FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN XITSONGA

by

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DECLARATION

I, Patricia Sizani Godi, hereby declare that FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN XITSONGA

submitted to the University of the North has not been previously submitted for a degree at

any University by me; and that it is my own work in design and execution.

....
P.S. GODI

07/02/2002
....
DATE

DEDICATION

To my father

(Eka tatana)

Nalios Mudanji Mngomezulu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is important to mention that I could not have succeeded on my own without the support and guidance of a number of people. Indeed, the work of this nature cannot be achieved by one man only (**rintiho rin'we a ri nusi hove**) without the assistance of others. The following Xitsonga proverb becomes apt in this regard: **Munhu i munhu hi van'wana vanhu**.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores focus in Xitsonga constructions and how it manifests itself through the use of various focus markers.

Chapter 1 is an introduction of this study. The aim, the methods of research as well as the literature review are also included in this chapter. Different definitions on focus have also been handled in this chapter.

Chapter 2 deals with different types of cleft sentences and these are: cleft sentences, pseudo-cleft sentences and predicate cleft sentences. In the main, cleft sentences in Xitsonga consist of the highlighted clause and the relative clause. The chapter also dealt with noun phrases and noun phrase locatives in so far as they relate to focus.

Chapter 3 examines various aspects that bring about focus in Xitsonga sentences. The aspects that are relevant in this regard are: stress, agreement, adjunction, fronting and the use of the aspect **se**, auxiliary verb **ka/ko** and morphemes **-vu**, and **-ka**.

Chapter 4 concentrates on stylistic aspects that generate focus in Xitsonga and these are: reduplication, repetition, linking, proverbs, idioms and figurative language.

Chapter 5 gives the conclusion of the study. It also gives some findings from this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Page

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Man's superiority to other creatures is based largely on his ability to communicate his thoughts through language. The main objective of communication is to make people understand what one thinks or feels. Understanding of facts does not happen automatically. For people to reach the stage of understanding, means that they must be able to grasp the key aspects of what is said to them. Failure to grasp the main points might leave the listener confused or unsure of what is expected of him.

What the above means is that it is of utmost importance to know where focus lies in all instances of communication. Focus is an element in a sentence to which the speaker wishes to draw special attention. It is the use of focus that enables the addressee to follow instructions correctly because he will have grasped the most important aspects of an utterance in a discourse situation.

Focus plays a significant role in everyday communication of Xitsonga speakers, just as it does in other languages. For interlocutors to interpret texts correctly, it is of vital importance to know where focus lies. If the focus of an utterance eludes the hearer, communication may not be as effective as desired.

As already indicated, the importance of focus in Xitsonga discourse cannot be over-emphasised. Amongst many other functions, focus helps in disambiguating statements

1

which otherwise would have been difficult to comprehend. I found it necessary to research this area of Xitsonga to reveal how focus works in the language, as, as far as I am aware, no such research has hitherto been done.

1.2   AIM OF RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to examine focus in Xitsonga. This will be achieved by examining different aspects that help to mark focus in Xitsonga, that is, how focus is generated, and the semantic significance of such focus.

1.3   METHODOLOGY

The methods of research in this study will be the primary, secondary and sociological methods.

With regard to the primary research method, research will be conducted through consultation with experts in linguistics such as professors, lecturers and teachers. The purpose of employing this method is the advantage it provides for discussion and verification of facts and data with the persons consulted.

The secondary research method is the method whereby the researcher will consult library books, articles from journals, research papers and dissertations. The purpose of using secondary research method in this study is to utilise information already gathered by different scholars on the subject.

The sociological research method in the context of this study is the use of one's knowledge of the culture of the language users (Nemapate, 1999). Since Xitsonga is my mother tongue, my understanding of the language as a native speaker will alleviate problems of contextualisation of examples, this method and the primary research method complement each other.

Examples in this research will be drawn from both linguistics and literary texts as both areas deal with language. The convergence of the two areas is illustrated by, for example, the title of Chapman's (1984) book, ***Linguistics and literature - An introduction to literary stylistics***. The first chapter of the book is titled "***Allies or Opponents?***" to raise consciousness to the relationship. Literature after all has language as its medium. Chapman (op. cit. , p.5) aptly states that "The literature of a language offers a corpus of material for linguistic study".

Due to the difference of the idiom of the Xitsonga and English languages, some translations from Xitsonga may sound awkward in their literal form. However, an attempt will always be made to bring out the meaning.

1.4 SCOPE AND ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

As already alluded to in 1.3 under aim, this study examines aspects that bring about focus in Xitsonga. Emphasis is placed on what focus is and how it manifests itself in the language.

Chapter 1 gives a general introduction to the study, its aims and objectives. It also defines focus and illustrates how it can be recognised.

Chapter 2 discusses cleft sentences and pseudo-clefts, their types and how they bring about focus in sentences.

Chapter 3 deals with different aspects that help to bring about focus to sentences. These are stress, agreement, adjunction, fronting and dislocation, the aspect **se**, morphemes **-vu** and **-ka** and the auxiliary verbs **ka** and **ko**.

In **Chapter 4** other aspects that help to mark focus in Xitsonga will be discussed. The aspects to be discussed are reduplication, negative verb focussing, repetition, parallelism, linking, proverbs, idioms and figurative expressions.

Chapter 5 concludes all the work dealt with in the first four chapters by giving the findings of the research.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Several scholars have conducted research in this field of study. Studies I have come across include English, Hungarian, Afrikaans and Tshivenda. In Xitsonga no such study has as yet been conducted ever as indicated in 1.1. It is for this reason that this study will use reference material that comes mainly from other languages other than Xitsonga.

1.5.1 Hoffman (1995)

According to Hoffman (1995) focus marking in English, is not visible in writing because it is located in intonation contour which may move upward or downward. That is, focus is marked by loudness or an abrupt fall or rise in intonation. Hoffman also mentions words that attract stress such as **even**, **only** and **all** which are also used to show focus. These words are also applicable to Xitsonga and would be translated respectively as: **hambi**, **ntsena** and pronouns of the quantitative stem **hinkwa-** which yields pronouns such as the following, according to the class of the pronoun: **hinkwaswo, hinkwerhu, hinkwato, hinkwavo**. In Xitsonga, as in other African languages, these classes denote human beings (e.g. **hinkwavo, hinkwerhu, hinkwenu**), animals and non living objects (e.g. **hinkwato, hinkwaswo** and **hinkwayo**.)

The following examples illustrate what is outlined by Hoffman in the use of **even (hambi)**, **only (ntsena)** and **all (hinkwaswo, hinkwerhu, hinkwavo**, etc.)

1. A ku rhule ngopfu esontweni **hambi** vana a va miyerile.

    (It was so quiet at church even children were quiet)

2. Fambani mi ya kha swiluva swo tshwuka **ntsena**.

    (Go and pick only red flowers)

3. Susani swibye **hinkwaswo** etafuleni.

    (Remove all the dishes on the table)

In example 1., the portion of the sentence: **A ku rhule ngopfu esontweni** shows no focus at all because it is expected of everybody to be quiet at church. Focus emanates where **hambi vana** comes in because children are usually unruly even at church. The use of **hambi** assigns the second portion of the sentence focus.

The same applies to example 2., i.e. **Fambani mi ya kha swiluva swo tshwuka ntsena**. The use of **ntsena** (only) leaves the addressee with no choice but to pick only red flowers and nothing else. This becomes so because **ntsena** gives no other alternative but focusses only on red flowers.

In example 3., **Susani swibye hinkwaswo etafuleni**, it is clear that the addressee should leave no dish on the table. Everything must be removed, and this becomes so because of the focus marker **hinkwaswo** (all).

1.5.2 **Hovarth (1985)**

According to Hovarth (1985) there are two basic strategies for marking particular constituents as focus of sentences in languages. The first one is called "syntactic focus marking", which is exemplified by clefts and pseudo-clefts constructions. The second marker is "phonological focus marking", which is exemplified by stress and intonation. What is said by Hovarth is also applicable to Xitsonga. The following examples serve to illustrate this:

4a.   Mufana u yive mali.

       (The boy stole money)

4b. **Mufana** u yive mali.

(The boy stole money)

5. **I mufana**, loyi a yiveke mali.

(It is the boy, who stole money)

In sentence 4a. **Mufana u yive mali** shows no focus at all. The pronounciation of the word **mufana** (the boy) in 4b. with more stress, assigns it focus. The change of word order in 5. and the splitting of the sentence into two brings about focus to the NP **mufana**.

1.5.3 **Declerck (1988)**

Declerck (1988) treats focus as one of the characteristics of cleft sentences. He indicates that clefts are identifying sentences that express a relationship of identity between the elements realised as the highlighted element and the relative clause. The highlighted element in this regard refers to focus. This is illustrated by the following examples:

6a. N'wana wa rila.

(The child is crying)

6b. **I n'wana**, loyi a rilaka.

(It is the child, that cries)

Clefting the sentence in 6a. and allowing it to take the form in 6b. assigns the clause **I n'wana** (it is the child) focus. **Loyi a rilaka** is the relative clause that denotes presupposition.

1.5.4 Du Plessis (N.D.)

Du Plessis (N.D.) treats focus by taking into account the aspect of presupposition as well. According to him presupposition denotes information in a sentence that is assumed by the speaker to be known to him and the hearer. He equates emphasis on the information that the addressee was not aware of, with focus. He continues to say that the semantic material associated with the phrase dominated with focus, is the focus of that sentence (M.S. 66). The following examples illustrate this:

7a.   Nsati wa Matimu i **Rebone**.
        (Matimu's wife is Rebone)

7b.   Loyi a hahlulaka yindlu i **Khanyisa**.
        (The one who is demolishing a house is Khanyisa)

From the example in 7a. it is assumed that the shared information is that Matimu has a wife. The missing information and the one in focus is who Matimu got married to. **Rebone** is in focus because she is the missing and required information to the question: Who is Matimu's wife?

The same applies to the sentence in 7b. It is assumed that both speakers are aware that somebody is demolishing a house. **Khanyisa** becomes the focus of the statement in 7b. as it provides the answer of who it is that is demolishing the house.

1.5.5 **Madadzhe (1992)**

Madadzhe (1992) shows the ways in which focus may be assigned in Tshivenda sentences. According to him focus in this language may be assigned to words and sentences through the use of **stress, agreement, adjunction** and the **lexical item *ha*.** As already indicated, stress is revealed by the use of emphasis on particular words and sentences as in the following examples:

8a.   Mikateko u xavisa tihuku.

(Mikateko sells chickens)

8b.   Mikateko u xavisa **tihuku**.

(Mikateko sells chickens)

In 8a. no emphasis has been assigned to the sentence. It is in 8b. where **tihuku** is pronounced with stress, that **tihuku** becomes the highlighted and the focus of the statement. This becomes so because **tihuku** is the word that the speaker wants attention to be paid to.

In his discussion of **agreement** in focus, Madadzhe indicates that the concordial morpheme generated by nouns through their class prefixes can assign focus to sentences. Examples are the following:

9a.   Ndza **ti** rhandza **tibuku**.

(I love (them) books)

This example is different from the ordinary, **ndzi rhandza tibuku** (I love books).

9b.   Wa **va** rhandza **vana**.

(He loves (them) children)

This also is different from the neutral sentence **u rhandza vana** (he loves children).

Madadzhe also shows how **adjunction** can assign focus in sentences. He points out that Tshivenda utilises the existential morpheme **hu** for this purpose.   The Xitsonga equivalent of this morpheme is **ku**:

10a.   **Ku** sweka manana.

(It is mother who cooks)

10b.   **Ku** tirha vafana.

(It is the boys who work).

Both examples in 10a. and 10b. are assigned focus by the employment of the existential morpheme **ku**. Without focus, examples 10a. and 10b. would read as rendered in 11a. and 11b. below:

11a.　Manana wa sweka.

　　　(Mother is cooking)

11b.　Vafana va tirha.

　　　(The boys are working)

In sentences 11a. and 11b. there is no focus assigned to both sentences. They are neutral sentences which simply state facts. But the employment of the existential morpheme **ku** in 10a. and 10b. state it categorically that it is mother and nobody else who does the cooking, and that the boys are the ones working.

1.5.6 Lyons (1977)

According to Lyons (1977) **focus** and **stress** are related, not only in the English language but in all languages in which variation in acoustic prominence serves a communicative function. Since focus relates to highlighted aspects of a sentence, Lyons indicates that expressions that convey new information are stressed and those conveying information the speaker presents as given are unstressed:

12.   Matimu wa sweka **exitangeni**.

(Matimu is cooking in the kitchen)

Stress on **exitangeni** provides a focus of where Matimu is cooking. Lyons further postulates that every statement that can be made a simple sentence expresses an informative proposition which provides the answer to either explicit or implicit question. This is highlighted in the example in 12. above.

1.5.7 **Summary**

Even before we attempt a definition of focus, the contribution of the scholars discussed in 1.5.1 to 1.5.6 above gives an indication of what it is.   Du Plessis however, sees focus as an aspect of presupposition, a position also shared by Lyons. Declerck sees focus as characteristics of cleft sentences, while Hovarth talks of syntactic focus marking and phonological focus marking as strategies for marking focus. What is clear is that focus is about prominence given to part of a sentence or utterance.

1.6   **DEFINITION OF FOCUS**

As already stated that in every communication it is important to note where focus lies, the main question can be what this focus is. Crystal (1992:421) defines focus as "an element in a sentence to which the speaker wishes to draw special attention".

The fact that the speaker wishes to draw special attention, clearly indicates that the information in focus is not to be ignored as it conveys special information that is the centre of attraction. Jacobs (1986:104) also defines focus as "the material that is highlighted in the sentence".

To 'highlight' means to pick out something as an important part or to throw attention onto something. Once attention is given to any word, phrase or sentence, that portion is on focus.

Trask (1993:105) augments Crystal and Jacob's descriptions of focus by defining it as:

> The special prominence given to some elements in a sentence which represents the most important new information in that sentence.

The use of "special prominence" and "the most important new information" reveal the fact that the focal phrase carries the most valued information of that sentence, that is, the core of the message is the one on focus. Beside the fact that focus marks new information, Crystal (1997:154) further elaborates that:

> Focus distinguishes between the information assumed by speakers and that which is at the centre (focus) of their communicative interests.

Crystal's definition is the same as that of Jacobs paraphrased by Hovarth (1985:93) where he describes focus as:

> The information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker not to be shared by him and the hearer, and the presupposition as information assumed by the speaker to be shared by him and the hearer.

Crystal and Hovarth's descriptions introduce the aspects of assumption and presupposition. Presupposition is what the speaker assumes that the addressee is aware of. This shows that focus can also be achieved where there is shared knowledge of information, but only to find that, that knowledge is incomplete.

In the afore-mentioned definitions, Crystal speaks of focus, as "drawing special attention", Jacobs describes it as "the highlighted information", while Trask regards it as "the most important new information" and Hovarth speaks of "the information not shared by both participants in a discourse situation". From what the above scholars state, one can deduce that focus is a tool through which the most recent, unfamiliar or unknown information is delivered amongst different speakers as new information. Focus is there to fill the gap on any unknown information or anything that one needs not ignore. Once an unknown information is brought to the attention of people, that information is in focus. It is for this reason that Saeed (1997:190) points out that one of the primary uses of focus systems is to mark new information.

This means that in focus, new information is marked out for people to recognise.

1.7   ILLUSTRATIONS OF FOCUS

The different definitions simply stated what focus is, but did not show how focus can be realised or how it manifests itself.   Hovarth (1985:93) points out that there are two ways of detecting focus in sentences.   He calls them "phonological focus marking and syntactic focus marking" as indicated in 1.5.2. Madadzhe (1997:510) explains them thus:

> Phonological focus marking involves only stress and intonation while syntactic focus marking are clefts and pseudo-clefts constructions.

Madadzhe highlights the two terms to give a clear picture of what is entailed in phonological focus marking.   Hence he points out the issue of putting emphasis in words. The pitch of voice, that is, the rise and fall of tone also marks the phonological part of showing focus. Madadzhe also describes syntactic focus marking as the tendency to divide a sentence into two main categories. He points out that the first category (half) will comprise the most important information, that is, the one in focus, and the other portion is more likely to be common knowledge to both speakers, ie., that which they are both aware of. The process of splitting a sentence into two results in clefts and speudo-clefts.

Besides the idea of splitting a sentence into two, Bussman (1996:167) has the following to add: "The main grammatical means used to indicate focus of a sentence are word order and intonation".

Trask (1993:105) combines both Madadzhe and Bussman's description by showing how focus can be identified in English and other languages. In his exposition he says:

> In English focussed elements are frequently marked only by stress, though clefts constructions are sometimes used. Some other languages mark focussed elements by the use of particles, or the use of word order as in Basque where the focussed word is placed before the verb.

The above clearly reveal that several scholars share the same views that stress, word order and clefts constructions are aspects that bring about focus in sentences. The following examples highlight this:

12a.   Ivy u tsale buku.

 (Ivy wrote a book)

12b.   Ivy u **tsale** buku.

 (Ivy wrote a book)

13a.   Mufana u fambisa movha.

 (The boy drives a car)

13b.   I **mufana**, loyi a fambisaka movha.

 (It is the boy, who drives a car)

14a.   A ndzi nwi byala.

(I don't drink beer)

14b.   **Byala**, a ndzi nwi.

(Beer, I don't drink)

The examples in 12a. and 12b. have the same information that **Ivy u tsale buku** (Ivy wrote a book).   Though the two sentences share the same words, their highlighted information differs.   The sentence in 12a. conveys information in a simple manner without showing any focus.   The use of stress on **tsale** in 12b. assigns it focus.   **Tsale** is in focus because it is the required information on the question:

15.   Xana Ivy u endle yini?

(What did Ivy do?)

The response **tsale** (wrote) shows that the addressee might have heard that Ivy did something but not knowing what she did.   By putting focus on **tsale** people then get to know what Ivy has done.

Sentences 13a. and 13b. both state that the boy drives a car.   13a. is a neutral statement with no focus at all.   By clefting the same sentence in 13a. as in 13b. **i mufana** is assigned focus.   **I mufana** constitutes the first portion that carries the most required information while **loyi a fambisaka movha** becomes the common knowledge shared by both speakers.

Sentences 14a. and 14b. share the fact that the speaker does not drink beer. 14a. is not emphatic in nature and does not show focus. The change of the word order in 14b. i.e. **byala, a ndzi nwi**, assigns focus to the sentence. It states clearly that the speaker may be given any drink but not beer.

Although the above examples elaborated only on stress and cleft constructions, there are other aspects that are utilised for focus marking like agreement, adjunctions, reduplication, the use of morphemes, negative verb focussing, dislocation, fronting, proverbs and figurative constructions, repetition, parallelism and linking, as will be shown later in this study.

1.8 SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter a general introduction to the study is given, which highlights what focus is all about and its importance in everyday communication. The aim of this study is also stated as well as the methodology to be followed. The scope and organisation of this study is also outlined. There is also a literature review of some of the work on focus in various languages to highlight some facts in this field of study. A definition of focus is also undertaken, as well as an introduction of aspects which serve as focus markers.

CHAPTER 2

2.   CLEFTS AND PSEUDO-CLEFTS

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Cleft sentences play a major role in assigning focus to sentences. There are various types of cleft sentences and these are classified as follows: cleft sentences or (it-clefts), reduced it-cleft sentences, basic pseudo-cleft sentences, reversed pseudo-cleft sentences and predicate cleft sentences.

According to Madadzhe (1999:93) these five groupings can be reduced to form three major types, viz., cleft sentences, pseudo-cleft sentences and predicate cleft sentences. He contends that reduced it-clefts and clefts will form one type, namely clefts; while basic pseudo-clefts and reversed pseudo-clefts will fall under the type pseudo-clefts sentences. Predicate clefts on their own form the third type.

This chapter will concentrate on cleft sentences and pseudo-cleft sentences.   Beside Madadzhe's exposition it would seem that cleft sentences are referred to variously by different scholars. Akmajian (1990) prefers the terms it-clefts and genuine clefts, Declerck (1988) uses the terms it-clefts and true-clefts, while Collins (1991) prefers the term clefts. These differences in what cleft sentences are called should not leave one confused, but the most important thing is to know what they are, what comprises them and how they operate.

2.2 DEFINITION OF CLEFTS

To cleft means to split. Splitting of sentences into two is more likely to produce cleft sentences, and this plays a vital role in assigning focus to sentences. Trask (1993:46) defines clefts as:

> ... a marked structure in which a focused constituent is extracted
>
> from its logical position and often set off with some additional
>
> material including an intransitive verb.

Trask identifies distinguishable features about cleft constructions, viz., the tendency to shift words from their original position and put them in a position where they can be identified as being on focus. Another feature is the putting together of the extracted information with an intransitive verb:

1a.   Kulani u sweka nyama.

(Kulani cooks meat)

1b.   **I Kulani**, loyi a swekaka nyama.

(It is Kulani, who cooks meat)

2a.   Mufana u raha bolo.

(The boy kicks the ball)

2b.   **I mufana** loyi a rahaka bolo.

        (It is the boy, who kicks the ball)

The employment of **I** in sentences 1b. and 2b. shifted the original positions of the NPs

Kulani in 1a. and **mufana** in 2a. from subject positions to object positions.

Trask's definition is augmented by that of Collins (1991:2) who defines clefts as:

>   The identifying construction expressing a relationship of identity
>
>   between the elements realised as the highlighted and the relative
>
>   clause.

Collins is also of the opinion that cleft sentences consist of two parts, viz., the

highlighted clause and the relative clause. In this regard the highlighted clause is the one

that is assigned focus. What Collins is highlighting is not different from what Trask says.

Instead of the highlighted clause he speaks of the focused constituents, and on the

relative clause he speaks of some additional material.   These views are also shared by

Crystal (1992:56) who simply defines cleft sentences as a construction where a single

sentence has been divided into two parts, each with its own verb.

What Crystal, Trask and Collins state is evident in the following examples:

3a.   Vavanuna va dlaya homu.

        (Men slaughter a beast)

3b.   **I vavanuna**, lava dlayaka homu.

       (It is men who slaughter a beast)

The sentence in 3a. i.e. **Vavanuna va dlaya homu** is a single sentence with one verb **va dlaya** (they slaughter).   In 3b. the same sentence is split into two; that is, it consists of **I vavanuna** which is also a copulative verb and is on focus, and **lava dlayaka homu** which also has its own verb stem **dlayaka**, and is also part of the relative clause.

On careful examination of the above definitions it becomes clear that cleft sentences are formed when sentences are divided into two portions and happen to have two verbs after the splitting occurred. It should however be considered that at first the sentence had only one verb, and that the second one came as a result of the splitting. One other important fact is that one of the splitted clauses should be on focus, while the other half will be shared knowledge.

2.3   FOCUS IN CLEFT SENTENCES

The main purpose of clefting sentences is to show focus. Higgins (1976), Declerck (1988), Collins (1991) and Fitchner (1993) all agree on what characterises cleft sentences. They all share the view that in English cleft sentences are marked by the use of **it is/it was**. Madadzhe points out that in Tshivenda cleft sentences use **ndi**. What is said of clefts in English and Tshivenda is also applicable in Xitsonga. In Xitsonga cleft sentences are shown by the use of **I**.   Once **I** is used, that sentence has something to focus on. The following examples highlight focus in cleft sentences:

22

4a.   Themba u vulavula eka xiya-ni-moya.

       (Themba speaks on the radio)

4b.   **I Themba** loyi a vulavulaka eka xiya-ni-moya.

       (It is Themba who speaks on the radio)

5a.   Mangaliso u xave movha.

       (Mangaliso bought a car)

5b.   **I Mangaliso** loyi a xaveke movha.

       (It is Mangaliso, who bought a car)

6a.   Sizwe u hahlule mukhukhu.

       (Sizwe demolished a shack)

6b.   **I Sizwe**, loyi a hahluleke mukhukhu.

       (It was Sizwe who demolished a shack)

The sentences in 4a., 5a. and 6a. are neutral statements showing no focus at all. Clefting of these sentences i.e, splitting them into two changes the impact and state of their information and they are now assigned focus. This becomes so because of the use of **I** in clefts which helps to mark focus. Statements on focus are **i Themba** in 4b., **i Mangaliso** in 5b. and **i Sizwe** in 6b. because they are respectively the required information to answer the questions:

7. I mani loyi a vulavulaka eka xiya-ni-moya?

(Who speaks on the radio?)

8. I mani loyi a xaveke movha?

(Who bought a car?)

and

9. I mani loyi a hahluleke mukhukhu?

(Who demolished a shack?)

The second portions of statements in 4b. **loyi a vulavulaka eka xiya-ni-moya** (who speaks on radio), 5b. **loyi a xaveke movha** (who bought a car) and 6b. **loyi a hahluleke mukhukhu** (who demolished a shack) are called clauses with presupposition. These clauses carry the assumption that both participants are aware that somebody spoke on the radio but not knowing who that person is. The same applies to **loyi a xaveke movha** (who bought a car) and **loyi a hahluleke mukhukhu** (who demolished a shack). It is believed that both speakers are aware that somebody bought a car and that the other one demolished a shack. The only missing information in them is who bought a car and the person who demolished a shack. The following examples further highlight on the above stated information:

CLAUSE WITH FOCUS	CLAUSE WITH PRESUPPOSITION
10a. I Nkhensani	loyi a biweke.
(It is Nkhensani	who was beaten)
10b. I Ntsako	loyi a paseke Xitsonga hi risiva ra ndzhangelo.
(It is Ntsako	who passed Xitsonga with distinction)
10c. I Nyiko	loyi a rilaka.
(It is Nyiko	who is crying)
10d. I Hlayiseka	loyi a rhandzaka ku hlambela.
(It is Hlayiseka	who likes to swim)

All of the above examples support the view that cleft sentences consist of two portions, viz., the highlighted or focused element and the most common information which is shared by speakers, which is called the relative clause or clause with presupposition.

Cleft sentences can also be represented in a tree diagram. The sentence: **I Nhluvuko, loyi a hlevaka** (it is Nhluvuko who gossips) will be represented as follows in a tree diagram:

11.
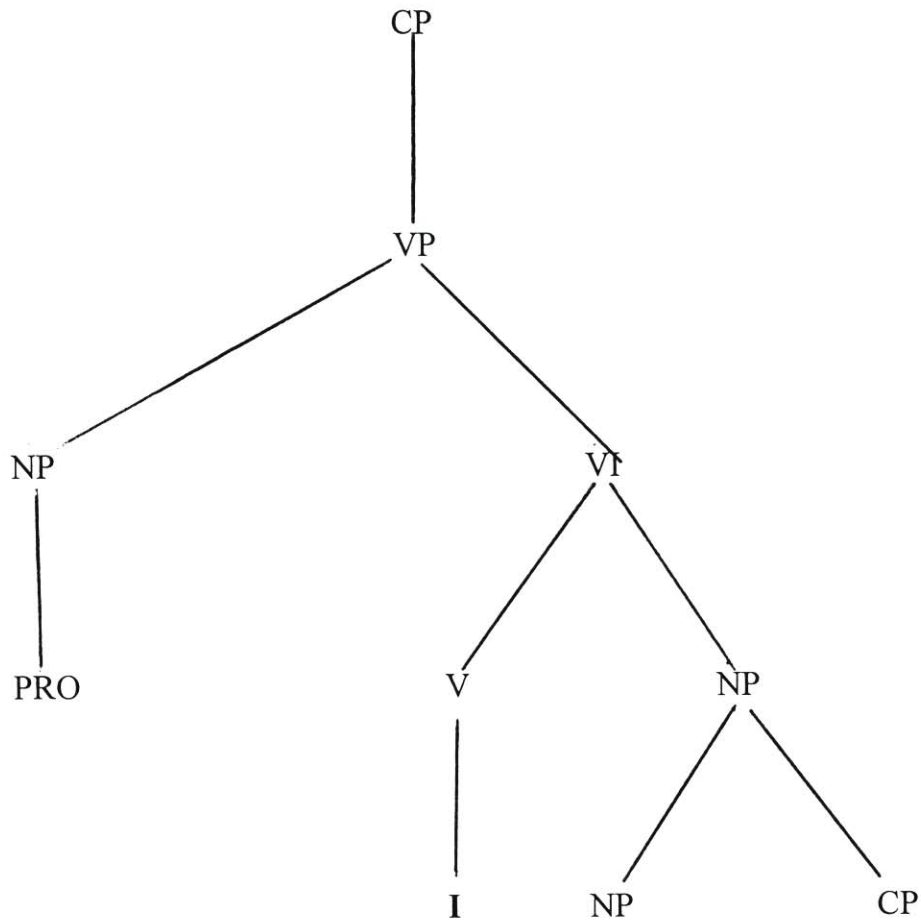
```
                              CP
                              │
                              VP
                           ╱      ╲
                       NP            VI
                       │           ╱    ╲
                      PRO         V        NP
                                  │      ╱    ╲
                                  I    NP       CP


                          Nhluvuko    loyi a hlevaka
```

From the above diagram, it is evident that the copulative clause appears as the subject while the relative clause occupies the object or complement position. All the above illustrations confirm what is already stated by Crystal that cleft sentences are divided into two and that each part has its own verb.

The fact that cleft sentences are divided into two should not leave one confused in cases where one comes across phrases like:

12a.   I tatana.

(It is father)

12b.   I movha.

(It is a car)

12c.   I Blessing.

(It is Blessing)

Should one come across such phrases, one needs to be aware that such examples are responses to questions. These types of clauses fall under what Declerck (1988) calls reduced it-clefts, which Madadzhe has grouped under clefts. According to Madadzhe these are short forms of cleft sentences. Madadzhe (1999:95) further makes a distinction between reduced it-clefts and fully-fledged cleft sentences as follows:

Fully-fledged cleft sentences possess two clauses, the clefted constituents and a relative clause. In contrast reduced it-clefts have only one clause.

He continues to elaborate on it-clefts sentences by stating that reduced it-clefts sentences are in most cases used as answers to questions. The following questions need reduced it-clefts as answers:

13a.   Question   :   I mani loyi a yiveke movha wa Dzunisani?

(Who stole Dzunisani's car?)

13b.   Answer   :   I Louwy.

(It is Louwy)

14a.   Question   :   I yini lexi kandziyeke swiluva swa mina?

(What trampled on my flowers?)

14b.   Answer   :   I homu.

(It is a cow)

15a.   Question   :   I mani loyi a hlantswaka swiambalo?

(Who washes clothes?)

15b.   Answer   :   I manana.

(It is mother)

Looking at questions in 13a., 14a. and 14b. it has become clear that in answering them, there is no need to continue with the relative clause, other than to provide the necessary answer. Therefore **i Louwy**, in 13b., **i homu** in 14b. and **i manana** in 15b. provide the most required and most satisfying answers to the questions in 13a., 14a. and 15a. Hence Madadzhe (1999:95) says:

28

It-clefts are generally used as an answer where no continuation with a relative clause is necessary.

Of utmost importance is that reduced it-clefts also form the focal point of a sentence regardless of their short nature.

Focus in cleft sentences is shown in different ways. Noun phrases which usually operate as subjects and objects are also cleftable. Noun phrase locatives are also used in clefts to show focus in sentences.

2.3.1 Noun Phrases

Fromkin and Rodman (1988:28) define a noun phrase as "an article followed by a noun". A noun is anything that denotes the subject or an object while an article includes morphemes like **the**, **a**, and **an**. According to Fromkin and Rodman the combination of the two, form a noun phrase:

> An apple (apula)
>
> The snake (nyoka)
>
> A goat (mbuti)

Fromkin and Rodman's description does not apply in Xitsonga as we don't have such noun phrase in the language. Crystal (1995:445) adds on Fromkin and Rodman's definition by calling a noun phrase 'a phrase with a noun as head word'.

Poole (1999:193) gives a more embracive definition of a noun phrase when he states:

> Noun phrase is a phrase that denotes an object, a concept and so
> on. It generally will include a noun and a determiner and may
> include one or more adjectives.

Poole's definition of what noun phrases are, also confirms that one cannot exclude a noun, but the most critical thing is that, the noun does not stand on its own. It needs the support of an article, a determiner or an adjective.

Bussman (1996:332) gives a comprehensive description of a noun phrase to support Poole's ideas. He describes a noun phrase as:

> A grammatical category or phrase which normally contains a noun
> (e.g. fruit) or a pronoun (I, someone, one) as its headword and
> which can be modified in many ways.

Bussman also agrees that a noun is the head though it needs some modifications to qualify as a noun phrase. He continues to highlight on possible modifiers of a noun where he gives examples like adjuncts, complements in the form of generative attributes and prepositional phrases. What Bussman says is also applicable in Xitsonga where modifiers (mabumabumeri) modify the noun and thus form part of the noun phrase:

16a. Mati yo titimela.

(Cold water)

16b. Wanuna wo karhata.

(A troublesome man)

16c. Nkarhi wa ku wisa.

(Time to rest)

16d. Wansati wa migingiriko.

(A hard working woman)

The above examples show the structure of noun phrases. The noun phrase may appear as a complement or specifier of the noun in both the subject and object position. Noun phrases are cleftable and this assigns them focus:

17a. **Siku ra Musumbhunuku** ra karhalisa.

(A day of Monday is tiresome)

17b. I **siku ra Musumbhunuku**, leri karharisaka.

(It is a day of Monday, which is tiresome)

18a. **Machudeni lava tikarhateke** va pasile xikambelo.

(The hard working students passed the examination)

18b.   **I machudeni lava tikarhateke** lava paseke xikambelo.

(It is the hard working students who passed the examination)

Sentences 17a. and 17b. have both used the NP **siku ra Musumbhunuku** in the subject position.   In fact they are the same, the only difference is that the sentence in 17b. has been clefted and **I** is added to assign focus to the NP **siku ra Musumbhunuku**.   The same applies to the sentences in 18a. - 18b.   Through clefting the NP **machudeni lava tikarhateke** in 18b. is assigned focus.   What is evident in both examples is that the NPs have occupied the subject position.   The following examples show the cleftability of NPs in the object position.

19a.   Manana u nwa **mati yo titimela**.

(Mother drinks cold water)

19b.   **I mati yo titimela** lama nwiwaka hi manana.

(It is cold water that mother drinks)

20a.   Petro u dlaya **mbuti yo basa**.

(Petro slaughters a white goat)

20b.   **I mbuti yo basa** leyi Petro a yi dlayaka.

(It is a white goat that Petro is slaughtering)

I mati yo titimela in 19b. and **i mbuti yo basa** in 20b. have been assigned focus through clefts. Both NPs have been used to denote the objects of both sentences. From the sentences in 17b., 18b., 19b. and 20b. it is evident that when NPs are clefted they attain a focussed position of that sentence.

2.3.2 Noun Phrase Locatives

Locatives denote the place where particular activities take place. Crystal (1991:207) defines the NP locs as "the form taken by a noun phrase when it typically expresses the idea of location of an entity".

Bussman (1996:288) augments Crystal's definition by defining NP locs as:

> A dependent clause functioning as adverbial to indicate place, direction or real extent of state of affairs described by verbs.

Both Bussman and Crystal share the same views that locative noun phrases are employed mainly for showing location. This implies that any phrase that is used to help people realise a particular place where some activities take place is termed a NP Loc. or noun phrase locative. However, Bussman also added the view that NP Locs will also reveal the state of affairs in a particular situation.

Noun phrase locatives are indicated differently in different languages. It is evident that in English prepositions like **at, on** and **in** help to denote location in sentences:

33

21a. Wanhwana u tshama **e**kaya.

(The girl stays at home)

21b. Nhlanhla u **le** ndlwini.

(Nhlanhla is in the house)

21c. Thabo u vulavula **eka** nongonoko wa Thelevixini.

(Thabo speaks on a Television programme)

A careful examination of the Xitsonga sentences show that NP Locs are characterised by either adding a prefix **e-**, **eka,** or suffixes **-eni** or **-ini**.   Sometimes both a suffix and a prefix are employed together to a noun. This is illustrated in the following examples:

22a. Xikolo - **e** + xikolo + **eni** - **e**xikolw**eni**.
      (School   at school).

22b. Mbilu - **e** + mbilu + **ini** - embilw**ini**.
      (Heart   in the heart)

23a. **Eka** Thomo (at Thomo)

23b. **Eka** Themba (at Themba's place)

23c. **Eka** Godi (at Godi)

24a. Ehandle (outside)

24b. Ehansi (down)

24c. Endzeni (inside)

The examples in 22a. and 22b. employ both the prefix and the suffix to denote location i.e. e**xikolweni** in 22a. and e**mbilwini** in 22b. In 23a. **eka** is usually used in reference to a settlement village where people stay as in **eka Thomo** in 23a. It is also used to people's names and surnames like **eka Themba** in 23b. and **eka Godi** in 23c.

Sentences with NP Locs are cleftable and this brings about focus in a particular clause. This is highlighted in the following examples:

25a. Manana u etlela **eka yindlu ya byanyi**.

  (Mother sleeps in a hut)

25b. **Hi le ka yindlu ya byanyi**, laha Manana a etlelaka kona.

  (It is in a hut where mother sleeps)

26a. **Exikolweni xa le henhla** ku na ntlangu wa bolo.

  (At the high school there is a soccer match)

26b. Hi le **xikolweni xa le henhla**; laha ku nga na ntlangu wa bolo.

  (It is at the high school, where there is a soccer match)

35

27a.   **Etikweni ra Xanthia** ku hava mati.

(At Xanthia village there is no water)

27b.   Hi le **tikweni ra Xanthia**, laha ku nga hava mati.

(It is at Xanthia village, where there is no water)

Sentences in 25a., 26a. and 27a. show no focus at all. Clefting their NP Locs as in 25b., 26b., and 27b. assigns them focus e.g. **hi le ka yindlu ya byanyi**, in 25b., **hi le xikolweni xa le henhla** in 26b. and **hi le tikweni ra Xanthia** in 27b. is the highlighted information. On careful examination of how clefts work , it is clear that as regards to NP locs one cannot employ **i** to mark clefts, but one can instead use **hi le** (it is at) which also helps to mark focus.

2.4   PSEUDO-CLEFTS

Like cleft sentences pseudo-clefts also come as a result of splitting a sentence into two and each part will also have its own verb. However, there is a slight difference between the two which will be evident as we go further in this discussion. Trask (1993:223) defines pseudo-clefts in the following manner:

> Pseudo-cleft is a marked construction in which non-focussed
> constituents are extracted from their logical position and preceded
> by a copula to focussed constituents.

From Trask's definition it becomes evident that pseudo-clefts are more likely the same as clefts in character because they also shift words from their logical position. The only difference is that in clefts what is shifted is the focussed constituent while in pseudo-clefts it is the non-focussed constituent which is shifted, and that what connects it is a copula while in cleft the copula holds the subject position. Higgins (1976:3-4) augments Trask's definition by defining pseudo-clefts as "copula sentences with a subject clause that is introduced by **wh- words**".

Whilst Higgins discloses a "copula" and "wh-words" as features that describe pseudo-clefts, Madadzhe (1999:104) adds other two features when he says:

> Apart from wh-words, pseudo-cleft in English may be introduced
>
> by **the** and **all** ..., pseudo-clefts in Tshivenda and other languages
>
> have a bipartite form.

What the above means is that pseudo-clefts are made up of two clauses which are the copula-clause and the relative clause.

It seems all the three scholars, Trask (1993), Higgins (1976) and Madadzhe (1999) agree on what constitutes pseudo-clefts in English, that is, **wh-words, the** and **all**. In Xitsonga pseudo-clefts can be recognised by using forms of demonstrative pronouns like **leswi, loyi, leti, lava**, etc. This is evident in the following examples:

28a.   U xavise baji ra yena.

(He sold his jacket)

28b.   **Lexi** a xi xaviseke, **i baji ra yena**.

(What he sold, is his jacket)

29a.   Tiyani u dlaye nyoka.

(Tiyani killed the snake)

29b.   **Loyi** a dlayeke nyoka, **i Tiyani**.

(Who killed the snake, is Tiyani)

30a.   U xave nyama, xinkwa na tiya.

(He bought meat, bread and tea)

30b.   **Leswi** a swi xaveke, **i xinkwa, nyama na tiya**.

(All he bought, is bread, meat and tea)

From the above examples one may realise that in pseudo-clefts, focus is more likely to appear in the latter part of a sentence. This is one remarkable difference from clefts because in clefts the highlighted information mostly appears in the initial part of the sentence. The examples in 28b. **Lexi a xi xaviseke i baji ra yena, Loyi a dlayeke nyoka i Tiyani** in 29b. and **Leswi a swi xaveke i xinkwa, nyama na tiya** in 30b. show the relative clauses:

–   Lexi a xi xaviseke

–   Loyi a dlayeke nyoka and

–   Leswi a swi xaveke

to be occupying the initial position of the sentences in 28b., 29b. and 30b. Their highlighted or focussed information **i baji ra yena** in 28b. **i Tiyani** in 29b. and **i xinkwa**, **nyama na tiya** in 30b. appear in the latter part of the sentences. The following table illustrates this clearly:

THE RELATIVE CLAUSE OR CLAUSES WITH PRESUPPOSITION	CLAUSES WITH FOCUS
31a. Lexi dyiwaka hi wanuna	**i xinkwa**.
(What the man eats	is bread)
31b. Loyi a yiveke mali	**i Hlengiwe**.
(The one who stole the money	is Hlengiwe)
31c. Lava rimaka masimu	**i vavasati**.
(Those who plough the fields	are the ladies)

Pseudo-cleft sentences can also be represented in a tree diagram, as in the following example:

32.　**Loyi a yiveke mali i Civilian**.

```
                              CP
                              |
                              |
                              |
                              VP
                          /        \
                        /            \
                      /                \
                    NP                  VI
                  /    \              /    \
                /        \          /        \
              NP         CP        V          NP
              |          |         |          |
              |          |         |          |
              |          |         i       Civilian
              |          |
              |          |
             Pro    Loyi a yiveke mali
```
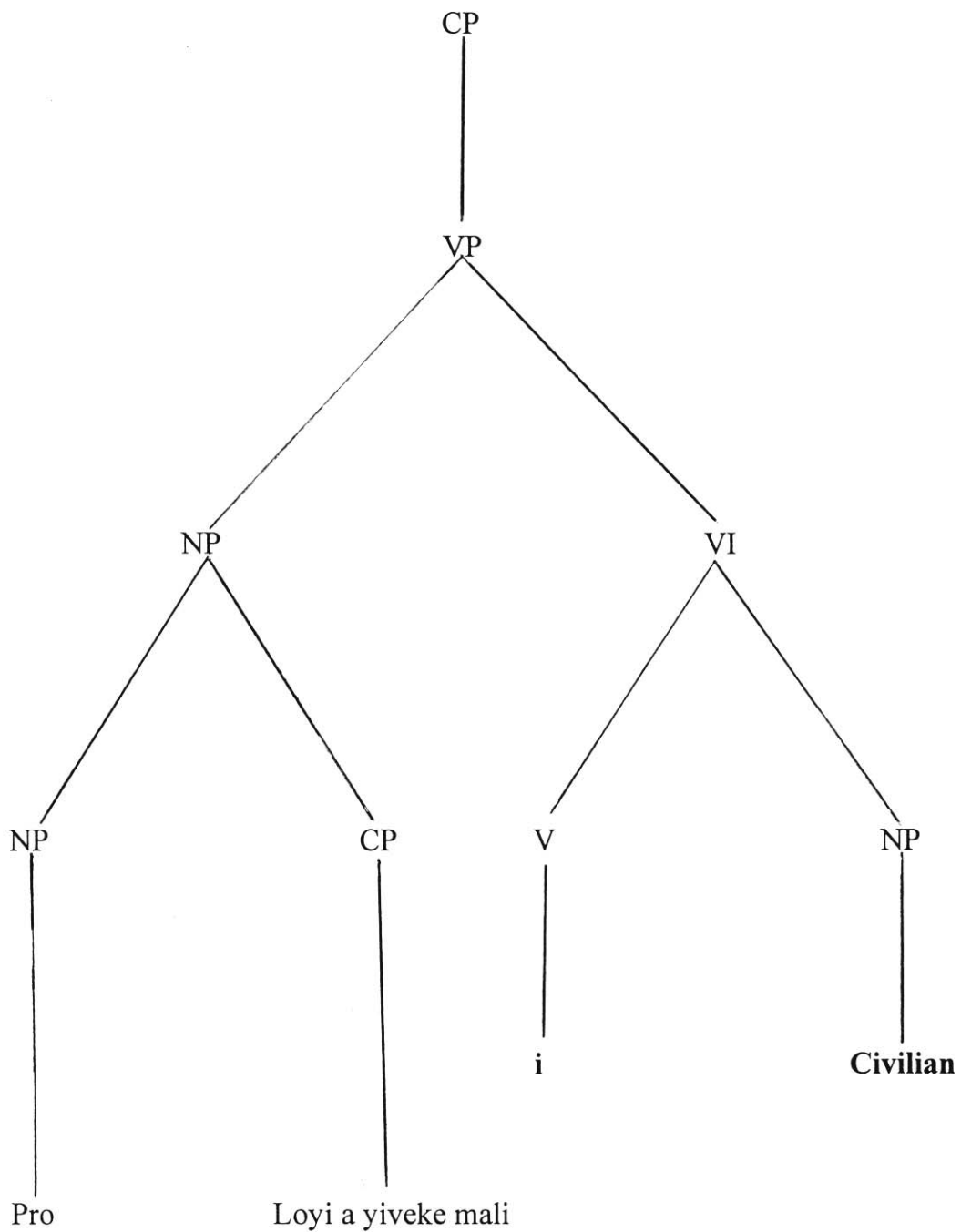
From the above structure in 32. it is evident that the relative clause serves as a subject in pseudo-clefts. This structure differs from that of clefts, because in clefts the copulative clause appears as the subject while the relative clause occupies the object or complement position.

2.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter one has shown that there are three major types of clefts, though focus was on two of them which are clefts and pseudo-clefts. The third major type which is not fully discussed is predicate clefts. It is also highlighted that the main characteristics of cleft sentences is that they are split into two, to form the clause with focus and the relative clause or clause with presupposition.

What also came out is that the change of position of a relative clause from its original position, gives focus to the other part of the sentence. One also concentrated on the cleftability of NPs and NP Locs.

Finally, it has been highlighted that cleft sentences play a significant role in assigning sentences with focus.

CHAPTER 3

THE PHONOLOGICAL, MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTIC
FEATURES OF FOCUS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

As stated in the first chapter, focus is marked by different aspects. In this chapter focus

will be on some of these aspects which are: stress, agreement, adjunction, fronting,

dislocation and the use of some morphemes (**-vu** and **-ka)**, the aspect **se**, and the auxiliary

verb stems **-ka** and **-ko**.   All these aspects will help in revealing how focus can be

recognised in Xitsonga sentences.

3.2   STRESS

The significant use of intensity in speech is referred to as stress. The term stress has to

do with pressure, force and emphasis on anything. In every utterance the greater the

force exerted on a particular word, the more the attention that word is likely to receive.

Once attention is drawn to a word because of the manner in which it was pronounced i.e.

stressed, that word is assigned focus.

Stress is one other aspect that plays a major role in assigning focus to words, phrases and

sentences. Stress can occur on subjects, objects, verbs and adverbs or even to the whole

sentence.

3.2.1 **Definition of stress**

Fabb (1997:35) defines stress as:

> ... a rhythm within the word, which is realised by a combination of
> several features, i.e. stressed syllables which are typically louder,
> longer and high in pitch.

Fabb regards stress as rhythm. A rhythm is characterised by the use of emphasis and tempo in words. He also emphasises that loudness and high pitch in voice are some of the things that characterise stress. Poole (1999:195) supports Fabb's definition by defining stress as: "the greater prominence given to a syllable by means of greater articulator force".

Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987:1046) augments both definitions by stating that "stress is the degree or force put on a word when it is spoken, ... making it seem stronger than other parts".

Longman's definition confirms the idea that stress helps to assign focus to words. Its ability to make words "seem stronger than others" in a sentence is nothing else but focus. Robins (1989:103) also elaborates on the above definitions by stating the following:

> Stress is a generic term for the relatively greater force in
> articulation of part of an utterance. Stress is often associated with

43

greater loudness and it may be a component part of prominence, but other factors involved include inherently greater prominence.

Robins (1989), Fabb (1997) and Poole (1999) all agree to the fact that stressed words are pronounced more forcefully and more loudly than the rest of the other words. Given the above definitions it becomes evident that stress is a special kind of pronunciation which is accompanied by a powerful sound caused by emphasis on the word during pronounciation.

3.2.2 The role of stress in words

The role of stress in different utterances is revealed by Lyons (1977:509) when he says:

> Roughly speaking, expressions that convey new information are stressed and information that the speaker presents as given or recoverable from context are unstressed.

Bearing in mind that anything that introduces a new information is a focus marker, it becomes obvious that stress help people to take note of what is regarded as the most important information from the one that they need not consider. Lyons' exposition on the role of stress is echoed by Robins (1989:104) who says:

> Any part of an utterance may be stressed, that is to say uttered more loudly and with more forceful articulation for the purpose of

emphasis, so as to compel the hearer to take more notice of it than the rest.

From what Lyons and Robins say, it is evident that the main purpose for stressing words is to assign them focus.   This becomes so because stress is persuasive in nature.   By stressing the word the addressee is compelled to quickly pay attention and to recognise what is said to him/her.   In stress there is a driving force that urges one to want to understand and know why a specific word is uttered with greater force.   The following examples illustrate this:

1a.   Famba sweswi.

(Go now)

1b.   **Ndzi ri, famba sweswi**.

(I say, go now)

2a.   Tisa buku ya ntima.

(Bring a black book)

2b.   Tisa buku **ya ntima**.

(Bring a black book)

The examples in 1a. **Famba sweswi** and in 2a.   **Tisa buku ya ntima** are without focus because all of their words are not stressed.   In 1a. the addressee might even be tempted to take some time before doing as told.   In 1b. the use of stress in the whole sentence,

that is, **Ndzi ri famba sweswi**, leaves one with no choice but to quickly do as told. The same aplies to 2b., stress on **ya ntima** clearly states that the addressor is expecting a book of no other colour "but black".

As already stated in the introduction of this chapter, stress occur in different parts of the sentence. The position of a stressed word depends on what the speaker wishes to highlight. As already indicated one might find stress on subjects, verbs, objects, adverbs or even the whole sentence as evident in **Ndzi ri famba sweswi** in 1b.

3.2.3 **Stress on subjects**

Goedhals et. al. (1993:16) define a subject as "the person or a thing about which the sentence is saying something". This definition is expanded by Robins (1989:235) who defines a subject as a noun, or equivalent word or word group, found in the minimal exocentric sentence type.

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary Learners (1987:1053) simply defines a subject as "a person or animal to whom something is done in the experiment". All the above definitions reveal the subject as a topic around which every activity operates. It is the presence of the subject that provokes actions. Lyons (1968:11) aligns himself with the above views when he gives a description of a subject as follows:

> Roughly speaking, the subject of a predication names the thing
> about which something is said.

46

The above definition highlights the fact that the subject serves as a topic around which people discuss or say a thing. Stress on the subject helps people to concentrate on who or what made things to happen. For example:

3a.   **Mufana** u dya xinkwa.

(The boy eats bread)

3b.   **Carol** u rhunga rhoko.

(Carol sews a dress)

3c.   **Elly** u aka yindlu.

(Elly builds a house)

3d.   **Timbyana** ti lume Daphney.

(The dogs bit Daphney)

From sentences 3a.- 3d. all the highlighted words are the subjects in the given sentences. Stress on the above subjects assigns them focus and concentration will be on them as initiators of certain actions. **Mufana** in 3a. **Carol** in 3b.; **Elly** in 3c. and **Timbyana** in 3d. become the focal points of attraction. They highlight on who does something.

All the above examples confirm the fact that when subjects are stressed, the whole attention is on them as doers and initiators of actions; in that way they have attained focus.

3.2.4 Stress on verbs

Subjects and objects become passive when there is nothing to be done by the subject or nothing to act on the object. The only activity that makes them lively is the verb. **The American Heritage Dictionary** (1985:132) defines a verb as "the part of speech, that expresses existence, action or occurrence of things".

Goedhals et. al (1993:25) simply define a verb as "the word that conveys action, feeling or experience". This implies that in every activity something is done or happens through the actions of the subject, which are realised on the object. Thus a verb tells us what is happening.

Realising that verbs show occurrence of events, the use of stress on them helps one to focus on what has happened, what is happening and what is still to happen. This is highlighted in the following examples:

4a.   Rivoningo u **faye** nkomichi.

        (Rivoningo broke a cup)

4b.   Vumbhoni u **dlaya** nyoka.

        (Vumbhoni kills the snake)

4c.   Days u **ta byala** murhi.

        (Days will plant a tree)

All the sentences in 4a.-4c., focus on what is done. Here different actions by different subjects are the centre of attraction. In 4a. stress is in **faye,** which is the action that took place in the past. In 4b. **u dlaya** is the action that is taking place now while in 4c. **u ta byala** tells of something that is going to come. With stress on the verbs the addressee will concentrate only on a particular event that is taking place. This means that the verb has been assigned focus.

3.2.5 **Stress on objects**

It has been stated that the activity of a subject is realized when there is a verb. Subjects do not operate in a vacuum, but need an object to act on. An object is any animate thing or instrument to which an action or a feeling is directed. This is confirmed in **Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English** (1987:1713) which defines an object as a noun, noun phrase or pronoun representing a person or thing that something is done to.

The American Heritage Dictionary (1985:857) aligns itself with the **Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English** by defining an object as "a noun or substantive that receives or is affected by the action of a verb within a sentence".

All the afore-mentioned definitions clearly indicate an object to be anything that the verb is operated on. Focus on what or who the victim of a particular incident is, can be shown by pronouncing the object emphatically and more stressfully:

5a. N'wa-Thayi u basisa **yindlu**.

(N'wa-Thayi cleans the house)

5b. Ntsako u endla **tiya**.

(Ntsako makes tea)

5c. Stanley u hlantswa **movha**.

(Stanley washes the car)

Stress on **yindlu** in 5a., **tiya** in 5b. and **movha** in 5c. assigns them focus. The three help people to concentrate on things or objects on which the actions are performed.

3.2.6 **Stress on adverbs**

Adverbs are modifiers of a verb. When the verb tells or show particular actions, adverbs go further to expatiate on how, when and where a particular thing happened. Bussman (1996:8) defines an adverbs as: "... a grammatical category that serves to modify verbs, adjectives, other adverbs and the whole clause semantically".

The Compact Edition of The Oxford English Dictionary (1971:35) adumbrates on Bussman's definition by defining an adverb as:

> ... a word used to express the attribute which express any relation
> of place, time circumstance, causality and manner or degree of
> which modifies or limits an attribute.

A careful examination of adverbs shows that they play a major role in supporting the verb. As indicated the verb shows action while adverbs elaborate by showing how, where and when the action occurred. It is for these reasons that Crystal (1991:455) states:

> An adverb is the word whose main function is to specify the kind of action expressed by the verb. Other functions include acting as an intensifier and sentence connector.

What is said of adverbs is clearly illustrated in the following examples:

6a.   Tiyiselani u yiva **swinene**.

        (Tiyiselani steals very much)

6b.   U tisa buku ya mina **mundzuku**.

        (Bring back my book tomorrow)

6c.   Manana u vulavula **hi ku kariha**.

        (Mother speaks angrily)

6d.   Vana va ya **exikolweni**.

        (Children go to school)

In sentences 6a. - 6d. stress is on adverbs '**swinene, mundzuku, hi ku kariha** and **exikolweni**. **Swinene** and **hi ku kariha** are adverbs that show the manner or degree to which a thing is done. Comming across the verb **ku yiva** and the adverb **swinene** one quickly knows that one should never make a mistake of leaving valuable items in a visible place when Tiyiselani is around, because he might be tempted to steal them. In 6c. one is also alerted that one should be careful on anything one does when mother is around because she talks angrily or **u vulavula hi ku kariha**.

Mundzuku in 6b. is the adverb that shows time or tells when things are to happen. Stress on **mundzuku** alerts the addressee that the owner of the book expect to find his/her book the following day. In 6d. stress on **exikolweni** highlights of the venue where children are getting to and that place is at school.

The above exposition clearly shows that adverbs are a class of words that modify the verb. They are also assigned focus when one pronounces them forcefully.

3.2.7 Stress in the whole sentence

The main parts that constitute a sentence are subject, verbs, and objects. It sometimes happens that a person stresses the whole sentence; even the whole paragraph. This is mostly applicable in the case where one is given directives that one has to follow. For example:

52

7.　**Teka mali exipachini xa ntima, u ya hoxela Khensani ebangini ya Standard**

(Take the money in the black purse, and deposit it for Khensani at Standard Bank)

The example in 7. clearly shows that it is important for the addressee not to miss a single information of what is said to him/her. **Teka mali exipachini xa ntima** helps one to focus on where to get the money. **U hoxela Khensani ebangi**, helps one to know what to do with the money; and **ya Standard** directs him to know the bank in which the money should be deposited.

3.2.8　Summary

Looking at all different positions where stress is found, it is evident that any stressed information cannot go unnoticed. Stressed words are more prominent. They are usually accompanied by force and loudness of voice. Once that occurs, people quickly pay attention to the stressed words and sentences, and that assigns them focus.

3.3　AGREEMENT

To agree means to be in accord or to match. In most cases people or things that agree to each other have the tendency to go together because there is something that binds them together. This is also applicable in a language. There is a relationship amongst words that channel them to stick together in order to make meaningful statements. This is evident in Crystal's (1997:14) definition of agreement as:

A term used to refer to a formal relationship between elements, whereby a form of one word requires a corresponding form of another.

Crystal confirms the fact that there is an existing relationship amongst words. He further highlights that the form in which words find themselves, is governed by other words in the same sentence. Pei (1966:9) aligns himself with the above statements in his definition of agreement as 'correspondence of one word with another as to gender, number, case or person'. What Pei highlights is evident in the following examples:

8a.   Vavanuna va cina muchongolo.

(Men are dancing a traditional dance)

8b.   *Vavanuna u cina muchongolo.

(*Men is dancing traditional dance)

9a.   Tibuku ta hlayiwa.

(Books are read/studied)

9b.   *Buku ta tsakisa.

(A book are interesting)

The use of the NP **vavanuna** and the concord **va** in 8a. show agreement in number because **va** is used to refer to many people. It also shows that what is addressed is not an abstract or instrument but a person because **va** is only applicable to people. In 9a. the use of **tibuku** and the concord **ta** also show agreement in number and that **tibuku** is inanimate because **ti** can only be applied to instruments and not to human beings.

In 8b. **Vavanuna** and **u** do not agree because one cannot use **u** to many people but can only be used to refer to one person. The same applies to 9b., **buku** and **ta** rejects each other in terms of number, because **ta** can only be used to refer to many books not one. Therefore, sentences 8b. and 9b. are grammatically incorrect. Hence Trask (1993:12) states:

> Agreement is the grammatical phenomenon by which the appearance of one item in a sentence in a particular form requires a second item which is grammatically linked with it to appear in a particular form.

Beside the grammatical correctness of words in a sentence, agreement manifests itself in two ways, i.e. subjectival agreement and objectival agreement. Madadzhe (1992:148) points out that nouns generate concordial morphemes through their class prefixes by means of which other words agree with nouns. This is already indicated by the examples in 8a. where the concordial morpheme **va** agrees with the noun **Vanhu** and in 8b. where the concordial morpheme **ta** agrees with the noun **tibuku**. Both subjectival and objectival agreement may be assigned focus in Xitsonga sentences.

3.3.1 Subjectival agreement

Here focus is on the agreement between the concordial morpheme and the subject. The following examples highlight:

9a. **Va** sweka kahle **vanhu**.

(They do cook well, the people)

9b. **Xi** file, **ximanga**.

(It is dead, the cat)

9c. **Ta** rima **tihomu**.

(They are ploughing, the cows)

The use of the concordial morphemes in the beginning of a sentence instead of the subject noun, and allowing the noun to appear later or at the end of the sentence assign them focus. Sentences 9a. - 9c. are in focus. The focus is assigned by using both the concordial morphemes with their subjects which forms subjectival agreement.

3.3.2 Objectival agreement

Objectival agreement focuses on the relationship between the concordial morpheme and the object in a sentence. The following sentences show objectival agreement.

10a. Va **n'wi** bile **n'wana**.

(They punished (him) physically the child)

10b. Malume wa **byi** nwa **byala**.

(Uncle drinks (it) liquor)

10c. Va **yi** yivile **movha**.

(They have stolen (it) the car)

10d. Wa **yi** hlaya **buku**.

(He reads (it) the book)

The concordial morpheme **n'wi** in 10a. agrees with the object **n'wana**, **byi** in 10b. agrees with **byala**, **yi** with **movha** in 10c. and lastly, **yi** with **buku** in 10d. Here both the concordial morpheme and the object are used in the same sentence to form objectival agreement. In Xitsonga the tendency to use both the objectival concord together with the object is for the purpose of showing emphasis. Emphasis helps to assign focus to the sentences. In this regard objectival agreement is one aspect that helps to assign focus in sentences.

3.4 ADJUNCTION

The **American Heritage Dictionary** (1985:79) defines adjunction as a "word or words added in order to clarify, qualify or modify other words. In adjunction the subject

occupies the adjunct position next to the verb and ends up receiving focus (Madadzhe, 1992:149).

In Xitsonga adjunction is applicable when the existential morpheme **ku** is utilised, and the subject has undergone subject inversion. **Ku** will always come before the verb and this helps to bring about focus. Focus becomes more explicit when a negative construction is added to the sentence just as in:

11a. **Ku** hleva vavasati, ku nga ri vavanuna.

(It is women who gossip, not men).

11b. **Ku** tirha Matimu, ku nga ri Promis.

(It is Matimu that works, not Promis)

11c. **Ku** sweka kokwana, ku nga ri hahani Rose.

(It is grandma who cooks, and not aunt Rose.)

In 11a. -11c. **vavasati, Matimu** and **kokwana** are focal elements because emphasis is on who is gossiping, who is working and who is cooking respectively. What contributed to their being on focus is the employment of **ku** and the negative construction which confirms that no other people are involved in what is said, but only those mentioned above. From what is stated above, it is therefore clear that adjunction helps to assign sentences focus.

3.5   FRONTING

Trask (1993:214) defines the term fronting as:

> Any of various constructions in which a constituent is placed at the
>
> beginning of a sentence or a clause.

Trask's definition shows fronting as the idea of extracting words from any part of the sentence and placing them in a front position. Crystal (1997:427) concurs with Trask by defining fronting as "moving a constituent from the middle or end of the sentence to the front".

Fronting in Xitsonga sentences help to assign words focus. This is evident in the following examples:

12a.   A ndzi nwi byala.

        (I don't drink beer)

12b.   **Byala**, a ndzi nwi.

        (Beer, I don't drink it)

13.a   Homu yi file.

        (The cow is dead)

13b. **Yi file**, homu.

(Dead, is the cow)

14a. A ndzi yivangi mali.

(I did not steal the money.)

14b. **Mali**, a ndzi yivangi.

(The money, I did not steal it)

Sentences in 12a., 13a. and 14a. show no focus at all. Due to fronting, the words **byala**, **yi file**, and **mali** in 12b., 13b., and 14b. end up receiving focus. Therefore fronting is one aspect that assigns words focus.

3.6 DISLOCATION

In **The American Heritage Dictionary** (1985:406) dislocation is regarded as "removing or forcing out words or clauses from a position they previously occupied". Trask (1993:84) describes dislocation as follows:

> Dislocation refers to a construction in which an element is displaced from its normal position in the sentence, that position being occupied by a pro-form.

Both definitions reveal that dislocation has to do with moving words from their original position. On careful examination of dislocation one would realise that it is nearly the same as fronting. The difference is that in Xitsonga dislocation will also employ some personal pronouns to come immediately after the dislocated word is pronounced in its new position. Sometimes the personal pronoun will come first before the dislocated word. This is due to the fact that dislocation occurs in two ways, viz. Left and right dislocation.

3.6.1 **Left dislocation**

In left-dislocation a word is taken from its original position, that is either in the middle of the sentence or at the end of it and placed at the beginning of that sentence. Bearing in mind that every sentence starts from the left and goes to the right this implies that what will be done is called left-dislocation. As already stated the extracted word will be followed with a personal pronoun which helps in assigning focus to the word. This is evident in the following examples:

15a.   A ndzi nwi masi.

(I do not drink milk)

15b.   **Masi wona**, a ndzi nwi.

(The milk, I do not drink it)

16a.	Ndzi ta xava xinkwa.

(I will buy bread)

16b.	**Xinkwa xona**, ndzi ta xava.

(The bread, I will buy it)

17a.	Munghana wa mina i Nyiko.

(My friend is Nyiko.)

17b.	**Nyiko yena**, i munghana wa mina.

(Nyiko, (he) is my friend)

In sentences 15a., 16a. and 17a., i.e. **A ndzi nwi masi, ndzi ta xava xinkwa** and **munghana wa mina i Nyiko**; there is no focus shown by these sentences. It is only in 15b., 16b. and 17b. where there is focus due to left-dislocation. In 15b. the sentence **Masi wona a ndzi nwi,** puts it clearly that the speaker will opt for any other thing to drink, except for **masi** (milk). **Masi** is the only thing that she would not like to see. The same applies in 16b. where the speaker states clearly that there is one thing that he would not leave out in his shopping and that is **xinkwa** (bread). Lastly, in 17b. one would expect the speaker to have no other closest friend than **Nyiko**. All of the above examples confirm that left-dislocation is another focus marker.

3.6.2 Right-dislocation

In right-dislocation the shifting of words in sentences is only caused by placing a personal pronoun in the beginning of the sentence and leaving the rest of the sentence as it was before, i.e., focus is employed in right dislocation by allowing the personal pronoun to occupy the initial portion of the sentence. The following sentences will highlight:

18a.   A ndzi hlayangi tibuku.

(I did not study the books)

18b.   **Tona**, a ndzi hlayangi tibuku.

(The books, I did not study them)

19a.   Wa tsutsuma Nhlamulo.

(Nhlamulo is running)

19b.   **Yena**, wa tsutsuma Nhlamulo.

(Nhlamulo, does run)

20a.   Bya tika vutomi.

(Life is tough)

20b.   **Byona**, bya tika vutomi.

(It is tough, the life)

By employing right dislocation the information in a sentence is emphasised and this assigns it focus.

From the above exposition there is no doubt that both left and right dislocation are used with purpose. The main aim of using them is to highlight something and that assigns focus to the highlighted information.

3.7 THE INCEPTIVE-CONTINUATIVE ASPECT "SE" AS A FOCUS MARKER

Se is the aspect concerned with duration. Baumbach (1987:218) says the following about this aspect:

> **Se** indicates the beginning and subsequent continuation of an action, etc. which has not taken place up till now and which follows on another foregoing action.

Se always comes before the verb in the sentence. It serves the duty of showing the change of state from the one people knew or know, to the new situation which people are not aware of. The following examples highlight this:

21a. Sizwe **se** u tsarile ntirho.

(Sizwe has now written the work.)

21b. Suzen **se** u vuyile dorobeni.

(Suzen is now back from town)

21c.   Nenge wa Excellent **se** wu pfimbe ngopfu.

(Excellent's leg is now badly swollen)

21d.   Muvabyi wa Aids **se** u lovile.

(The Aids patient has now passed away)

Sentences 21a. - 21d., show the change of state of affairs. In 21a. the use of **se** helps people to realise that what they knew that Sizwe did not write his work, has now changed because he has now done his work. In 21b. it shows that the addressee knew Suzen to have gone to town not knowing that she has returned. With the employment of **se** one is alerted that she is now present. In 21c. and 21d., both sentences show a change of situation from a better one to a worse one. In 21c. **se** shows that Excellent's leg is not getting better while in 21d. it also reports the death of someone people knew to be ill. The use of the inceptive-continuative aspect **se** in the above sentences has assigned them focus.

3.8   MORPHEMES AS FOCUS MARKERS

3.8.1   The inducive suffix -vu

The suffix **-vu** is added into a verb-stem. Once employed in a verb it serves or has the function of **also** in a sentence. Baumbach (1987:231) explains why **-vu** is called inducive suffix when he says:

65

This verbal suffix is called the inducive suffix, because it is only used when you want to persuade or induce a person who is unwilling to act in a certain way, to do or to act in the way you want him to act.

Bearing in mind that "to persuade" has to do with convincing a person that a thing is so. This implies that the suffix -**vu** is able to drive one to do or act according to what is focussed on. Once that is achieved, it means that the inducive suffix -**vu** is able to assign focus when used in a sentence.

As already stated, this suffix is added to a verb-stem as in the following:

22a. Hi **cheleleni-vu** kofi na hina hi nwa.

(Pour us also some coffee so that we may drink)

22b. **Tsutsumani-vu** na n'wina mi ta hatla mi vuya.

(Run ye also so that you can also come back quickly)

22c. **Sweka-vu** u kota tin'wana tintombi.

(Cook also and be like other girls)

22d. **Yimbelelani-vu** hi kona mi nga ta tiphina hi ntlangu wa bolo.

(Sing ye also, it is then that you can enjoy the soccer match)

The above examples have been assign focus by using the suffix -**vu** in each verb-stem. In 22a. **hi cheleleni-vu** serves to highlight that the people asking for the coffee have not yet got it while others have already got it. What marks this is -**vu** which induces the one who pours out coffee to notice those who have not yet got it.

In 22b., **tsutsumani-vu** serves to encourage the ones ordered to run to do like others did. What others did is to run and this helped them to quickly go through their work. -**Vu** then serves to advice the ones addressed and to show to them that the only key to quickly getting over their job is in running. In 22c. **sweka-vu** serves to encourage a girl to realise that it is good for her to cook as other girls also do the same. Lastly, in 22d. **yimbelelani-vu** encourages people who could not enjoy watching a soccer game to realise that what makes others enjoy it is that they sing. The use of **yimbelelani-vu** serves to alert spectators that the secret of enjoying the game is in singing.

The suffix -**vu** can also be used with absolute pronouns to assign focus on them as in:

23a.   Na **wena-vu** wa laveka enhlengeletanini.

(You are also expected in the meeting)

23b.   Na **hina-vu** hi ta kala hi twa ndlala.

(We shall also get hungry)

23c.   Na **nwina-vu** fambani mi ya tsala.

(Ye also go and write)

All the same the employment of the inducive suffix **-vu** to absolute pronouns serve to persuade the NPs to realise that they are also expected to do as told or they are part of a particular event; or state of affairs as in 23a. where **wena-vu** shows that the addressee who thought he was not invited to a meeting was surely invited. The same applies to 23b. which shows that all will get hungry. And in 23c. the group which did not write the work is also invited to join others who already did, and they also have to do likewise. The most important thing about the inducive suffix **-vu** is that it assigns focus to verbs and subjects because it has the power to persuade people to act in a certain way and also to help people realise that they are included or form part of what is to transpire in a given situation.

3.8.2 The insistent suffix -ka

Like **-vu** the insistent suffix **-ka** is also added to a full verb-stem. According to Baumbach (1987:231) **-ka** is called an insistent suffix because it is used to indicate to people one's sincere insistence on the execution of an act that one wants them to perform as in the following examples:

24a.　Mafemani **yima-ka** u muka ekaya.

　　　(Mafemani stand also and go home)

24b.　Mahlori **tirha-ka** ri nga si hisa dyambu.

　　　(Mahlori do work, before the sun gets hot)

68

24c.   A hi **sweke-ka**, hi ta hatla hi dya.

(Lets cook also, so that we may quickly have food to eat)

24d.   **Tshamani-ka** hi ta mi nyika swodya.

(Do sit down, so that we may give you food to eat)

The above examples reveal the suffix **-ka** to be insisting in nature, when employed to a verb it also persuades one to do or act according to the given order.   In **Mafemani yima-ka u muka ekaya** in 24a., **yima-ka**, compels Mafemana to stand up and do as directed.   In 24b., **tirha-ka** insists on the fact that Mahlori has to do her work at no other time, but now because if she does not, the sun will be hot and she can no longer effectively do her job. In 24c., **a hi sweke-ka** also draws people's attention that someone is not willing to cook but it is insisted that one joins in the cooking for both people to can quickly have something to eat.   Finally in 24d. **tshamani-ka** persuades people who are not willing to sit down to do so in order to be given food by the addressor.   Above all, what matters most is that the insistive suffix **-ka** assign focus to sentences they are found in.

3.9   THE AUXILIARY VERB STEMS 'KA' AND 'KO' AS FOCUS MARKERS

The two auxiliary verb stems also serve to assign focus when employed in a sentence. They are contraction of **kala** for **ka** and **kondza** for **ko** and they normally work as follows:

25a.   Manana va lo **ka** va famba va nga dyangi.

(Mother had to go without anything to eat)

25b.   Rhulani u lo **ka** a tlhela hikuva bazi a yi fikangi.

(Rhulani ultimately returned home because the bus did not arrive)

26a.   Matanato u tiyisele ku dyondza a **ko** a humelela.

(Matanato persevered in her studies until she succeeded)

26b.   Fatima u biwe a **ko** a boxa laha a veke kona mali.

(Fatima was beaten until she told where she hid the money)

The use of **ka** in 25a. and 25b. shows that those who spend a long time waiting for something to happen, end up loosing their patience without getting what they wanted. In 25a. **Manana** waits for food but she finally had to leave without getting it, because it was not served in time. The same applies in 25b.; **Rhulani** who has waited for the bus for a long time, had to cancel her journey because the bus did not arrive or has delayed. In 26a. and 26b. people stick to what they want until they get it. That their final goal is achieved, is marked by **ko** which means until.

From the above discussion it becomes clear that aspects, suffixes and contracted auxiliary verbs also serve a great purpose of highlighting something which was not explicitly stated previously. This shows that focus is not only attained through the use of long words, but even morphemes do assign focus in sentences.

3.10   SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter it has been shown how the various focus markers work. Stress which gives rhythm and special prominence to a word has been fully discussed to show where it is found and how it manifests itself.   There has also been a clear exposition of agreement as concord i.e. the use of words in sentences such that they conform to the rules of grammar.

Fronting as the tendency of placing at the beginning of a sentence constituents which has the effect of bringing focus in that sentence has also been discussed to show the effects it has in bringing focus to sentences.   In dislocation it has been shown that starting a sentence with a pronoun or subject helps to bring focus. Morphemes as suffixes have also proved to be able to assign focus to words they are inflected to.   It has also been revealed that even auxiliary verbs do assign sentences focus.

CHAPTER 4

THE GRAMMATICAL PROCESSES AND THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to further examine aspects of focus in areas where it occurs. The areas of investigation here will be divided into two, namely grammatical processes and the figurative language. In the former the following will be discussed: reduplication, repetition, parallelism, negative verb focusing and linking. In the latter proverbs, idioms and other figurative expressions will be discussed as focus markers.

4.2   GRAMMATICAL PROCESSES

4.2.1   Reduplication

Words belonging to the same part of speech are often repeated to show focus. In this case the same word is repeated twice in a construction, but the second is repeated immediately after the first one. This phenomenon is called reduplication. Robins (1989:202) confirms this by defining reduplication as a type of grammatical formation where a part or the whole of a root form is repeated in the same word.

This definition is elucidated by Pei (1966:230) when he says:

> Reduplication is a morphological process where there is a
> repetition of a radical element or part of it, occurring
> usually at the beginning of a word, occasionally with a word
>
> ...

Bussman (1996:400) simply defines reduplication as doubling of initial syllables of a root or stem, while Marivate (1996:39) alludes to reduplication when in his discussion of compounds, refers to "those compounds which are formed by the repetition of a word".

In addition to the definitions by Marivate, Robins and Pei one can cite Crystal (1995:429) who also shares his views by simply saying that reduplication is a form involving a repeated element. From the above definitions it becomes clear that reduplication occurs when a word or part of it is repeated.

The employment of reduplicated words serves a great purpose of assigning focus to sentences. Du Plessis (1995:23) concurs with this description when he states that one of the ways to put emphasis on the action, is to repeat the predicate. Though Du Plessis seems to have concentrated on the predicate only, it is nevertheless possible to bring about reduplication by utilising other word categories such as nominals and adverbs.

Reduplication is most common in folktales, proverbs, idioms and even ordinary sentences as will be seen in examples which will be given under different word categories. Different word categories are reduplicated to assign focus to the reduplicated word falling under that category. From the different word categories, only three will be considered in this regard, viz. verbs, adverbs and ideophones.

4.2.1.1 *Reduplication of verbs*

Verbs are the mostly reduplicated words in Xitsonga. In proverbs, folktales or even in our everyday communication, what is mostly reduplicated are verbs. Once they are reduplicated they assign focus to sentences or to what is done, for example:

1a.   Ndzi lo **yima-yima** ku kala swilo swa mina swi lulama.

(I stood on my feet, until my things were in order)

1b.   Suzen i munhu who **famba-famba** a nga tali ku kumeka.

(Suzen is a person who travels a lot it is not easy to find her)

1c.   Nwana wo **rila-rila** wa karhalisa.

(A child who cries constantly is tiresome)

1d.   Xiculu a **yiva-yiva** Somisa hi mahlo, kasi hi leswi a n'wi rhandzaka.

(Xiculu kept on eyeing Somisa for the reason that he loves her)

The use of **yima-yima** in 1a. shows that the speaker had to persevere until her things were in order. **Yima-yima** shows that the success came after a tiresome process of going up and down. In 1b. **famba-famba** alerts the addressee that it is difficult to find Suzen as she hardly stays in one place. **Famba-famba** emphasises the regular movement from one place to another.

The use of **rila-rila** in 1c. cautions the addressee of the type of a child one would not enjoy staying with. The use of the verb **rila-rila** shows that the child keeps on crying such that one faces some difficulties in trying to calm him or her.

In 1d. reduplication of **yiva** to form **yiva-yiva** shows how often Xiculu keeps eyeing on Somisa. In reduplication of verbs focus is on how one repeatedly does something and that helps to attract people's attention.

This kind of reduplication is found even in proverbs such as:

2a.   Mhunti yo **tlula-tlula** mangulwe wa yi siya.

(The duiker jumping here and there is left behind by the little red buck)

2b. **Tshova-tshova** anga na ndzima.

(To break everything when working is not good)

From the proverb **mhunti yo tlula-tlula mangulwe wa yi siya** in 12a., focus is on **tlula-tlula** which means to jump up and down repeatedly. The proverb serves to highlight the fact that if one does things quickly but not carefully, one is more likely to leave most work undone.

In 2b. reduplication of the verb **tshova-tshova** focuses on how repeatedly one breaks things when working. It does not matter how fast and well one works, but if after working most of the things will be damaged, such a person is more likely to be avoided when one needs someone to help. The proverb serves to highlight that people need to be careful when working with breakable things because if they are not, they might find themselves with nothing as they will have broken everything.

Reduplication on verbs is also common in folk-tales to emphasise on what the narrator is telling, as in the following examples:

3a. Hi loko n'wa-nghala a **bonga-bonga** hi vukarhi.

(The lion roar repeatedly with anger)

3b.   Nwa-mpfundla a **cina-cina** hi ntsako.

(The hare pranced about happily)

The use of **bonga-bonga** in 3a. serves to highlight how repeatedly the lion kept on roaring. It is the repeated roaring that attract people's attention, as they would like to find out the reason behind **ku bonga-bonga**. Once **ku bonga-bonga** is taken into consideration; it means that it has attained focus. The same applies to **ku cina-cina** in 3b., focus is on how repeatedly the hare kept on dancing. People then get to know that the hare's joy was shown by its dancing.

Reduplication on verbs is also applicable on idioms; as in the following:

3c.   Tatana u ta ku **khoma-khoma** u kondza u rila.

(Father will touch-touch you until you cry i.e. father will thrash you)

3d.   Nyamisoro u tile a ta **yima-yima** tatana a ko a hola.

(The Sangoma stand-stand on father until he was cured. i.e. the sangoma cured my

father)

The use of the idiom **ku khoma-khoma** in 3c. aims at highlighting that father will give one a severe physical punishment. In 3d. **ku yima-yima** has to do with the manner in

77

which the Sangoma cures his patients which involves lots of medicines and activities. This also emphasises that what the sangoma will do is definitely going to leave one cured or healed.

Reduplication on verbs is mainly for the purpose of drawing people's attention on how things are done. Once that is attained it means that people were able to get the gist of what transpired. This means that reduplication shows focus.

4.2.1.2 *Reduplication of adverbs*

Adverbs as modifiers of verbs are also reduplicated in order to assign focus to the manner, place and time in which things occur. The following examples highlight this point:

4a.   **Endzeni-ndzeni** ka lwandle ku na swiharhi ni swimilana swo tola.

(There are many plants and animals deep inside the sea)

4b.   Phamelani vanhu hinkwavo swodya, **ngopfu-ngopfu** vana.

(Give food to all people, especially children)

4c.   Maphorisa va lavisisa **kahle-kahle** hi ta ku dlawa ka yena.

(Police carefully investigate the case of his murder)

4d.   Nsuku wu ceriwa **hansi-hansi** mugodini.

(Gold is dug deep down the ground)

In 4a. the use of **endzeni-ndzeni** shows that one does not refer to a shallow place, but to a very deep area. Reduplication of **ndzeni** to form **ndzeni-ndzeni** highlights the depth where animals and plants are found in the sea.

In 4b. **ngopfu-ngopfu** serves to alert the addressee that focus should be on children when giving people food. This means that no child should go unattended. The use of **kahle-kahle** in 4c. emphasises the thoroughness and careful examination of evidence by the police in the death case. In 4d. the employment of **hansi-hansi** shows that gold is not easily found, but one has to dig very deep into the bowls of the soil. Reduplication of **hansi-hansi** alerts the addressee that getting gold is not a child's play but a matter of life and death as people are sometimes buried alive in their search for gold.

Reduplication of adverbs is also found in folk-tales as in:

5a.   Khale-khale.

(A long time ago)

5b.   Kule-kule.

(Very far away)

The use of the adverb **khale-khale** in 5a. helps to highlight that what the speaker wishes to say is something that took place a very long time ago; and that one cannot even estimate when. This has the power to attract people's attention such that they become attentive in order to hear things of the past, that took place when even their forefathers were not yet born.

The adverb **kule-kule** in 5b. makes the listeners aware of the fact that the place the narrator wants to talk about is not found nearby; this means that they don't even imagine themselves to can reach such a place.

4.2.1.3 *Reduplication of ideophones*

Ideophones are imitations of sound and manner of doing things. Reduplication of the imitated sound and manner of doing things assigns focus to the repeated ideophones as in the following:

6a.   Swindzilwana a swi vonaka ku **keti-keti** le kule.

        (The sparkling fire was seen from a distance)

6b.   Yindlu yi basisiwe yi sala yo **hati-hati**.

        (The house was cleaned and shiny)

In 6a. focus is on **keti-keti** (the sparkling of the fire) which could be seen from a distance. **Hati-hati** in 6b. emphasises on the gloss of the floor of the house. The two ideophones

help one to focus on the manner in which things are happening while the following will emphasise on imitations of sound, e.g.:

7a. **Rhwembu-rhwembu** ya wena yi vange hi ku tlangela byanyini.

(The itching in your body was caused by playing on the grass)

7b. **Vudlomu-dlomu** lebyi twalaka i bya vana lava tlulelaka ematini.

(The sound is made by children who dive into the water)

7c. **Vupha-pha** lebyi twalaka i bya xibamu.

(The bang-bang sound is that of a gun)

Rhwembu-rhwembu in 7a. **vudlomu-dlomu** in 7b. and **vupha-pha** in 7c. draw people's attention to focus respectively on the sound that comes out when one repeatedly scratches oneself in 7a., the repeated sound of when things fall into water which is made by children who jumped into water in 7b. and that of gunshots in 7c. This shows that the sound did not only happen once but repeatedly.

Reduplication of ideophones is also applicable in proverbs, as the following highlights:

8a. **Ntlevu-ntlevu** yi dlele mhunti.

(Jumping up and down killed the duiker)

8b.   Ncele wa mbila-mbila, **nsohe-nsohe**.

(The rock rabbits' hole, you never reach the end of it)

Reduplication of the ideophone **ntlevu** to produce **ntlevu-ntlevu** helps one to focus on how busy the person is. The above proverb helps one to know that it is dangerous to work and not give yourself time to rest. This is achieved by looking at **ntlevu-ntlevu** which shows a hard working person and working very fast. People then get to know what **ntlevu-ntlevu** does, because it kills. This will help people to know that in every hard work, one needs time to rest. **Nsohe-nsohe** in 8b. shows something which is not straight. It is for this reason that anything or enemy trying to enter the rock rabbit's hole becomes tired before reaching the end of it.

Poetry is one field that employs reduplication of ideophones to help to assign focus to the reduplicated words. The following are examples in Ntsan'wisi, Ndhambi and Nkondo's poetry:

9a.   **Chuku-chuku** wee!

(A sound made by the movement of the old black train)

9b.   **Kelu-kelu**.

(Looking side ways)

9c.   Ka **khigi-khigi**.

(Stopping suddenly against an obstacle)

9d.   Mihloti **hara-hara**.

(Tears drip-drip i.e. tears flowing without stopping)

Reduplication of the ideophone **chuku** to form **chuku-chuku** in 9a. helps one to focus on the rhythm and sound made by a moving train. **Kelu-kelu** in 9b. helps one to focus on how repeatedly one keeps on looking sideways. The same applies to **ka khigi-khigi** in 9c., it emphasises that the sudden stop against the obstacle did not occur once. This means that there were a number of obstacles that kept on blocking the progress of the forward movement. **Hara-hara** in 9d. shows how repeatedly tears kept on flowing from one's eyes as one cries quietly.

From the above discussion it is clear that reduplication is common in Xitsonga language. The aim of using reduplication is none other than putting emphasis and showing focus to what one talks about.

4.2.2 Negative verb focusing

Negative verb focusing is nearly the same as reduplication. The only difference is that here focus is assigned to sentences when the verb phrase is in its negative form. These types of sentences are sometimes referred to in literature as double negatives (Dembetembe 1986:5). The negative formatives are employed in this regard to reinforce rather than cancel each other. This is highlighted in the following examples:

83

10a. **A va nga cini**, **a va nga cini** a ku ri tanani mi ta vona.

(They did not dance, they did not dance, it was eye-catching)

10b. Maggie **a nga yivi**, **a nga yivi** wo chela ndlala.

(Maggie does not steal, does not steal leaves one hungry)

10c. Meitah **a hi futa**, **a hi futa** a nga na rona.

(Meitah is untidy)

10d. Dyambu **a ri nga hisi**, **a ri nga hisi** a ri hisa ni vusokoti.

(The sun was so hot that it burnt even the ants)

Sentences 10a. -10d. are all assigned focus by using a negative form of the verb. The use of **a va nga cini, a va nga cini** in 10a. emphasises that people danced with vigour for a long time. **A nga yivi, a nga yivi** in 10b. stresses the fact that Maggie is a great and experienced thief that all people are afraid to leave their things behind when she is around. In 10c. the use of **a hi futa, a hi futa** strongly states how untidy Meitah is, and lastly in 10d. one puts it emphatically that the sun was very hot.

From the above examples one can realise that the use of a negative form in a verb does not always express the negative one might think it literally means, but imply the opposite of what is said in a more forceful manner, and this is focus assignment.

4.2.3 **Repetition**

Repetition as the term indicates, means to repeat, to do, or say again. Repetition occurs in language in what we can call ordinary speech and literature. In literature the technical term "anaphora" is used for this phenomenon. Interestingly the term "anaphora" applies to grammar also, but in the latter it refers to "the use of a word referring to or replacing a word used earlier in a sentence to avoid repetition (Complete Word Finder 1993:50). In literature it means "the repetition of a word or a phrase at the beginning of successive clauses" (Complete Wordfinder, ibid.)

Discussing repetition in Poetry, Milubi (1997:22) shares his views on how repetition works, and what its purpose is when he says:

> Repetition often creates the sense of pattern or a form in a work
> of literature. At a particular level repetition is used for
> amplification and emphasis.

He further points out that repetition is meant to draw attention. From what Milubi states; it is obvious that repetition assigns focus because what is emphasised ends up drawing people's attention.

As already stated repetition is one of the author's valuable tools used in literature to emphasise the message he aims to convey.

4.2.3.1 *Repetition in poetry*

In poetry for example, repetition is the tool commonly used for emphasis. An example is the following poem by E.P. Ndhambi cited by Nkuzana (1988:61):

MBILU

11.   **We** mbilu ntlhavela ya ngati vuton'wini.

      Wena tsawu ra **rirhandzu, rirhandzu** vanhwini.

      We fundzu ra **rivengo, rivengo** tikweni.

      We nyoka, nyoka ya le hansi misaveni.

      We baku ra **xihundla, xihundla** mhakeni.

THE HEART

You heart the fountain of life

You the seat of love, love among the people

You the knot of hatred, hatred in the country

You the snake, the snake underground

You are the secret, the secret in the affair

In the above stanza, Ndhambi (1966:14) uses repetition to emphasise how complicated the heart is. In the first line he portrays the heart as a fountain of life, without which life would be impossible. He also uses repetition to draw people's attention and to alert

86

them not to underestimate the heart; because it is vital to human life. **Rirhandzu** is repeated in the second line to show that the love we share comes from the heart. In contrast to **rirhandzu**, **rivengo** is also repeated to show that hatred and destruction of others also comes because of the very heart. Secrets are also kept in the heart. Repetition here helps one to completely focus on how good and evil the heart can be.

4.2.3.2 *Repetition in clauses*

Repetition does not occur in poetry only, sometimes clauses are also repeated in ordinary speech to show focus on a particular state of events. The repeated clauses are more likely to have two tenses though it sometimes happens that they have the same tense in both clauses. The following examples are pertinent in this regard:

12a.   Hi lo pfuka **hi sweka, hi sweka** se hi ya masin'wini.

(We woke up and cook, and cook and then go the fields)

12b.   **Hi tlange, hi tlanga** hi ko hi karhala.

(We played, and play until we got tired)

12c.   **Hi hleke, hi hleka** hi ko hi xiririka mihloti.

(We laughed, and laugh until tears flowed from our eyes)

12d.   Vanhu **va ta cina, va cina** ri kondza ri xa.

(People will dance, and dance until sunrise)

12e.   Mundzuku **hi ta rima, hi rima** hi ko hi heta nsimu.

(Tomorrow we will plough, and plough until we finish)

Repetition from all of the above sentences serves to arouse the interest of people to want to hear more of what transpired or is about to happen. The use of **hi sweka, hi sweka** in 12a. shows that one cooks fast as one would like to go to the fields as quick as one can before the sun gets hot. **Hi tlange, hi tlanga** in 12b. and **hi hleke, hi hleka** in 12c. aim at emphasising how happy the people were and how they enjoyed themselves playing and laughing. In **va ta cina, va cina** in 12d. and **va ta rima, va rima** in 12e. focus is on the hard work coming ahead or something to come. People become aware of the fact that what awaits them is to plough until their work is through and to dance until sunrise. It has already been stated that repetition occurs in sentences in order to emphasise what one talks about.

4.2.3.3 *Repetition in folktales*

In folk-tales repetition is also used. However, wherever repetition is used, one finds that it has marked focus. In the tale **N'wampfundla a sweka N'wamhuti hi mbita** by Junod (1983:63) this is highlighted:

13a.   N'wamhunti a ku: **Ndza tshwa, ndza tshwa**
(The Duiker said: I am burning, I am burning)

88

13b.　N'wamhunti **a cemo**; **a cemo**.

(The Duiker screamed, he screamed)

13c.　**Yo**; **yo**, **yo** mati ya vila manuku.

(Crying repeatedly, the water is boiling)

Repetition of **ndza tshwa** in 13a. emphasises the fact that the duiker was in serious danger of being cooked alive as the hare was not prepared to let him out of the pot. **A cemo, a cemo** in 13b. also emphasises and alerts the listener that the duiker's cry for help was loud enough to touch one's feelings to realise the type of pain he was in. **Yo! yo, yo** in 13c. also help to highlight how repeatedly and loudly the duiker cried for help while the hare continued its evil plan of killing the duiker. Listening at the folktale one is surely touched to realise how painful the duiker died and how evil the hare was, and this teaches one not to trust a friend. This means that the repeated words have served their purpose of assigning focus to statements.

From what is stated above it becomes clear that repetition either in language or in literature play a major role of emphasising and assigning focus to the repeated information.

4.2.4 **Parallelism**

Schapera (1965:19) defines parallelism as:

89

Correspondence in sense, or construction of successive clauses or passages where in each pair of lines the first halves are identical in wording and the second are basically alike in meaning.

The following examples from Marhanele's (1996:40) poem entitled **Vusokoti** help to illustrate on Schapera's definition:

14a. **Byi xaxamerile** byi sasekile.

(They stand in a row and look very beautiful)

14b. **Byi longolokile** xinketana.

(They move one after another like a chain)

15a. **Byi nyenya** ku tlulana milenge.

(The scorn to surpass one other's feet)

15b. **Byi nyenya** ku nuhana makehele.

(They scorn to smell each other's armpits)

16a. **Mianakanyo ya byona** yi entile.

(Their mind is deep)

16b. **Mianakanyo ya byona** yi ringana ni lwandle.

(Their mind is like a sea)

From 14a. and 14b. both sentences begin with the concord **byi**, this shows the same wording as stated in Schapera's definition. What comes after the concord **byi** is **xaxamerile** in 14a. and **longolokile** in 14b. which both means to stand along a straight line with one thing coming after another. The two statements help one to focus on the unity of ants as they harmoniously move along a straight line where no ant pushes another.

In 15a. -15b. **byi nyenya** occurs in both sentences to emphasise what ants dislike most. Both **ku tlulana milenge** in 15a. and **ku nuhana makehele** in 15b. means, hate and negative attitude towards each other. This means that the two are alike in meaning. However, the statements serve to encourage people to copy from ants which have no room for hatred among themselves.

The depth of the ants' minds is compared to the deep sea as evident in 15a. and 15b. This is aimed at challenging people to see how weak and how shallow their level of thinking is when compared to that of ants. This is also aimed at alerting and provoking people's feelings to do what is sensible and not be outsmarted by small creatures such as ants.

While Schapera speaks of successive lines identical in wording and meaning, Hodza and Fortune (1979:88) reveal another type of parallelism when they say:

91

Parallelism is observed when an idea is contrasted with another idea through the same part of speech.

What Hodza and Fortune elucidate is evident in the following examples:

17a.   **Ku nyika** i ku hayeka, **ku tsona** i ku cukumeta.

(To give is to hang up, to be close-fisted is to throw away)

17b.   Xikwembu a **xi gobangi**, xi lo **haxa**.

(God did not sow sparingly, he has sown by broadcasting)

17c.   Nomu a **wu tlheli, ku tlhela** rintiho.

(What is uttered cannot be withdrawn, a pointed finger can)

17d.   Ndlala a **yi ngheni** hosi, **ku nghena** rifu.

(Hunger does not enter the king's place only death do)

The proverb **ku nyika i ku hayeka, ku tsona i ku cukumeta** in 17a. has contrasting ideas, viz. **ku nyika** which means to extend one's hand and be able to help others through giving. The proverb equates **ku nyika** (to give) to hanging up something at a place where you can take it down one day for use. However this is contrasted with **ku tsona** which is associated with **ku cukumeta**. **Ku tsona** means to hold back things and being stingy. The entire proverb is aimed at helping to urge people to give because one day they will get something in return.   This is marked by the employment of **ku hayeka**. Yet **ku cukumeta** helps one to realise that there is no reward for being selfish or not giving.

In **Xikwembu a xi gobangi, xi lo haxa** in 17b. focus is attained by using contrasting words **ku goba** which means to sow sparingly, one seed at a time because one does not have enough seeds. In contrast **ku haxa** means to scatter seed all over the fields. The broadcast method is used because one has more than enough seeds. Through its contrast the proverb emphasises the fact that there are plenty of women from whom to choose a wife. This is aimed at helping someone not to cry for a woman who dumped him because he can still find a better one.

In 17c. people are cautioned to be careful of what they say because once they speak carelessly it would be impossible to retract what they have said. People can be trapped by their own words if they are not careful; hence the proverb states : **Nomu a wu tlheli, ku tlhela rintiho**.

In 17d. focus is on the power of death. It shows that death has no bounds, it befalls even a king. Death attacks all people whether rich or poor, king or commoner. All people are victims of death. The proverb **ndlala a yi ngheni hosi, ku nghena rifu** is aimed at educating people to know that one cannot combat death.

The above examples confirm Hodza and Fortune's ideas of viewing parallelism as statements consisting of contrasting ideas. Guma (1967:83) gives a definition that reconciles both Hodza and Fortune's ideas and Schapera's views by stating that:

> Parallelism is a literary device that occurs when two ideas
> are juxtaposed irrespective of whether they are similar or

93

contrastive. Where such a device occurs there is normally a pause punctuated by a comma which balances the two propositions.

In addition to what is said by the cited writers, one can add Marivate's classification of parallelism into two types: viz. direct and indirect parallelism. Ntuli (1984:191) calls the two types perfect and partial parallelism. However, parallelism whether perfect or partial, direct or indirect serves a major role of highlighting and emphasising on what one says.

What is evident about parallelism is that it helps to assign focus to statements. This becomes so because people will want to understand the reason behind using the contrasting ideas and repetition of words either by wording or by using synonymous words as already indicated.

4.2.5 **Linking**

Linking is another form of repetition where a certain statement or word in one line is going to succeed and appear in the following line. Schapera (1965:19) confirms this when he defines linking as 'a word or idea occurring in the second half of a line, is repeated in the first half of the succeeding line'.

Milubi (1997:18) adumbrates on Schapera's definition when he describes linking as:

The joining of lines by means of a word or phrase, this pattern may be found in the beginning or at the end of the phrase.

Milubi also gives a clue of what linking is characterised of. He highlights that linking may occur at the beginning or the end of the phrase. This idea is supported by Ntuli (1984:192) who says:

Linking actually happens when similar words or (stems or roots) appear at the beginning of successive lines (initial linking) or at the end (final linking).

Both Milubi and Ntuli agree on two patterns of linking viz, the initial and final linking. Both final and initial linking fall under one major type which is vertical linking. Besides the vertical linking there is also the oblique and cross linking. The most important thing is that these different forms of linking assign focus to sentences and words.

4.2.5.1 *Vertical linking*

Vertical linking occurs either in the beginning of sentences i.e. (initial linking) or the end of sentences, i.e. (final linking). Vertical linking shows that the repetition amongst words occur in the form of a vertical line.

95

4.2.5.2 *Initial linking*

In poetry or any verse initial linking occurs when a word which starts the second line is a repetition of the one which started the first line. Sometimes initial linking occurs when words which start the first clause of a compound sentence also appear at the beginning of the second clause of that sentence. The following example in M.B. Mpenyana (1995:16)'s poem **Xisiwana na n'wankumi** highlights:

18a.   **Xisiwana** xi etlela exihahlwini.

18b.   **Xisiwana** xi risa tihomu, a xi tivi dyondzo.

18c.   **Xisiwana** xi dyela exirhengeleni bya mbyana.

18d.   **Xisiwana** xi na vutlharhi lebyi nga amukeriwiki hi n'wankumi.

18e.   **Xisiwana** xi aleriwa ku nghena lomu ku hluvukeke.

A poor person sleeps in a fowl-run

A poor person looks after the cattle, he knows no education

A poor person eats from a potsherd like a dog

A poor person has knowledge which is not accepted by the rich

A poor person is refused to enter better places

In lines 18a. -18e. the word **xisiwana** repeats itself at the beginning of each line. This is aimed at highlighting how the poet feels on the way a poor person is unfairly treated. It emphasises the fact that beside the pressures of the world caused by poverty, people add more pressure to a poor person by not showing him love and respect. The use of

xisiwana in the beginning of each line has marked what Milubi and Ntuli termed initial or vertical linking.

4.2.5.3 *Final linking*

Final linking occurs where the same words are repeated at the end of the successive lines. This is highlighted in the following example:

19.   U tivavisela yini **mbilu**.

        U tipfatlanyela yini **mbilu**.

        Ringeta ku horisa **mbilu**.

        U nga si vabya hi **mbilu**.

        Why do you trouble your heart

        Why do you hurt your heart

        Try to heal your heart

        Before you develop problems with your heart

The example in 19. portrays a person with problems being comforted and advised not to concentrate on them as one might end up developing heart problems. The use of **mbilu** at the end of every sentence forms final linking, and it has also assigned focus to the fact that one must struggle to make sure that one does not allow life problems to oppress him as this might be detrimental to one's health.

97

4.2.5.4 *Oblique linking*

Oblique linking occurs where a word appearing in the last portion of a line also appears in the beginning of the succeeding line. Milubi (1997:16) calls this right-left swing type of linking. This is highlighted in the following examples:

20.   **Mafemani** i munhu wo yiva.

Wa yiva a nga tlangi **Mafemani**.

Mafemani a nga yivi wo teka.

Vanhu mi nga n'wi tekeli hansi **Mafemani**.

Mafemani is a thief

He steals he does not play, **Mafemani**

Mafemani does not steal he takes

People don't underestimate **Mafemani**

From the above example, the name **Mafemani** appears in the beginning of the first line and at the end of the succeeding line. This forms oblique linking. **Mafemani** is repeated to highlight the extent of his theft. What is evident is that linking, whether vertical, cross or oblique plays an important role of assigning lines focus. Milubi (1988:33) confirms this when he says:

> The linking brings in repetition which could be significant in
> heightening the effect. One could also say that linking also
> serves to enhance the melodious effect ...

The words to 'heighten' and to 'enhance' show how important linking is in drawing people's attention and assigning focus to different words.

4.3 THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

4.3.1 Proverbs, idioms and figurative expressions

Xitsonga has a special usage of language through the employment of proverbs, idioms and figures of speech to achieve focus. The three aspects are figurative in nature because one has to move away from looking at the literal meaning of a sentence and go deeper to find what is hidden in the sentence as a whole. The use of the abovementioned aspects become artistic and more decorative in nature because they add beauty to speech.

Proverbs, idioms and figurative language are expressions that the speaker employs and blends with everyday speech to enhance his style and quality of his language. Once his quality and style are improved, the speech is able to catch the eye of the reader and to steal the listener's ear and make him to concentrate on the speech as a whole. Once that is done focus is achieved.

4.3.2 Proverbs

A proverb is one of the major communication devices that Xitsonga speakers frequently use to give unity and depth of meaning to their narrative. Guma (1967:65) concurs with this because he regards the proverb as:

... a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. It serves

to express some homely truth or moral lesson in such an

appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words

could have been used to describe the particular situation.

The use of proverbs is so satisfying that it ends up proving to be the best way and the most effective way of expressing one's thoughts. It reveals truth in a striking manner that one ends up feeling that no other words can be best suitable in describing a situation than a proverb is. This view is also shared by **The Webster's New World Dictionary** (1988:268) who defines a proverb as a short saying that strikingly expresses some homely truth, i.e. the obvious truth or familiar experience.

A proverb reveals some truths in a manner that cannot be ignored, it has the power to instil something in the mind of an individual. Ntsan'wisi (1965:3) supports this when he says:

A proverb is figurative and didactic in nature, usually it is

short and pithy and packed with wisdom of ages.

That a proverb is pithy, becomes evident when it manages to persuade one to do or not to do something. Wisdom is something that the wise choose because they know that it is rewarding.

From the above definition it becomes clear that a proverb is a wise saying, full of meaning employed by people to attract the attention and sensibility of a person, to take notice of what is said to him or her. This is highlighted in the following examples:

21a. Kuwa ro tshwuka ri na xivungu ndzeni.

(A red fig has a worm inside, i.e. a beautiful girl is often lazy or wicked)

21b. Vukati bya katinga.

(Marriage fries i.e. marriage is tough)

21c. Huma mhirhi ku nghena mamba.

(Go out puffadder, in comes the mamba, i.e., he who refuses a good man or wife, accepts a bad one)

21d. N'wana u luma endzeni ni le handle.

(A child bites inside and outside i.e. it is difficult to raise a child)

The proverb **kuwa ro tshwuka ri ni xivungu ndzeni** in 21a. means that a beautiful woman is likely to be of unbecoming behaviour. This is revealed by the contrast in **ku tshwuka** (red) and **xivungu** (worm). A fig which is red outside attracts everyone by its externals, but as soon as it is opened, the rot inside is revealed. However, the contrast in this proverb serves to highlight to people that the outward beauty of a person does not count, what matters most is the intrinsic worth of such a person. This proverb is more effective in sending a message to anyone who may be blinded by the outside appearances of a woman and disregard her bad behaviour to consider the intrinsic qualities of a person.

The use of **vukati bya katinga** in 21b. is aimed at cautioning women that marriage is not a bed of roses, it has grave difficulties. The truth is revealed in a striking manner when one focuses on **katinga** (fries) which brings about the image of frying in a fire. This proverb helps people who wish to enter into marriage to be conscious of the fact that they will meet difficult situations in marriage which need one to persevere in order to succeed. This proverb ends up serving as a preparatory stage for any one to enter into marriage.

In 21c. **Mhirhi** and **Mamba** show very contrasting behaviours. **Mhirhi** seems to be very calm in nature and does not provoke anyone unlike **Mamba** which is the most violent, poisonous and very dangerous when it bites.

The proverb **huma mhirhi ku nghena mamba** is used more specially to advice a person who is considering to leave his wife because of a new affair he is involved in, that he will be making a terrible mistake because a good wife cannot be replaced. From the above saying one deduces that the best things tend to be the ones that one gets first. This is similar to another Xitsonga proverb: **nhlampfi i ya manghena**; which also means that a good wife is the one a man gets in his first marriage. What follows is more likely to be a disastrous relationship.

The proverb **n'wana u luma endzeni ni le handle** is aimed at highlighting to parents not to give-up on children due to mistakes they commit because grooming a child is very demanding.

From the above examples it becomes clear that Boshego (1995:43) is right to say:

> One uses proverbs to emphasise certain moral issues, expose
>
> character, reveal theme and to confirm or to repudiate certain
>
> forms of human conduct.

The above saying indicates that proverbs assign focus to any information they bring because of the manner in which truth is expressed through them.

4.3.3 Idioms

Like proverbs, idioms are expressions that the speaker employs to enhance the quality of his language. Marivate (1990:49) shows how important the use of an idiom is, and that it assigns focus to the meaning of a given sentence. In his discussion he says:

> Idioms are a linguistic form which add colour to speech. In
>
> so doing they render linguistic expression, very picturegue
>
> and more effective in communication.

The effectiveness of an idiom in a particular discourse is revealed by Boshego (1995:44) who says:

> At times the author employs ... idiomatic expressions to give
>
> more emphasis to his communication.

Since emphasis is also shown by using idiomatic expressions, therefore focus is also assigned because what one emphasises turns to be the focal point of his discussion. The following examples illustrate this point.

22a.   Ku hlanula swirhendze.

(To turn one's heels upside down i.e. to run fast out of fear)

22b.   Ku tlhava mbilu.

(To pierce one's heart, i.e. to disturb one emotionally)

22c.   Ku luma ndleve.

(To bite one's ear, i.e. to tell a secret)

22d.   Ku dya mbitsi u xeva hi nhlomulo.

(To eat distress and savour it with sorrow, i.e. to suffer severely)

The idiomatic expression **ku hlanula swirhendze** (to turn one's heels upside down) simply means to run away. The use of the above expression assigns focus to the manner of running. It compels one to concentrate on how one runs and what leads the speaker to use such a statement. The emphasis here is that one is not running for fun but to save one's life.

Ku tlhava mbilu means to hurt one's feelings. In simple terms it could be **ku khunguvanyisa munhu**. However this is a weaker expression that does not help one to

realise the depth of pain that one feels,   but with **ku tlhava** (to pierce) one imagines the action of piercing (**ku tlhava**) and the excruciating pain that accompanies it.

Ku luma ndleve literally means to bite one's ear, but the actual meaning is to tell a secret. The emphasis of how confidential the information is, is symbolised by **ku luma endleveni** (to bite in the ear) which leaves no distance between the ear of the listener and the mouth of the speaker. The closeness figuratively shows that the message is supposed to be conveyed by the one who tells it directly to the ear of the hearer and no other person should hear it. **Ku luma ndleve** therefore is assigned focus because it alerts one not to share the information one was told with all and sundry.

In **ku dya mbitsi u xeva hi nhlomulo**, the doubling of the idioms i.e. **ku dya mbitsi** and **ku xeva hi nhlomulo** serve to emphasise what one is experiencing. In simple terms one could say **munhu wa xaniseka** i.e. somebody is suffering, but the use of the above expression shows how extreme the suffering is. The idiomatic expression stresses the unbearable suffering that one is experiencing.

From the above examples, it is clear that though idioms are decorative in nature, they however serve a major role of assigning focus to that which the speaker wishes to express.

4.3.4 Figurative expressions as focus markers

Figurative expressions are decorative in nature, as they state homely truths in a modified manner. However, the remarkable thing about them is that they help assign focus to

sentences and words. There are various types of figurative expressions. In this study however the following types of figurative expressions will be discussed: metaphor, hyperbole and irony.

4.3.4.1 *Metaphor*

A metaphor is a form of comparison in which two things are implicitly identified with each other. Barnhart et al.'s (1993:304) definition highlights what a metaphor is:

> A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily means one thing is applied to another thing, in order to suggest likeness between the two.

Pei (1966:162) expresses the same idea as Barnhart et al. when he says "a metaphor is a figure of speech in which one object is likened to another and given its name". Crystal (1997:435) also concurs with the above scholars by saying:

> Metaphor is a figurative expression in which one notion is described in terms usually associated with another.

Barnhart (1993), Pei (1966) and Crystal (1997) all agree that a metaphor shows likeness of two things. It is however important to note that in a metaphor likeness is implied unlike in a simile where it is shown. However this type of comparison helps to bring about focus to sentences and words:

23a.   Dzunisani **i nghala** vanhu va n'wi chava.

(Dzunisani is a lion, people are afraid of him)

23b.   Vana va Khosa hinkwavo **i tindlopfu** ku hava who soleka.

(All Khosa's children are elephants no one is of small stature).

23c.   Nhlalala **i nyimpfu**, a nga rhandzi timholovo.

(Nhlalala is a sheep she hates arguments)

In 23a. **Dzunisani** is described as a lion because of his ferocious temper. Because all people know how dangerous a lion is, they quickly grasp the fact that Dzunisani has a vicious temper and they should be wary of him. The use of **i nghala** helps to conscientise people to be aware of Dzunisani's bad temper. People will then get to know how to behave in Dzunisani's presence.

In 23b. **i tindlopfu** quickly highlights the fact that everybody in Khosa's family is a giant. One quickly comes to this idea by conceptualising how big an elephant is. **I nyimpfu** in 23c. refers to a very polite and quiet person. One's politeness is equated to that of a sheep and this helps the addressee to quickly understand how polite **Nhlalala** is.

All the given examples show that a metaphor is an indirect method of comparing things. Instead of saying **A** is like **B** one simply says **A** is **B**. It is this simplicity that helps to assign focus because one would like to understand why **A** is called **B**.

4.3.4.2 *A hyperbole/Exaggerations*

The American Heritage Dictionary (1985:632) defines a hyperbole as "an exaggeration or extravagant statement used as a figure of speech". Boshego (1995:43) augments the above definition by stating that:

> Exaggerations are over statements, magnifying things or
> situations beyond truth. They are the distortions of actual
> life situations, making them incongruous and out of tune
> with normal life.

From what is stated by the afore-mentioned scholars in their definitions, one deduces that a hyperbole is one way of assigning focus to sentences. Speakers often attract listeners attention by using exaggerated statements. This becomes so because listeners try to figure out what is said and compare it with the real situation. The following examples are exaggerated statements:

24a.   Enkhubyeni wa Louwy na Florencia hi dye hi tlhela hi raha.

(At Louwy and Florencia's wedding we ate food and kicked it)

24b.   Byalwa a ko hlambiwa hi byona emuchongolweni wa ka Sibuyeya.

(At Sibuyeya's traditional dance ceremony we bathe with liquor)

24c. A ku pfumala ni vuphelo bya marha enkosini wa Rhulani.

(At Rhulani's funeral there was no place even to spit saliva)

24d. Laha Sebenzile na Sizani va nga ta hlangana kona, a ku nga mili byanyi hikuva va hlevanile.

(Where Sebenzile and Sizani meet the grass will not grow because they have gossiped about each other.)

The use of **hi dye hi tlhela hi raha** in 24a. shows that there was too much food at the function. Exaggeration is in **hi tlhela hi raha** which serves to highlight and to sharpen one's appetite if one has missed the occasion. In the real situation people cannot kick the food no matter how satisfied they are. They rather keep it in a safe place, that when they get hungry they can eat it again. This was used to show how plentiful the food was. The same applies to **byalwa a ho hlamba hi byona** in 24b., this serves to arouse one's interest and make one realise how much one missed the opportunity to have as much beer as one could drink.

The use of **a ku pfumala hi vuphelo bya marha** in 24c. is aimed at showing that there were many people at the funeral. It is unlikely that people can survive in the situation described by the above expression without suffocating. However the situation as described marks focus to the statement and helps people to understand how many people were at Rhulani's funeral.

Byanyi a byi nga mili in 24d. is also an overstatement that shows that there will be a vicious fight between **Sebenzile** and **Sizani**. In the real situation no people can remove grass by mere fighting, because even elephants cannot. However the exaggerated statement serves to show the intensity of the fight which will occur when Sizani and Sebenzile meet.

4.3.4.3 *Irony*

Focus is sometimes attained by using irony in sentences. Irony is the tendency to say something while in the actual sense one means exactly the opposite of what is said. **The American Heritage Dictionary** (1985:677) describes irony as:

> The use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning; an expression marked by deliberate contrast between the apparent and the intended meaning.

The deliberate contrast is for rhetoric and humorous effects and yet it ends up assigning focus to the sentence as a whole.

25a.   Petro u tshembeke ngopfu loko wo n'wi siya na mali u ta kuma ku pfumala na sente ya ntima.

(Petro is so trustworthy that should you leave him with money you will not find even a cent)

25b. Stanley leswi a nga sasekisa swona, vana hinkwavo va tlhava mukhosi loko va n'wi vona.

(Stanley is so handsome that all children cry loudly when they see him)

25c. Manana u rhule ngopfu, loko a fika vana hinkwavo vo banana hi tinhloko hi ku chava yena.

(Mother is very gentle, when she arrives children get confused)

25d. Rebone u komile swinene, lero u boheka ku korhama loko a nghena enyangweni.

(Rebone is too short, she is bound to bend when she enters through the door)

On careful examination of the above examples it becomes clear that the first portions of all the above sentences are opposed to their second parts. What is said in the first place about a person is a real opposite of the real situation. In 25a. there is a contrast between **ku tshembeka** (being trustworthy) and to find all your money stolen when Petro is around. What becomes evident is that Petro is a thief. The same applies in 25b., a very kind, quiet and loving mother cannot cause her children to run away when she arrives. This proves that she must be very cruel. There is also a complete contrast between **ku saseka** (a handsome Stanley) and **ku tlhava mukhosi ka vana** (the crying of children) when they see him. In the real sense it means that Stanley is too ugly. For Rebone to be short and yet she has to bend when walking through the door shows that she is a very tall woman.

The contrast used in all the above examples help to assign focus to the given statements because people will want to understand why should the opposite of what is said happen.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter it has been clearly outlined how reduplication serves as a focus marker. It has been pointed out that reduplication occur in everyday communication in Xitsonga. It occurs mainly in different word categories such as verbs, adverbs, idiophones etc.

Negative verb focusing is also revealed to be one way which states the truth by using a negative form of the verb. What is highlighted is that negative verb focusing serve as a focus marker. It was also highlighted that repeated words are given more attention because they are the ones that the speaker would like people to focus on.

Parallelism, whether direct or indirect is also viewed as a focus marker as seen in numerous examples given in the course of this chapter. It has also been shown that colourful language like idioms, proverbs and figurative expressions are used as focus markers. They draw attention because although usual words are used, there are always deeper and hidden meanings out of the ordinary. It has also been revealed that metaphors, hyperbole and irony are parts of figures of speech which in their own way serve as focus markers.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research was to examine focus in Xitsonga and the different ways in which it is expressed. This aim has been achieved. The views of different linguists, e.g. Hoffman (1995), Madadzhe (1992), Hovarth (1986) etc. have been used and some aspects of focus in their languages have been shown to be applicable to Xitsonga while others are not. Although focus has been researched in other languages, this study it would seem, is the first detailed and comprehensive research on the subject in Xitsonga. Following hereunder are some of the major aspects and findings of the study.

In the first chapter a general introduction to the study, its scope, aims, methods of research, and definitions of focus were discussed. Views of different scholars relevant to this topic were also highlighted. It is in this introductory chapter that it was also highlighted that focus is nothing else but the marking and highlighting of new information, thus distinguishing it from what both interlocutors in a discourse situation are aware of. Crystal (1997:427) opines to this when he states that "focus is an element in a sentence to which the speaker wishes to draw special attention". It was also found that the assignment of focus in words and sentences helps to dispel ambiguity and misunderstandings.

In chapter 2 different types of cleft sentences, viz. cleft sentences, pseudo-clefts and predicate cleft sentences were pointed out and only clefts and pseudo-clefts were fully discussed.

It was divulged that a clefted sentence will have a highlighted clause and a relative clause; and that the highlighted clause is the one on focus.

It has also been found that pseudo-clefts have their focused elements at the end of the sentence while their relative clauses start the sentence. This is a reversed position from that of clefts.

It was also divulged that noun phrases and noun phrase locatives are also cleftable in order to assign focus to sentences in Xitsonga:

The third chapter expatiated on stress as one of the phonological focus markers. The role of stress and the different areas in which it operates in order to mark focus was elaborated on in this chapter. It was revealed that no stressed word can go unnoticed in a discourse situation.

Related to stress is the pitch of voice, i.e., the rise and fall in the tone of a voice which plays a major role in assigning focus to words.

Other aspects that bring about focus were also discussed and these are: agreement, adjunction, fronting, dislocation, the aspect 'se', suffixes -vu and -ka and the auxiliary verb stems 'ka' and 'ko'.

114

The study discovered that agreement also plays a vital role in bringing about focus. Two types of agreement were discussed: subjectival and objectival agreement.

It was also discovered that the shifting of words from their original positions and putting them in another position has the tendency of assigning focus. This is more evident in fronting and dislocation.

Adjunction in Xitsonga is distinguished by the appearance of the morpheme **ku**.

The use of **ku** in the beginning of the sentence with the sentence having undergone subject inversion assigns focus to sentences; more specially when negative constructions has been added.

It was also found that the aspect **se** does not only indicate the subsequent continuation of an action, but also introduces new information which people were not aware of, and this is nothing else but focus.

The suffixes **-vu** and **-ka** play a major role in assigning focus to the verbs they are inflected to.

It is in this chapter where it has been clearly indicated that to generate focus does not depend on how long the word or the sentence is, but on what morphemes' functions in words and sentences are.

In chapter four other aspects that also serve as focus markers were fully discussed and it became evident that reduplication marks focus in sentences.

Negative verb focussing which is also called double-negative reinforces what one aims to highlight.

Repetition, parallelism and linking also play a major role in assigning sentences focus, these have been examined in 4.4 - 4.6.

It was also revealed that proverbs play a pivotal role of assigning focus to sentences because of their wise sayings and impact they have once they are addressed to individuals.

Idioms and figurative expressions were also examined and proved to be important tools used to show focus in different sentences.

Chapter five concludes the whole work, by giving a summary and findings throughout the whole study. What became evident in this study is that it is of utmost importance for one to grasp the gist of what is communicated to him in every communication. And this can be achieved when interlocutors know where focus lies in sentences.

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