



## An Analytic Study of three Rhetorical Devices: Metaphor, Simile and Antithesis in Siswati Proverbs

Jozi Joseph Thwala, Nandi Cedrol Mthethwa, and Nkosinathi Macdonald Lusenga

Jozi.Thwala@univen.ac.za; Lelonyembe12@gmail.com; lusenga3@gmail.com

M.E.R Mathivha Centre for African Languages, Arts and Culture, School of Human and Social Sciences,  
University of Venda, South Africa

**Abstract.** The objectives of this study are to give broader knowledge and fundamental truth of Siswati proverbs that are classified according to selected figures of speech, namely: metaphor, simile, and antithesis. They further establish their structures and functions in rhetoric discourse. Proverbs arise from a conversational context and are of considerable benefit to those who use them often. Their regular usage in society with a deeper understanding, instill morals in people and are employed for educational purposes. They are relevant in the modern world if integrated into people's everyday lives to achieve a better life to enrich their culture and social relations. Proverbs are meeting these challenges because of their authoritarian and persuasive nature. In Siswati language, a proverb is called *saga* in singular form and *taga* in plural form. Proverbs are complete, simple, complex or compound sentences that comprise all syntactic modalities. They are, however, rigid in structural formation but flexible in interpretive and applied dimensions. The moral and educative ideals and ideas are embedded in proverbs as they mirror the community pursuits in a broader manner. They cover various themes, structural forms, and figurative language. They reflect cultural and social life in the broader sense. The rhetoric approach is adopted for explicit exploration and interpretation.

**Keywords:** *Character disposition, Enriching content, Life's determinants, Rhetorical approach, Syntactic modalities.*

### 1. Introduction

Imagery contributes to the structure of meaning of the proverbs. Thus, it may imaginatively expand its implicit and explicit meaning. Motives can be expressed through imagery, for comparisons through metaphor, simile, and antithesis. Functions of imagery entail increasing poetic concentration; expression of feelings; strengthening consistency; elaboration of detail, which exhibits an underlying field of thought and implications within the discourse. According to Heese and Lawton (1978, p. 62), imagery is defined as follows:

...a reference to or a description of something concrete by means of which the writer wishes to tell you something else. Concrete in this sense means that it can be perceived by one or more senses. The something else Amy is abstract, or it may be concrete too.

The above – quoted scholars proceed to distinguish between the different type of descriptive imagery such as simile, personification, metaphor, and symbol. Wellek and Warren (1963, p. 191) postulate that:

Imagery appeals to the senses, but this does not mean that it calls forth only visual response that the reader 'sees' what the image is referring to, imagery also evokes a response to the sense of smell, of heat and movement.

This study follows the definition of Heese and Lawton (1978) and discusses the different types of imagery under the headings simile, metaphor, personification, and symbolism. Explaining the concept 'imagery', Abrams (1981, pp.78 – 79) views it as follows:

Imagery is used to signify the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other work of literature whether by literal description, by allusion, or in the analogous (the vehicle) used in its similes and metaphor...Also imagery includes auditory, tactile, thermal, olfactory, gustatory, or kinaesthetic as well as visual qualities.

Siswati is a language that is extremely rich in folk expressions called proverbs, which are used in everyday speech in various situations. Proverbs are condensed, and standardized statements intended to comment on different situations, which are commonly accepted values of the society. They form a significant part of oral tradition in Swazi culture because they reflect intelligence and descent of ancestors. Proverbs are accepted as expressions of teaching and basic learning (Derbel & Al-Mohammadi, 2015). Of all forms of oral tradition, proverbs are the most basic, fundamental and resourceful. They could be regarded as an essence of Swazi culture since they comprise the philosophy of the Swazi. The images contained in the proverbs of the Swazi people reveal norms and values of the nation. Most proverbs have the religious indication as they speak about God, ancestors, and creation. They are an appropriate tool for imparting religious beliefs and values of the nation. Proverbs are oral and rhetorical expressions of culture. The meaning of proverbs reflects a persuasive strategy of looking at people's lives. They are not only taken as life directives but the impact on the way people live, as well as understanding their social structures. In the light of the foregoing this discourse purports to present a theory that supports proverbs and gives evidence of their being rhetorical models that reflect life's realities in an attempt to strengthen and reinforce a persuasive voice. Proverbs employ the persuasive voice to exploit human-animal relationships, by representing ideal life sets of animals that could be employed towards the enhancement of human life. The theoretical underpinnings of the proverbs explain language as a powerful tool that greatly impacts on human lives. It is asserted that proverbs are beyond being rhetorical metaphors but are life's determinants.

While Siswati proverbs' researchers have analyzed the function of proverbs, relatively little attention has been paid to the classification. This work indicates that proverbs can be employed as an effective communication strategy. They are the genius of cultures and an encapsulation of the whole. They identify and dignify a culture, bringing life into wisdom and wisdom into life. The potential value of proverbs in life is recognised in African societies. They boost the attitudes towards proverbs given the cultural, social and economic grading conditions in most African communities.

## 2. Research methodology

Babbie and Mouton (2005, p. 64) define research methodology as the systems of implementing a research plan and collection of data. It refers to the plan and system of methods used in a field to verify a reliable perception, events, and process at many different levels. The textual and rhetorical approaches are employed to collect and select the relevant proverbs. All collected proverbs are classified under the appropriate rhetorical devices. Each proverb is translated into English and interpreted according to its meaning and function in society. The scholars that became the main sources of proverbs are Makhanya (2005), Thwala (2006) and Mthethwa (2014).

There are many figures of speech in Siswati language that are used for comparison, differentiating and association. For this study on Siswati proverbs, only three rhetorical devices namely: metaphor, simile, and antithesis are selected because of their implicit and explicit characteristics. They create a vivid impression by setting up comparison and contrast between dissimilar things.

### **Metaphor**

Grace (1965, p.248) defines a metaphor as follows:

*A figure of speech in which a term is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance.*

From the above definition, it is clear that a resemblance between objects and person is merely suggested but is, not literally applicable to the subjects. If one says that a hero is a lion, one is identifying the hero with the lion, but the resemblance is suggested and not literal. Abrams (1981, p. 63) asserts this about the figure of speech:

*In a metaphor, a word that in standard usage denotes one kind of thing, quality, or action is applied to another, in the form of an identity instead of comparison.*

Abrams concurred with Grace in the sense that the usage denotes qualities and potentialities, which are applicable to one another. Heese and Lawton (1978, p. 63) express metaphor as a comparison that is made in an implicit manner. This implicitness distinguishes it from the simile. A metaphor is an implicit comparison that shows the relationship between two things in order to make the explanation clearer and livelier. In fact, it works like a simile except that it does not make use of these words "like" or "as" as prescriptive lexicons. The selected Siswati proverbs examples are the following:

*Licili lidliwa ngulamanye emacili* (A craft is consumed by other crafty people). A crafty individual uses cunning to outwit other people. He or she knows the tricks of catching other tricksters. *Emacili akalali endlini yinye*. (Crafty people do not share the same house). Crafty individuals live by outwitting others. They choose those that will be easily victimised. The cunning person cannot feel happy in each other's company because they share craftiness. They have a wide knowledge of each other. A crafty person will not commission another crafty person to do his or her errands for fear. Most cunning individuals tend to be persuasive, oratory and emotionally appealing to accomplish their goals. *Akunkhani liselesele libange emsamo*. (What obstinacy, it is the frog going to the back of the hut). The frog is a stubborn animal. If it enters a house and one tries to take it out by pushing it with a stick, it repeatedly goes back. The expression is used to depict an extremely headstrong who is ill-mannered, disrespectful and discourteous. *Umlomo lishoba lekutiphungela* (The mouth is a tail to drive off the flies). Animals with long tails like cattle and horses use their tails to drive off the flies, which settle on their bodies. The significance of a mouth in any dialogue discourse is indisputable. Its function is to narrate, explain, describe and evaluate facts and opinions, denotative and connotative aspects as well as objective and subjective phenomena. *Licala ngumphikwa* (A case is always denied). When a person had committed a wrong, the first thought that comes to him or her is to defend as much as possible. Therefore, he or she will deny all knowledge of the crime, until by cross-questioning is made to confess. *Umlomo sihlangu setivikela* (The mouth is the shield to safeguard). The mouth is given the characteristics of the shield because of protection, support, vindication, and justification. It is regarded as a tool to demean and uplift, to humiliate and ennoble the characters.

In conclusion, on metaphor, it is evident that the following objects, concepts, animals or things: *sihlangu* (shield), *licala* (case), *lishoba* (tail), *liselesele* (frog) and *licili* (crafty person) as *tisetjentiswa* (vehicles) leading for the connotative meaning called *tinshokutsingco* (tenors). The metaphor is an implicit and indirect equation without the use of the words 'like' or 'as'. It can also be used to make an abstract thought more real and concrete. In order to understand why or how a metaphor is effective, we need to establish a connection between the different things or entities that are linked. It is regarded as the most important figure of speech used by rhetoric's for comparisons. It comprises two elements called tenor and vehicle. The metaphor's purpose is to disclose a special characteristic of the less – perfectly understood component namely, the tenor by attributing and ascribing to it a characteristic of the better – known one, the vehicle.

### **Simile**

Various scholars have explicitly defined simile. Shipley (1970, p.304) defines a simile as follows:

*The comparison of two things of different categories. From this definition, aspects of a simile can be singled out as being the tenor and the vehicle.*

Scott (1967, p. 268) defined a simile according to the function that it performs:

*Simile (Latin Similis) like. A simile makes an imaginative comparison for purpose of explanation, allusion, or ornament, introduced by a word such as like, as or such. It can be simple, briefly expressed or long and sustained, known as the epic simile.*

In his definition, Fowler (1973, p.222) expresses the following:

*....Simile is a comparison, discursive, tentative, the 'like' or 'as'... as suggests from the viewpoint of reason, separateness of the compared items. From the characteristics of a simile, it is evident that the objects or person compared must be comparable.*

In Siswati, this comparison is introduced by these formatives: *-njenga-*; *-nganga-*; and *sa. Ukhwela etikwendlu njengenja* (He or she climbs on top of the hut like a dog). The proverb refers to an ill-mannered person. It depicts moral degeneracy. It is usually used to refer to a young person who is disrespectful. That unseemly behavior is opposed to be gracious, courteous and polite. *Wamlahlisa kwenyoka yenyatsi* (He or she threw him away like the gall bladder of the buffalo) is not used for any purpose; therefore, if it is thrown away there is no regret. The expression means that one has been abandoned. *Usele phansi njengemafinyila*. (He or she has remained down like mucus.) Previously people had a tendency of not using handkerchiefs to clean their nostrils. They blew the mucus onto the ground and remained discarded. The saying is used of a person who has lost favour from the king or when a man or woman who is rejected by his or her lover. *Unonela ngekhatshi njengandlazi* (He or she is fat internally like the mouse-bird). The reference made to it depict that the mouse-bird is a bird, which its outward appearance show it to be lean, while it is fat. This describes a person who does not show his or her color. *Uluma aphotisa njengeligundwane* (He or she bites and soothes like a mouse). It is alleged that mice do bite people especially at night. One is never aware that a mouse is biting him or her it soothes as it bites. A person doing harm to another deceives him by soft-spoken words and expression to ally his fears. The behavior of pretence, deception, and falsehood becomes evident.

*Uyokomela elutsini njengentsetse* (You will get dry on a stick like a grasshopper). A grasshopper is found spitted on a thorn or a sharp stick. Sometimes that is done by the butcherbird. A grasshopper is denied food and is subjected to slow death. This is a threat that a person will starve if he or she is wasteful. *Ufinya ngeluwimi njengenkomo*. (He or she cleans his or her nostrils with the tongue like a beast) A beast uses a tongue to clean its nostrils. It is referred to a poverty-stricken person, which is in great want, who lacks even a rag to clean his or her nose with. Poverty seems to affect his or her mind as well, so that he or she sees nothing wrong in eating mucus. *Umuka ngendle njengemabele* (He goes away in the field like corn). Corn gives trouble to those who plant it, because when the grains are, ripen, birds must be kept away from the field. A person, who simply leaves others without pleasant words of saying goodbye, is likened to the corns. *Ungena ngelinceba njengemphetfu* (He or she comes in through the wound like worms). If you have a bad wound, which is not looked after well, there is likelihood that worms will develop. The worms take advantages of the unfortunate circumstances of a person. The saying is used when someone takes advantages of the situation and pursues his or her agenda. *Udla asulela phansi njengenkukhu* (He or she eats wiping his or her mouth like a fowl). The eating habit of a fowl is that it cleans its mouth on the ground from time to time. This is prevalent when it eats something that sticks to its beak. The action of wiping the mouth when eating is associated with being satisfied and completion of eating process. Thus, some actions of individuals give that impressive of pretence, artifice, and deceit. *Uhambela nganhlanye njengelilanga* (He walks sideways like the winter sun). In winter, the sun moves more towards the side in the sky. The saying describes a person who adopts new paths in order to avoid people. The sun assumes different positions in relation to the earth during certain season of the year. This movement of the sun is due to the revolution of the earth around the sun. In winter, the sun is farther away from certain places of the earth and in summer is nearer. The sun rises and moves overhead in summer while in winter it moves more laterally in the sky. The observation of the sun is looked at in relation to the behaviour of an individual.

In conclusion, about simile, it is evident that comparisons of animate or inanimate in direct or indirect ways play a significant role. It draws on an explicit comparison between two elements of dissimilar categories. The two elements comprise the vehicle that qualifies a tenor.

### **Antithesis**

Hendry (1998, p. 173) postulates that antithesis is the following:

*The balance of opposing thoughts, placed in opposition to each other to emphasise the contrast.*

Scheffler (2015, p. 164) advocates that antithesis is the following:

*Words or ideas that contrast or are opposite in meaning and are expressed in a single, balanced sentence. It is used to sharpen contrasting ideas.*

Tucker and Young (2013, p. 170) contend that:

*Antithesis is an apparent contradiction, in which the two contrasting sides of the issue are represented in two opposing halves of the sentence.*

Lutrin and Pincus (2007, p. 41) classify antithesis as a figure of speech that functions as follows:

*Compares and contradicts ideas or statements within a sentence.*

All four citations are expressing contrasting ideas in a sentence. The ideas can have positive – negative or negative – positive connotations. They all share the views of contrast or opposition in meanings of phrases or clauses that ultimately depict parallelism. *Bayishaya emuva bayishaye embili* (They strike it behind and strike it in front). The proverb means the people who are untrustworthy and deceitful. It means a two-faced person who is characterized by insincerely, dishonesty and hypocrisy. This is a malpractice of the people who present different information on the same subject. Such people have all attributes of deceivers, fabricators, and falsifiers. The two words, *emuva* (behind) and *embili* (in front) are selected antonyms, which express contrast. *Konakala ngemlomo kulungiswe ngemlomo* (Things are wrongly pronounced by mouth and corrected by mouth). The proverb depicts the function of the mouth in both negative and positive angles. If things were inappropriately handled, enunciated or articulated using the mouth, a person needs to rectify, amend and redress the situation using the same body organ. The words, *onakala* (wrongdoing) and *lungisa* (to correct) reflect an opposite idea that syntactically form the proverb. *Umlomo udla lokushisako, udle lokubandzako* (The mouth eats the hot and the cold food). In life, one expects the hot and cold, sweet and bitter, good and bad as well as righteousness and wickedness. The words, *lokushisako* (hot) and *lokubandzako* (cold) reflect the speaker's word choice that enhances oratory and rhetoric styles. *Mentiwa akakhohlwa, kukhohlwa menti* (The one offended never forgets and the offender forgets). This expression means that when another had hurt a person, the injury is never forgotten. The remembrance of the injury permanently remains in the mind. The perpetrator of the injury, who is not the sufferer, quickly forgets. His forgetfulness leads to reprisal. People heard using the saying as a warning because vengeance will follow. The words, *akakhohlwa* (never forgets) and *kukhohlwa* (to forget) are appositionally used to express opposite ideas. *Inkhonyane yalenye iyayichubusha yayo iyayikhotsa* (It gores the calf of another cow and licks its own). The observation shows that animals show kindness to their own young and exhibit harshness to the young of others. Thus, a cow will lick its own calf, but the calf of another cow gores. This behavior may be observed with people who will hate what belongs to others, and love what is their own. People who are doing that exhibit self-centred, self-obsessed and inconsiderate characters. The words, *chubukusha* (to gore) and *khotsa* (to lick) give the contrasting ideas, which are ultimately providing a full proverbial meaning. *Lihleka lingakaphatsi litsi lingaphatsa lisiname* (One who laughs when he or she has nothing, but when having something becomes surly.)

When a person is empty-handed, starving and deprived tend to be kind-hearted, thoughtful and considerate with the aim of getting something, but when he or she has achieved the specific goal, all the kindness vanishes and becomes sulky. This is the behavior of the stingy and egocentric people. The opposite words are, *hleka* (to laugh) and *sinama* (to be surly), *phatsa* (to handle) and *lingakaphatsi* (not to handle) they jointly give a proverbial meaning. *Litsatsa losemsamo limphonse emnyango* (It takes the one at the back of the hut and throws him at the door). There are no predictions that can be made about the striking lightning. If people are sitting in a hut, one nears the door and another further back in the hut. The lightning strikes the one who is further back in the hut and hurl him towards the door. Therefore, no one is safe from injury by lightning. The action of lightning is unpredictable. The saying is an apt warning to everyone. The two contrasted adverbs of place are *emsamo* (at the back of the hut and *emnyango* (at the door) which form a proverbial construction

*Likhiwa lelihle ligcwala timphetfu* (A fine fig is full of worms). A fig looks attractive on the outside, but when opened it is found to be full of worms. This proverbial expression is used of a person who looks beautiful on the outside, but his or her character is bad. A variant of this proverb uses the noun *tibungu* (worms). Both words mean the same connotation. *Likhiwa* (fig) is associated with beauty, glamour, and prettiness, while *timphethu* (worms) are associated with displeasing, unattractive, and repulsiveness.

*Tjani lobulele buvuswa ngemlilo.* (The sleeping grass is awakened by fire). A person who does not want to take a firm stand in life, he suffers the consequence and face destruction. The grass represents unsteady, startle and doubtful behavior that is counteracted by savage, intolerant and punitive action. Diction is reflected by two selected words; *lala* (sleep) and *vusa* (awaken) which form part of a proverbial expression. *Inala ayihambi, kuhamba indlala* (An abundance does not spread, famine does). During a year of plenty, it is not all people that get an abundance of food, some people remain in want but when there is famine, everybody feels the consequences. The expression means that good news takes longer to be heard, but evil news spreads very fast. It takes time for a well-mannered and exemplary person to be known and acknowledged, but the evil doer is quickly known. The two predicative words that are contrasting in this proverb are, *ayihambi* (does not spread) and *hamba* (spread). They are, however, appositional with two nouns, *inala* (abundance of food) and *indlala* (famine), which are opposites in meanings but significant in proverbial construction. *Kubona kanye kubona kabili.* (To see one is to see twice). If something bad happened to an individual, he or she tries not to be a victim of the same unpleasant situation again. A person is warned to be careful and vigilant before he or she takes any action. The contrasting words are *kanye* (once) and *kabili* (twice) which form part of proverbial structure.

In conclusion, about antithesis, we note the balancing of equal parts of a sentence or a whole proverb. There are repetitions of words within the lines or sentences. Various forms of repetitions constitute the musical and imaginative qualities in proverbs. Parallelism is the major aspects that appear through the repetition of words, phrases, statement of ideas and grammatical structures. Diction plays a vital role in proverbial construction because of the employment of vehicle and tenor, concrete and abstract, plain and ornate concepts.

### 3. Results

They are examined and deliberated from the viewpoint of their rhetorical function in the language. Few proverbs are randomly selected to illustrate the significance of figurative perspectives in proverbial constructions and usage. They contribute to the richness of the language found in the verbal forms. Nyembezi (1990, p. xi) defines the proverb as a concise pithy saying in general use, an adage. He further mentioned that a proverb represents, in its essential form, some homely truth expressed in a succinct and terse manner so as to recommend itself to a more or less extended circle. These aphoristic expressions are pithy, witty and compact statements that are vital in any language. Seidl and McMordie. (1978, p.241) declare that proverbs express in a few words validity and veracity which relate to experiences. One can find proverbs, which fit any human situation, and this gives them a general application and specific interpretation. They are used to give a word of advice, counseling, guidance and wise general comment on a situation, and do this in a precise and emotional style which make them to be easily remembered and used.

Proverbs are lexical elements and syntactic strings, which are learned and reused as units with both internal and external structures. Their quotation status derives from the fact that they are invoked and cited rather than straightforwardly asserted. They clearly differ from other sentences in light of the role they play in belief systems and symbolic thinking. They serve to define and transmit a range of cultural categories from generation to generation. In normal discourse, they make perfect sense to both the sender and receiver. They are metaphoric expressions that express veracity, authenticity, and certainty. They are figurative in nature and fall into a category of formulaic language that encapsulates a society's values and beliefs. To understand and interpret the proverb, there should be clarity about the concept of figurative use of language, especially the mechanism of a language. It appears that the proverb functions based on metaphor, rhetoric, and symbolism.

Ntshinga (2010, p. 86) comments about the proverbs as traditional static forms that enhance social and literary contexts. Their focus tends to be on analyzing text and disregarding their social background and aesthetic qualities. Most studies are primarily concerned in the analysis of texts that are basically text-oriented and ignore the dynamics of the proverbs. Figurative language is fundamental in proverbs because of the use of various figures of speech for comparisons, resemblances, and emphasis. Abrams define it (1981, p.64) as follows:

*Is a departure from what speakers of a particular language apprehend to be standard meaning of words, or the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect?*

The figures of speech are integrated to the functioning of language and indispensable to all mode of discourse. It is further noted that the repetition technique called parallelism forms an integral part of antithetic proverbial expressions. Schapera (1983, p. 19) defines parallelism as follows:

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

Parallelism constitutes to the musical quality of oral discourse and can be regarded as a general term of various forms of repetitions. In proverbs, this technique emphasizes a particular idea, rhythm, linking and unity.

#### 4. Discussion

A number of scholars have researched proverbs from various approaches to achieve their intended objectives. The task of the literature review is to find out the following:

- What has been researched and published on proverbs?
- What is the quality and quantity of work that has been done on proverbs?
- What are possible gaps that need to be filled on the subject?
- Should there be any range of empirical findings to the overall framework of existing knowledge about the problem area?
- What is the range of accepted definitions of critical terms on the study of proverbs?

It is noted that most proverbs use connotative meaning which is vividly expressed by Awerbuck, McLean, Rule, and Williams (2013, p.158) as follows:

*The indirect or implied meaning that goes beyond the literal meaning of a word or phrase.*

Linguistics and folklorists have repeatedly attempted to explain the semantic ambiguity of proverbs which results to a large degree from their being used in different contexts. They act as analogies and add to the complexity of understanding their precise meanings in a particular speech act. Meider (1994, p.81) gives this summation as follows:

*Function as warning, persuasion, admonition, reprimand, statement, characterization, explanation, description, justification, and summarization. It is well possible that one and the same proverbs takes completely different functions in different context of usage.*

It is worth noting that proverbs are part of oral literature. They reflect a deep understanding of one's roots, historical background, static and dynamics of culture. They serve as a link between the traditional and modern literature. The rationale of studying oral or verbal lore is to develop readers or receivers sensitivity to a special use of language that is figurative, symbolic and deeply meaningful. Proverbs have ideas, thoughts, principles, ideologies, and beliefs that can broaden readers and listener's horizon and their understanding of culture.

They provide resources that enable readers to study the formal features of this genre, such as alliteration, metaphor, simile, and antithesis. They also incorporate the socio-cultural values of this literary genre. Imagery plays a significant role in proverbs because it signifies objects and qualities of sense perception. It is the use of words diverging from its usual meaning but providing freshness of expressions and figurative interpretation. An exploration and interpretive study of proverbs are fundamentally controlled and guided by vehicle-tenor, denotative - connotative and implicit - explicit relationships. The rhetoric nature of proverbs dates back during Aristotle's period (385 – 322 BG) where Steinberg (2015, p.288) asserts the following:

*Aristotle's knowledge of communication with observations he made in everyday situation of the practices of speakers and responses of audiences.*

Proverbs play a central role in the functioning and development of any language and they suite various formal or informal situations, oratory or persuasive discourse.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is noted that proverbs are pithy expressions that express the thoughts and beliefs. They are aphoristic in nature because they are general truth and observations about life. Their witty, prudent and perspective nature depicts the aphoristic style which is characterized by reinforcement of argument, oratory, and persuasion. They are more of an art of logical discourse than eloquent speech. Their socio-cultural inclination is depicted through rhetoric and persuasive approaches. The role of language in reinforcing its status and function can best be understood from the cultural background as enshrined in the proverbs. They exhibit the community's attitudes towards others as well as its sense of humanness. They also reflect the relationship between members of the household, society and the nation. They cover various themes and subjects such as character disposition, moral nature, heredity, conversations and transmission of values.

It is recommended that more proverbial classifications on rhetorical devices be made. Their classifications and categorizations need comparisons and analysis. The historical background of proverbs needs exploration. Their context, content and didactic nature must be both implicitly and explicitly looked at. Their unique characteristics must be highlighted and interpreted. Proverbs as part of folk saying need to be investigated and explicated in relation to idioms, riddles, and folktales. Their figurative language to express thoughts and ideas in a vivid and imaginative ways warrants emphasis.

## References

- Abrams, M. (1981). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Watson.
- Awerbuk, D. McLean, A. Rule, P. and Williams, C. (2013). *Platinum English First Additional Language*
- Babbie, E.R and Mouton, J. (2005). *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Derbel, E. & Al-Mohammadi, S. (2015). *Integration of Language Skills and Culture in English Language Teaching: Rationale and Implication for Practice*. In R. Al-Mahrooqi & C. Denman (Eds). *Issues in English Education in the Arab World*. (pp. 216-232). New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Dorson, R.M. (1972). *Folklore and Folklife*. New York: Doubleday.
- Grace, W.J. (1965). *Response to Literature*. New York: McGraw – Hill.
- Heese, M and Lawton, R. (1978). *The Owl Critic*. Cape Town: Nasou Publishers.
- Hendry, J.O. (1998). *Rhythm and Muse*. Lombardy East: Wordsmiths Publishing.
- Lutrin, B and Pincus, M. (2007). *English Handbook and Study Guide*. Birnam Park: Belut Books.
- Makhanya, C.N. (2005). *Inkholongo*. Arcadia: Actua Press.
- Mieder, W (1994). *African Proverb Scholarship. An Annotated Bibliography* Burlington. Vermont: Queen City.
- Mokitimi, MIP. (1991). *A Literary Analysis of Sesotho Proverbs (Maele)*. Unpublished D Lit. et Phil Thesis Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Mthethwa, C.N. (2014). *Silulu SeMaswati*. Randhart: Lectio Publishers.
- Ntshinga, T. 2010. *Structural Innovations in IsiXhosa Proverbs*. SAFOS May 2010.
- Nyembezi, C.L.S. (1990). *Zulu Proverbs*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Orwell, G. (2005). *Animal Farm*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- Reader 9. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- Schapera, J. (1983). *Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. London: George Routledge.
- Scheffler, B (2015). *Vistas of Poems*. Randhart: Lectio Publishers.
- Scott, A.F. (1967). *Currently Literary Terms. A Concise Dictionary of their Original and Use*. London: Macmillan.
- Seidl, J and McMordie, W. (1978). *English Idioms and How to Use Them*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Shipley, J. 1970. *Dictionary of World's Literary Terms*. London: Allen and Uniwin.

Steinberg, S. (2015). *An Introduction to Communication Studies*. Cape Town: Juta Publishers.

Thwala, J.J (2006). Umkhunsu. Arcadia: Actua Press.

Tucker, B and Young, J. (2013). *English Home Language Achieve*. Cape Town: Pearson Publishers.

Wellek, R and Warren, A. (1963). *Theory of Literature*. London: Latham.