be hoped that the terminology will be introduced into the corpora of national dictionaries where it can be given proper lexicographic treatment. The glossary is presented here in a report-based manner, mainly from the recipes prepared in the school project, together with further information from informants. The glossary has not been given any specific lexicographic treatment.

Supplementary work was done to expand the glossary, which involved consulting informants who were able to provide the information needed, although the focus of inquiry was effectuated by the initial ideas and terms originating from the school project.

Bjala bja Sesotho (traditional African beer)

One of the idiomatic expressions associated with traditional beer is 'go wela ka nkgong', which can be translated as 'getting drunk'. In a more literal sense, it also means 'falling into the (traditional) beer container'.

The process of preparing African beer has the following terminology:

Mmela is **mabele** (an African cereal food) that is not smoothly ground; it has to be rough. When the mmela is rough, it is called **gaila**. When the mmela is smoothly ground, it is called **mathume**, and is normally used to make porridge.

Sekhukhu is a mixture of mmela and boiling water.

Riteletša is to mix the mmela and the sekhukhu.

This mixture has to be left for 24 hours in summer or 48 hours in winter for fermentation. After this period has elapsed, the mixture is called **mohlogotse**. This is when fermentation is in process and the water separates from the mmela. The water has foam, which is known as **lehulo**.

After the fermentation process, the water is removed and boiled separately. The fermented mohlogotse left behind is now known as **dintshe** or **pelle**.

When the water has boiled, dintshe or pelle is added and cooked. Once

this has cooked, it is called **lešeleba** or **magebelela**. Lešeleba or magebelela is left to stand for a day and thereafter more mmela is added and the container is covered with a **seroto**.

Moroko, an extract that is part of the final process of this beer-making procedure, is a reusable product. It will be dried, ground and mixed with corn cereal to make a different type of porridge. Sometimes this extract will be cooked whilst it is still watery, before it dries, and it will be eaten with salt or sugar as another type of porridge. The cooking is referred to as **go šokwa**.

Other types of beer

- (a) **morula** — beer made from the juice of the morula fruit
- (b) **makgere** — beer made from prickly pears

Different types of porridge and related dishes

Porridge was the staple food. There were variants of this dish as indicated in the various terminologies used.

- (a) **bogobe bja mabele** — porridge made from sorghum cereal
- (b) **kgodu** — porridge made from a cooked melon-like fruit called **lerotse** mixed with mealie meal
- (c) **lewa** — a dish made from sorghum grain
- (d) **lehlahlara** — a type of lewa, prepared from mabele
- (e) **lemopa** — a type of lewa made from **dithodi** (Chinese beans)
- (f) **semotwane/sekgotho** — a dish made from traditional beans and thickened (**loišwa**) with maize meal

The less tasty version of porridge was always accompanied by another dish. Besides meat, it would be eaten with some type of **morogo** or other. Morogo is a traditional vegetable.

Different types of morogo

- (a) **leroto** — leaves of a small plant which bears small white flowers when mature, with a bitter taste when cooked
- (b) **lehlanye** — a small plant with pointed needle-like leaves with a bitter taste
- (c) **monawa** — leaves of the bean plant
- (d) **mphodi** — leaves of the pumpkin plant
- (e) **monyaku** — leaves of a small plant which bears a hairy fruit that looks like a smaller version (and one that is not edible) of a melon fruit

- (f) **motšhatšha** — leaves of a melon plant with a bitter taste when cooked
- (g) **mothagaraga** — leaves of a small plant that produces oval-shaped fruit and usually grows on harvested fields
- (h) **theepe** — leaves of a small plant that are two-toned, with a reddish colour underneath, and slimy when cooked

Dithotse, pumpkin and watermelon pips that are normally fried without fat (and salt added), were also used as **sešebo**, something to eat together with porridge. These were dried, and could be kept for a considerable time. **Dithuthupe**, popcorn, was a common seasonal snack. **Mangangale** was another type of a dish made from **marotse** (pumpkins). These melon-like fruits will be sliced (a **hlabelwa**) and dried, then cooked and eaten separately as a single dish.

Wild fruit that was part of the traditional diet

- (a) **dithetlwa** — soft wild berries
- (b) **mabilo** — wild brownish fruit when fully ripe
- (c) **ditoro** — prickly pears
- (d) **mabupudu** — wild dates
- (e) **mahlatswa** — wild litchi
- (f) **matšhidi / ditšhidi** — wild fruit that is yellowish when fully ripe, with a bitter-sweet taste
- (g) **dinee** — wild mulberries
- (h) **ditlhakola** — big wild berries
- (i) **marula** — marula
- (j) **magaba** — a wild tuber that has a lot of water
- (k) **dikgwane** — hard wild berries
- (l) **mago** — figs

Other special dishes

Bokoma was a special dish for those who took long journeys. It was made of ground dried nuts. This came in handy and did not need any preservation. **Sekome** is a variation of this dish that was given to soldiers who spent a long while away from home with no access to fresh food. It consists of groundnuts, maize, sorghum and salt. These ingredients are fried without any fat, ground and mixed.

Mageu is a drink made of cooked mealie-meal porridge mixed with water and sugar, left for a week or so to ferment.

Traditional utensils

- (a) **pitša** — a three-legged cooking pot, usually black in colour
- (b) **moruswi / thiswane** — a utensil for keeping relish
- (c) **sethebe** — a utensil for keeping porridge
- (d) **sego** — a calabash used for drinking water and for serving porridge
- (e) **seroto** — a lid made from cane
- (f) **leselo** — a sieve made from grass
- (g) **mogopo** — a wooden dish used for serving porridge
- (h) **legopo** — a wooden dish, usually small in size, used for serving relish
- (i) **mokgopu** — a calabash used for drinking traditional beer
- (j) **mothotwana** — a small dish used for mealie meal
- (k) **tšhelwana** — a small lid used for covering such substances as mageu
- (l) **tšhakga** — a sheet of galvanised iron used to make popcorn without adding any fat
- (m) **nkgo** — a clay pot used mainly for the storage of traditional beer

Cleaning materials

- (a) **lešekešedi** — river-sand that is used to wash utensils
- (b) **motaga** — white soil usually found at river-banks and used for polishing washed utensils
- (b) **mogohlo** — white gravel soil used for cleaning utensils

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