

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE RESTANDARDIZATION OF
SEPEDI: THE INCLUSION OF THE KHELOBEDU DIALECT**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Mmatlou Jerida Malatji declare that this mini-dissertation titled “**An exploration of the restandardization of Sepedi: The inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect**” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....
MALATJI M.J.

.....
DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lifelong friends, Stanley and Rhedemcia Poopedi; these two have helped lay the first brick to the foundation of my educational journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the Almighty God for the strength, wisdom and the courage that He continually avails for me.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr JR Rammala for his insight and supporting me throughout the study. His guidance and assistance have been more than enough, and for that, I am grateful.

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I wish to all acknowledge my participants, this study is complete because of your availability and precious time. Thank you so much.

ABSTARCT

The study explored the restandardization of Sepedi with the aspiration of including Khelobedu dialectical lexicons in the standard form. The standardization of Sepedi, unlike the case of Shona, excluded many of its dialects from the process, thus, left Khelobedu speakers outside of this medium and later subjected them to learn it in schools, putting them at a point of disadvantage academically. Very few studies have been conducted around this term restandardization.

This study is mixed method in approach and sequential in design. Data is collected via self-administered questionnaires and face-to-face interviews using an interview guide. A total of 20 participants from four villages in the Mopani District made up a sample for the quantitative data collection phase, while four participants who are Language practitioners by profession made up the qualitative phase of the study.

The findings of the study reveal that dialect speakers do not have much confidence in their dialectical variety. They still believe that English and Sepedi are mediums of development and progress. Although restandardization according to the language practitioners is said to be possible, PanSALB still has a lot to do in terms of developing Indigenous Languages in South Africa.

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This study explores one of the rarely investigated aspects in sociolinguistics, namely, restandardization; although there is not much literature in this field, there have been studies conducted by prominent scholars which serve as a reference for this study. The intend of this study is to harvest lexicons from one of the widely spoken dialect of the standard Sepedi known as Khelobedu, taking into consideration all the complexities of language planning and language.

1.2 Background and motivation of the study

1.2.1 Khelobedu

Khelobedu, although assimilated into Sepedi as one of its dialects, also shares some linguistic characteristics with Tshivenda (Mohale, 2014: 32). It is one of the widely dialects spoken in the Mopani District of Limpopo Province, particularly in Greater Tzaneen Municipality, made up of approximately 120 villages (StatsSA, 2016 Community Survey Report).

However, the standardization process of Sepedi excluded Khelobedu and other dialects. Mojela's (1999: 22) claim that 'Pulana, Lobedu, Phalaborwa, etc. did not have any orthography, and until today very few people can write these dialects, even after consulting phonetic transcriptions to check the pronunciations' seems to have changed over time. Lobedu has recently received a lot of attention resulting from the production of indigenous Khelobedu music, thus, it implies that this dialect can be written.

1.2.2 *Motivation of the study*

Trask (1994: 46) states that ‘the combination of language change and geographical separation inevitably results in the rise of regional dialects’; if no unifying force intervenes, dialects may diverge from one another without limit. Wardhaugh (1992: 25) cites Hymes (1974: 123) who, after observing, concludes that boundaries between groups of the same language are drawn on more than just the usage of linguistic items, but also on the attitudes and social meanings attached to those items.

Shen (2010: 98) mentions that:

Linguistic changes manifest in three aspects—vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar—but we must also note that such changes in language itself arise originally in the linguistic consciousness of those who use that language. From modernity onward, language has been assigned a societal importance that it lacked before. That is, language has become the vital apparatus for establishing the triple identities of state, ethnicity, and individual.

Language, being the medium by which knowledge is transmitted and received, has a particularly close interactive relationship with social life (Shen, 2010: 108).

This phenomenon is narrowed down to standard and non-standard language varieties; one having undergone the process of standardization and the other perceived as ‘not formal’. Standardization is one aspect of corpus planning, and Wardhaugh (1992: 30) defines it as ‘a process by which a language has been codified in some way; that process usually involves the development of such things as grammar, spelling books, and dictionaries, and possibly a literature.’

According to Mojela (1999: 19), standardization can result from a selection of one dialect or from a combination of many dialects. He mentions the case of the Zimbabwean language, the Shona standard language which originated through the amalgamation of the major varieties spoken in the then Southern Rhodesia, through an amalgamation of six major dialects to form a standard Shona language, i.e. the Zezuru, Korekore, Karanga, Manyika, Kalanga and Ndau.

In some cases, other dialects are overlooked in this process of standardization (Odendaal, 2013: 12). This then raises a need amongst the speakers of the previously disadvantaged dialects to call for the restandardization of the standardised language. Odendaal (2013: 12) acknowledges that the term restandardization is not entirely researched in sociolinguistics. Nevertheless, Odendaal (2013: 13) used definitions of prominent linguists such as -Bruthiaux (2006:32), Kotzé (2009:1, 2010:154, 2011:36), (Haugen 1972b:161), Schiffman (1998:362-363), Van de Rhee (1985:36-37), Cooper (1989:154) and Johl (2002:173), to draw her own definition of restandardization as:

... Deliberate language planning from above and from below which is aimed at revising the form and function of a standard language and influencing the linguistic behaviour of a speech community in order to create a democratic standard (Odendaal, 2013:13).

Furthermore, restandardization comprises the correction of some or other social injustice in the speech community by standardising the language from a broader varietal base, thereby making the standard language more inclusive to empower all speakers (Odendaal, 2013: 12).

1.3 Research problem

Language changes with time due to improved world systems, technology, science, social interaction methods, etc. All these aspects of life require the use of language for communication purposes; therefore, language must be modernized to keep up with changing times. Sepedi is one of the languages which is underused, underdeveloped and does not enjoy the full benefits of its given status of being an official language.

Although Sepedi is a standardised language, its dialects are used as forms of communication daily by many villagers for different functions in their respective communities. These dialects have terms which are not found in the standard language as the speakers are able to create them because it is their form of communication daily. Thus, dialects have a greater capacity for term creation; this in turn addresses

the biggest challenge of the standard Sepedi of terminology development, thus, the need for restandardization.

Westby (1994:341) aptly states: "In the pre-school years, children learn to talk but as they move into school they talk to learn. In academic tasks, language is used in the service of thought". The standardization of Sepedi, unlike the case of Shona, excluded many its dialects from the process, thus, left Khelobedu speakers outside of this medium and later subjecting them to learn it in schools, putting them at a point of disadvantage academically.

According to Ramapela (2014), "Language is considered to be a crucial means of gaining access to knowledge and skills. It is the key to cognitive development which promotes or impedes scholastic success". For the Khelobedu speakers, this proves to be challenging.

1.4 Literature Review

1.4.1 Standardization (Standardised languages)

Standardization is one of the aspects of language planning. Wardhaugh (2006: 356) indicates that '*language planning is an attempt to interfere deliberately with a language or one of its varieties: it is human intervention into natural processes of language change, diffusion, and erosion.*'

Odendaal (2013: 1) shares Alexander (2013:93-94)'s view that:

Standard languages are invariably the preferred varieties of the ruling class or ruling strata in any given society. They prevail as the norm because of the economic, political-military or cultural-symbolic power of the rulers, not because they are 'natural' in any meaning of the term.

Lodge (1993: 23) cites Ferguson (1968) who makes mention of the differences of less developed and developed languages by indicating that the developed language goes through three processes, namely, graphization, standardization and lastly

modernization. This is of course after the language variety has passed through selection, codification, elaboration of function and acceptance processes (Hudson 1996: 33).

According to Hudson (1996: 33), standardised languages are the outcomes of the 'direct and deliberate interventions by society'. Due to this intervention, a standardised language is produced in the place where there were dialects. Wardhaugh (1992: 30) emphasizes that once a language is standardised, there is a need for agreement as to what is in the language and what is not, and this is to enable it to be taught in a deliberate manner.

Mojela (2014) shifts the focus to purism. He claims that its effects in standardizing African languages like Sepedi, produces lexemes which are not used daily while on the other hand ignoring words which are of use on a day-to-day basis. He further maintains that '*this results in the creation of a huge gap between written languages and spoken languages, i.e. between the written vocabularies which are contained in the standard dictionaries and the real practical vocabularies used by the communities.*'

1.4.2 Dialectology

Dialectology, as Spolsky (1998: 28) puts it, is 'the search for spatially and geographically determined differences in various aspects of language'. Hickey (2014: 6) maintains that sociolinguists refuse to use of the term dialect as 'it carried with it implication of a rural type of speech.' A neutral term variety is used to simply refers to a variant of a language as it has the 'advantage that it did not imply implicit contrast with a standard'; it may be standard of this language or not, whether rural or an urban variant, a social or peer group variant, etc.

According to Francis (1983: 1), a dialect is a 'variety of a language used by a group of smaller than the total community of speakers of the language'. He further states that any language that is spoken by a few people shows manners of dividing into dialects, language content, structure and function, i.e. usage, social function, artistic and literary expression.

In an article presented at the African Association for Lexicography 19th International Conference, Mojela (2014) strongly stated:

Dialectal exclusions in Sesotho sa Leboa, for instance, resulted in a one-sided Standard Language which is presently being disowned by most of its own communities, such as the Balobedu, Mapulana, etc. The huge gap existing between the standard Sesotho sa Leboa and many of its own dialects, creates a situation where a standard dictionary in this language will be a complete foreign document to the majority of the Northern Sotho communities.

Selokela and Mojapelo (2014: 27) make a strong claim that even though the standard language is used to write dictionaries, dialects are responsible for language development in all aspects of life. They (Selokela and Mojapelo, 2014: 27) continue to state that terminology development can be possible if dialectal varieties are included when compiling dictionaries, this according to Selokela and Mojapelo (2014: 27), can form basis for language expansion.

1.4.3 Language variation

Fishman (1971: 226), Cheshire and Stein (1997: 21), Lodge (1993: 15) and Wardhaugh (2006: 25) maintain that it cannot be assumed that language is homogenous, that changes do take place in language, and its speakers do not automatically adapt to the changes, thus, language is not free from variation.

Wardhaugh (1992: 33) concurs with Hudson (1996: 45) to say that each language exists in several varieties. Hudson (1996: 22) then stands out to say that language, like music, is a general phenomenon and has varieties. With language, what distinguishes one variety from another are the linguistic items that it includes; thus, Hudson (1996: 23) continues to define language variety as '*a set of linguist items with similar social distribution*'. Therefore, any linguistic communication systems qualify as a variety of language, and what would normally be referred to as language, dialect or register, would then be categorized under the general term language variety.

It is indicated by Wardhaugh (2006: 25) that variation is found in all languages, as every language exists because of the totality of those variations within it. Wardhaugh (2006: 25) claims that uniformity in language is not needed, that there will always be some degree of variation, whether a language is considered, a dialect of that language, or whatever form of language variety; he (Wardhaugh, 2006: 25) concurs with Lodge (1993: 15) to say that such (language variation) is 'a basic fact of linguistic life'.

Cheshire and Stein (1997: 21) mention that one of the spheres of differences between dialect and standard language is:

Characteristics absent in the standard language and present in the dialects, whose emergence should be attributed to the fact that dialects are spoken languages *par excellence* in which strategies relating to the actual process of speech production are much more influential than in standard languages. Standard languages, in consequence of the fact that they are a vehicle for writing, do not give in to forces linked to speaking as readily as dialects which lack such a written counterpart.

Nevertheless, Haugen (1997: 341) places these two terms into formal structures to indicate dependency. He illustrates that 'X is a dialect of language Y' or that Y can be said to have 'dialect X and Z', thus, it can never be that 'Y is a language of dialect X'. This is a clear indication that the term language can be used separate from the term dialect; on the other hand, the term dialect is dependent on the term language.

1.4.4 Restandardization

Odendaal (2013: 3) cites Wade (1996:10, 54), who argues that 'if language purism and standardisation have the goal of excluding certain groups of people, restandardization has the opposite goal in that it broadens the limits of acceptability.'

As an attempt to expand the standard language, linguists need to consider including other varieties to the written and spoken forms of the 'official' language (Odendaal, 2013: 7 and Parakrama, 1995: 42). This process of incorporating previously disadvantaged dialects of the standard form, as it is emphasised by Odendaal (2013:

7) and Johl (2002:173), influences the existing standard by focusing on structural changes to the standard for the sake of reflecting the changing relationship between the different speech communities.

Even though this kind of restandardization is deemed as superficial (Wade 1996:11) as the standard language continues to 'belong to the elite', it does not erase the existence of the varieties from which the elements are taken from.

Alberts (2013: 3) mentions that the standard orthography is based on the standardised variety; therefore, there is no sign of dialectal variety, except in the spoken language. Furthermore, Alberts (2013: 3) continues to indicate that it is the language users who can create the spelling and orthography of their language, this according to Alberts (2013: 3), requires that the language users have some degree of knowledge of the system of orthography.

Restandardization as a process does not seek to dry out dialects, but rather to make an inclusive standard language variety that is accommodative of other language varieties which have been overlooked in the past (Odendaal, 2013: 12); thus, Alberts (2013: 4)'s view that in order for a language to be able to have a written communication form, its spelling and orthography has to be standardised is crucial to restandardization as it incorporates the dialectal variety which has no approved standardised spelling and orthography into the standardised variety which has linguistic rules (Wade, 1996: 13; Bruthiaux, 2006: 32 & Odendaal, 2013: 11).

1.5 Role of theory in the study

This study employs Haugen's (1966) model of standardization. The researcher deems this model relevant to the study as Haugen's model has two advantages as mentioned by Deumert and Vandebussche (2010: 4) that:

- It is broad as well as detailed enough to function as a frame of reference for the description of highly varied standardization histories.
- It is an appropriate frame of reference for the strong comparative orientation for the current study.

Haugen (1966) developed a model for standardization process which has been reviewed over the years (Haugen, 1972 & 1987), and nevertheless, the core aspects of the model remain the same, namely, selection, codification, implementation, and elaboration of function.

- Selection and acceptance of the norm

This, according to Haugen (1966a), precedes any process when standardizing a language variety because the community must select and accept a norm, in agreement to some model before other processes can come into play. The selected norm does not necessarily accord with the observed behaviour of that speech community, rather, it is most likely to be an idealized norm that they would then have to aspire to.

This means favouring one vernacular above the other, removing other varieties as possible completion in the selection process. The selected norm will then be associated with prestige, power, the elite, and power. This can either unify or cause a drift in the community.

- Codification

This step is related to the stabilization of the norm selected. It is also related to the standardization process in corpus planning. The norms and rules of grammar, use, etc. which govern the variety selected must be formulated, and set down definitively in grammars, dictionaries, spellers, manuals of style, texts, etc. Haugen (1972: 110) summarised this as:

Table 1.1 (from Haugen 1972: 110)

	Form	Function
Society	Selection	Acceptance
Language	Codification	Elaboration

- Implementation

This step involves the actions of government agencies, institutions, and writers in adopting and using the selected and codified norm. It involves (among other things) the production of newspapers, textbooks, and other publications, as well as adoption for mass media.

- Elaboration

This step involves the expansion of language functions and the assignment of new codes, such as scientific and technical. For the variety selected to represent the desired norms, it must be able to discharge a whole range of functions that it may be called upon to discharge, including abstract, intellectual functions. Where it lacks resources to do so, these are developed. Thus, a standard language is often characterised as possessing 'maximal variation in function, minimal variation in form'.

The selection of a norm for standardization purposes requires that there be literature of the norm, in this case, Sepedi, which is spoken in the Sekhukhune district, was deemed to be more acceptable as it already had existing literature from the translations of the missionaries in the 1900; Khelobedu on the other hand, had no existing literature.

Haugen (1966)'s theoretical framework serves as reference in that it outlines the shortcomings of the process of standardization. It has already been established that language evolves with time, therefore, the process by which a norm has been selected, codified, implemented, and elaborated needs to be revised to make room for improvement, development, and modernization.

Restandardization is a process that, without demolishing what has been standardised, creates platform for elaboration, modernisation, and expansion of language. Every selected norm has its language family; thus, lexicons can be harvested from the immediate family of a given language variety to bridge the gap of zero equivalence and other linguistic challenges of terminology.

1.6 Purpose of the study

1.6.1 Aim

To explore the restandardization of the standard Sepedi by considering non-standard variety, such as Khelobedu

1.6.2 Objectives

- To evaluate the standard Sepedi variety.
- To assess the possibilities of including some aspects of Khelobedu in the standard Sepedi.
- To investigate how Khelobedu items can be accommodated in the orthography of the standard Sepedi.
- To determine processes relevant to the restandardization of the standard Sepedi.
- To suggest a model that can be followed in the process of the restandardization of indigenous language varieties.

1.7 Research methodology

The researcher employs mixed research methodology for this study. This is because this methodology has the capacity to:

- Provide stronger inference for the study,
- Reduce the disadvantages that one method has when being used alone
- The designs complement each other

(Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 16 & Johnson and Turner, 2003: 98)

1.7.1 Research design

Sequential explanatory design is one of the six major designs of mixed methods research approaches and it is said to be a straightforward amongst the six. This design requires the collection and analysis of quantitative and then followed by qualitative data, with integration of findings undertaken during the interpretation phase of the project (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 223)

With this design, quantitative data is collected, analysed and its results lead to the collection of qualitative data and its analysis. Thereafter, the researcher interprets the entire analysis of the collected data (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 225).

1.7.2 Sampling

The researcher employs mixed methods, thus, there are two sets of sample units.

- Qualitative Sampling

In this study, the aim is to explore Khelobedu dialectical variety, thus, the population from which the samples will be sourced is encapsulated in the topic of the project, the Balobedu people who largely reside in Mopani district in Tzaneen make up the population sample for phase-one of the study.

Probability sampling technique is more suited for this phase as the researcher shares in on one of its goal of generalizability (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 225). Simple random sampling system will be adapted. This means that every dialect speaker of Khelobedu has an equal chance of being part of the project. The population sample for this phase will be 10 participants.

- Qualitative sampling

In the second phase, the sample units will be sourced out from four of each of the following: academics, language practitioners, lexicographer, language policy implementers and the PanSALB Provincial Manager for Limpopo Province. This leads the researcher to purposeful sampling as the researcher will '*intentionally select participants who have some experience in the phenomenon*' (Creswell and Clark, 2011: 173) which has the advantage of adding trustworthiness rather than

generalizability to the findings (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 282). This makes the sample size of the second phase to be 17 participants.

1.7.3 Data collection

- Quantitative data collection

The researcher will conduct quantitative survey to identify and explore dialectical vocabulary of Khelobedu. In this phase, the randomly identified participants will be handed questionnaires as a data collection instrument.

- Qualitative data collection

In the second phase of the data collection, the research will conduct an interview of professionals, i.e. language practitioners, lexicographers, language policy implementers and the PanSALB Provincial Manager for Limpopo Province. In this phase, the researcher will use a semi-structured interview guide.

1.7.4 Data analysis

There are two sets of data to be analysed in this study, i.e. the qualitative data from the Khelobedu speech community, and the quantitative data collected from language practitioners, lexicographers, language policy implementers and the PanSALB Provincial Manager for Limpopo Province.

- Qualitative data analysis

The researcher will use Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet to analyse the set of data from this phase, questionnaires. This will provide the researcher with statistical inference, form a solid base for drawing qualitative interview guide. The survey conducted in the phase will assist in giving the researcher more insight to the speech community, thus, the data collected from the survey will be used to interpret the linguistic knowledge, behaviour and background of the speech community.

- Quantitative data analysis

In this set of data, the researcher will use thematic narrative data analysis. Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher will draw themes under which the data will be interpreted and displayed accordingly. This will also serve to indicate that the goals of the study have been achieved as the objectives would have been met.

Also, the researcher intends to employ stages of mixed methods data analyses process designed by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003: 373). Of the seven stages, the researcher will only employ stage 1, 2, 3, and 7 as the intention of this mixed methods study is expansion (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 377).

- Data reduction- reduces the collected data by sorting and organizing it in such a manner that conclusions may be drawn from it.
- Data display- includes categorizing the organized and sorted data accordingly
- Data transformation- is the process of transforming the data into readable and presentable information.
- Data integration- this leads to data interpretation, taking into consideration the inferences assumed from the qualitative data analysis, the quantitative data analysis, and the inferential relationship between the two.

1.8 Quality criteria

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008: 102), the quality of mixed methods largely depends on the purpose for which the researcher deems necessary for the project. In this instance, the researcher uses mixed methods to source out questions from the inferences of qualitative strand to develop quantitative strand. Thus, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008: 102) state that for reasons such as these, the quality criteria are for developmental purposes.

1.8.1 Qualitative quality criteria

- Credibility

The credibility of the findings of the study relies on the researcher to present the qualitative data from the perspective of the participant. This involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research.

- Conformability

Conformability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. This requires the researcher to document the procedures for checking and rechecking the qualitative data throughout the study to give transparency of the researcher's position in the study (Richards, *et al.* 2012: 331).

- Transferability

Transferability is when the findings of the study can be applied to another context.

- Dependability

The enquiry must provide the audience with evidence that if it were to be repeated with the same evidence or respondents in the same context, its findings would be the same.

1.8.2 Quantitative quality criteria

- Internal validity

It is the extent to which observed effects can be attributed to the independent variable

- Reliability

The extent to which the results are consistent if the study would be replicated

- Generalizability

The extent to which the results can be generalized from the research sample to the population

- Objectivity

The extent to which personal biases are removed by the researcher and value free information is gathered

1.9 Significance of the study

This study considers an issue that affects different stakeholders, including language policy issues and its findings will be beneficial to:

Pan South African Language Board

NLU- Sesotho sa Leboa with new terms which can be used when compiling Puku Ntšu

Sepedi language users as their language will be expanded, with new terms and possibly new uses. This will also expand the speech community.

Balobedu speech community, in that they will be able to be part of the Sepedi speech community and take pride in it as well.

1.10 Ethical considerations

The study is approved by several stakeholders, including the Department of Translation and Linguistic, and the School of Languages and Communication Studies Committee. The researcher adheres to the University of Limpopo's rule for Research Ethical Clearance as the participants of the study project are people; therefore, the researcher has applied for ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo's Research Department. Furthermore, the researcher will also get written approval from the tribal authorities of the villages which they are to collect their data. The researcher will also hand out consent forms (attached to the questionnaire) to the participants, which will clearly indicate the intentions of the researcher and their expectations of the participants.

1.11 Conclusion

In brief, this chapter gives an orientation of the entire study, defining key concepts, motivation, research problems, significance of the study and ethical considerations, just to mention a few. An in-depth literature is reviewed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature, in descending order from the relationship between dialect and language, the historical background of Khelobedu (as a dialect); standardization including other aspects of language planning; restandardization and the methodological aspects of Linguistic literature review. Existing research from prominent scholars is reviewed under each subheading, building up to the motivation of the study at hand.

2.2 The relationship between dialect and language

For a better comprehension of the two terms, Haugen (1966: 923) suggests that this can be through the slant of their background, he elaborates that they are borrowed terms from French. He further defines these:

In a descriptive, synchronic sense “language can refer either to a single linguistic norm, or to a group of related norms. In a historical, diachronic sense “language” can either be a common language on its way to dissolution, or a common language resulting from unification. A “dialect” is then any one of the related norms comprised under the general name “language,” historically the result of either divergence or convergence.

van Coetsem (n.d: 15), on the other hand, points out that the study of dialect-language interaction has changed drastically, and the scope of study has gone beyond dialectology; accommodating also the social aspects of language in society, including language contact and acquisition.

In the same study, van Coetsem (n.d: 16) draws the difference between dialect and language by referring to scholars such as Goossens 1973a, 1985 and Weinreich 1953:69-70, 104-6, and concludes to state:

The difference between dialect and (standard) language appears to reside primarily in a ranking evaluation, the dialect being viewed as subordinate and regionally confined in relation to the (standard) language as a superordinate or overarching language... the difference in ranking rests on a variety of factors: on difference in functionality, on geographical expansion, on language or structural distance (affinity) and the subjective rating of this distance by the speakers themselves...

It is further noted by van Coetsem (n.d: 17) that even though dialect and language are genetically and structurally related, it is however, not unusual for a language to '*expand over an area where a genetically less related or nonrelated language or dialect is used*'. This is known as language distance.

To a certain extent, it can be argued that this is the case with the Khelobedu-Sepedi relationship. The geographical origin of Sepedi is traced to the Sekhukhune area located in the southern part of the Limpopo province, while Khelobedu is said to be originating from Zimbabwe, sharing also Tshivenda linguistic features while assimilated into Sepedi by government. A linguistic setup such as this, results in the dialect being in a '*subordinate relationship to the language that functions as an overarching standard*'.

The below table indicates the variation of Khelobedu, Sepedi and Tshivenda, exemplifying the interrelationship of dialect-standard.

Table 2.1: Linguistic variation

Example	Khelobedu	Sepedi	Tshivenda
1. Porridge	<i>Booswa</i>	<i>Bogobe</i>	<i>Vhuswa</i>
2. Motorbike	<i>Khethuthu</i>	<i>Sethuthu</i>	<i>Thuthuthu</i>
3. Hoe	<i>Letšepe</i>	<i>Mogoma</i>	<i>Dzembe</i>
4. Eat	<i>dya/ ʔa</i>	<i>Ja</i>	<i>La</i>
5. Medicine	<i>Molemo</i>	<i>Sehlare</i>	<i>Mushonga</i>

Lexical variation exists both in dialect and the standard form of language (van Coetsem (n.d: 17); nevertheless, there appears to be genetical and structural relation between the three varieties.

2.3 Khelobedu as a dialect

Tatira (2012: 78) describes the region of Bolobedu as a surrounded by three tribes, namely the Vatsonga to the east, the Vhavenda to the north and Bapedi to the south-west, highlighting also on the depth of its cultural orientation by providing a snapshot of the area to say that the vastly scattered villages are headed by headmen. They preserve their cultural practices and beliefs as they consider them to be of profound value, passing them from one generation to the other through oral communication and performance of rituals, dances, singing, etc. And detailing its historical background by presenting the said origin of the Khelobedu speakers as that emanating from neighbouring 'Zimbabwe; being the descendants of the historical Mwenemutapa kingdom'.

In another study conducted by Mohale (2014: 32), in terms of language, Khelobedu shares a language like that of Sepedi and Tshivenda. Nevertheless, it was assimilated into Sepedi as a dialect by the government. On the contrary, Tatira (2012: 78) claims that Khelobedu is a non-Sepedi dialect, which through language contact over time,

'has become rather like Sepedi, since the latter is the home language done in schools in the greater part of Mopani district'.

In a study that aimed to explore the use of modern Greek dialects conducted in Athens, Karantzi (n.d: 456) indicates that although a dialect may be referred to as an object of ridicule or of admiration, these dialects are linked to culture and the politics of local identities of a given linguistic community. This study brings to light the paramount importance of a spoken dialect within the society and its contribution towards the progression of the community through communication.

Unlike Sepedi, the Modern Greek language is made up of various dialects (Karantzi, n.d: 457). He continues to mention that:

There is a small number of highly divergent, outlying varieties spoken by relatively isolated communities, and a broader range of mainstream dialects less divergent from each other...

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about Sepedi, as the standard language largely caters for a specific community, namely, the Bapedi community who mainly reside within the Sekhukhune area while the other dialectical linguistic communities are subjected to a variety that is not known to them. Khelobedu cannot even be referred to as a divergent dialect spoken by isolated community as it is spoken in one of the towns which contribute greatly to the economy of the province and South Africa through its agricultural cultivation, music, tourism sites, etc. Hence, Tatira (2012: 79) sympathises with Khelobedu speaking learners to say:

Speaking a mother tongue which is not one of the official languages is often a disadvantage for the learner and it is a reality the Balobedu learners have to contend with, especially that the Department of Education stipulates that the Foundation phase learners must to be taught in their mother tongue (DoE, 2009: 41).

Khelobedu is used in informal oral communication settings, as such; there is a great amount of unmonitored linguist creativity that can be of substantial use to the standard language user of Sepedi if given a chance to blend these lexicons into the standard variety.

It is also acknowledged by Pukari (2015: 10) that:

Writing in dialect is a problematic practice for a multitude of reasons. The problems include among others the problem of the difficulty of accurate orthography. A written form of in any given dialect can only be an approximation of the actual sounds that the speaker of a dialect actually produces...

Nevertheless, with time and skills, an ample of lexicons can be harvested from these dialects and bridge the gap between speech communities of the same language families.

2.4 Standardization

Perhaps a proper starting point would be based on the notion of Masilela's (2009) paper in reviewing 'Language as a cultural issue in Africa today' wherein she poses a question to ask '...how does a nation choose a national language(s) within a context of the multiplicity of languages.' This remains a great debate for a country such as South Africa based on its diversity on the issues of language and culture.

Schiffman (1998: 362) acknowledges the fact that many definitions of standardization (codification, etc.) revolve around the corpus of a language. But then differs on the notion that standardization is about the development of a spoken standard, and as such, there are other decisions other than corpus of the language that need to be made.

He gathers definitions of standardization from distinguished linguists, namely, Haugen (1972) with his four model theory (selection, diffusion, maintenance, and elaboration of function); Milroy & Milroy (1985) partially agreeing with the process and stand out to say orthography and grammar can be standardised while standardization of the spoken form remains an ideology and Joseph (1987) who paved a pathway for many European languages to change statuses of their languages when he unearthed the rising of the French language from its low status to a language of prestige.

It has been attested to by linguists from different schools of thought (Haugen, 1989; Coronel-Molina, n.d; Hudson 1980:33–37; Schiffman,1998: 362; Garvin, 1964; Karantzi, n.d: 456; Deumert and Vandebussche, 2003, and many others) that language standardization is the result of the deliberate intervention by society. The four major aspects of this process are:

- Selection

A variety that is associated with politics, economy or religious sphere is selected and developed further for function by a society.

- Codification

The linguistic features of the variety are the codified by institutions of learning, and documented in dictionaries, grammar books, etc. for learning purposes. It is thus formalised and set apart from other varieties within the same language family.

- Elaboration of function

The variety is then used in prestigious settings such as courts of law, universities, parliament, etc.

- Acceptance

It then falls on the speech community members to accept the variety as their language.

Furthermore, Schiffman (1998: 362) refers to a prominent Linguist's (Garvin, 1964) work pertaining to the process of standardization to say that any standard needs to have stability. He mentions that this is a 'requirement of flexible stability'. This denotes that for any medium to be regarded as having stability, there is a need for evidence of some written work (dictionaries, spelling books, etc.) for reference's sake; not only that, in addition, its flexibility needs to make room for the expansion of the language in that it needs to permit language revision, addition of vocabulary and adaptation of more modern technology. This is a feature that dialects do not possess, as such, it remains on the codified language variety to broaden its spectrum and make room for its dialects to remain flexible and relevant to its speakers.

In this study, Schiffman (1998: 367) also notes Garvin's (1964) four functions of a standard language. One that stands out with reference to the current study is the function of unifying, which he defines as:

...the ability to unite several dialect areas into a single standard-language community. This function is largely symbolic, since it gives subjective value to notions of what kind of linguistic community the speakers inhabit.

This is a function which is not found within the bounds of the standard Sepedi as many of its dialects are widely separate from the standard variety. Nevertheless, it is a medium that is accepted by the majority and those who hold a different view of this subject are left frustrated by the processes of language planning of a developing country such as South Africa. This then leaves a wide language, identity and cultural gap within the Sepedi speech community, which, in this case, can be bridged by restandardizing the medium (Sepedi).

Schiffman (1998: 368) reluctantly admits defeat by stating that:

New ways probably need to be devised to broaden the concept of standardization, to allow for variation, perhaps in register and domain, without giving up the whole notion of having a form of language of widest communication, or the utility of some kinds of agreed-on understandings.

In another study conducted in Mali by Ouane (1991: 1), it is highly noted that language standardization is continuing process and is yet to be attained, especially in developing countries wherein dialects have no history of 'literacy tradition'.

Ouane (1991: 1) advises that when attempting to establish a realistic language, there should be a cognizance of a broader perspective of the people, community of people, who are living in given conditions and expressing exceptional situations in some languages. And due to urbanization, there will be intensive detribalization which will in turn lead to 'the acceptance and use of languages for their intrinsic communicative value'

Ouane (1991: 1) asserts that one of the criteria influencing the standardization process is esteem rather than ethnicity. He mentions the obvious in mentioning that:

...the source of positive, neutral or negative assessment are to be found in political, economical and cultural advantages/disadvantages associated with a given language.

Based on the findings of Ouane's (1991: 1) study, it reports on the language standardization situation in Mali, and claims that standardization of the Malian language confirms a well-known fact, 'that a language gets a particular identity when it is fixed and codified in written form. It also performs many new functions and follows new organizational forms different from that of its oral counterparts'.

Adding to the complexities of this already complex phenomenon, Deumert and Vandebussche (2003) bring forth an understanding of standardization as a type of language contact, referring to the substantial work of Haugen (1972: 247). It is noted in this study that it is undeniable that 'contact between speech and written language would eventually lead to the emergence of new [spoken] norms (Haugen, 1972: 247) which are an *amalgamation* of speech and writing' (Deumert and Vandebussche, 2003).

Deumert and Vandebussche (2003) attempt to strike a balance between standard and dialect varieties to establish interrelations in saying that contact between the two through oral communication will not indispensably cause diminution of the non-standard variety, instead, this:

...can also support the formation of regional spoken standard norms which command local prestige, and which are used in semi-formal situations.

Furthermore, Deumert and Vandebussche (2003) perceive that:

Standardization is often employed as a "default strategy" to increase the functional value of a language by providing it with a clear linguistic identity (which often replaces a diffuse and highly variable dialect continuum, and which allows the channelling of

language attitudes towards the standard norm), a “modern” lexicon and a supra-regional, written norm.

Although the focus of this study is on restandardization, which lead to the discussion of standardization, it also necessitates that a brief overview of modernization and graphization as these are processes which are closely related, particularly for languages which are under development.

Modernization

To date, the fundamental base of defining language modernization is based upon the definition by Ferguson (1968) as:

The process by which (a language becomes) the equal of other developed languages as a medium of communication; it is in a sense the process of joining the world community of increasingly inter-translatable languages recognized as appropriate vehicles of modern forms of discourse.

In a study undertaken in New York by Sridhar (1998:351) studying language modernization as an integrated process, with structural, stylistic, and sociolinguistic dimensions, an argument is put forward to say that most of these languages which are still developing (including Sepedi) is the past history found in the respective country which has seen other languages left behind in terms of use in domain areas such government, the media, educational institutions, which are the major vehicles of ushering language modernization and language prestige.

Terminological modernization is a function of language elaboration in corpus planning; it is another form of language maintenance. According to Kurtbóke (1996: 592) who also cites Clyne (1992), states that unlike status planning which is largely pursued by politicians and bureaucrats, with its focus being on language spread and developing the identity of the nation at national and global level, corpus planning is an agenda of language practitioners, i.e. lexicographers, linguists, etc. to do one of three things:

- I. To give the language a terminology for scientific and technical purposes;

- II. To resolve normative/ structural questions of correctness, efficiency, and stylistic level; and/ or
- III. To support an ideological cause by eliminating sexist, racist, or militaristic elements in the language'

Kurtbörke (1996: 593) continues to maintain that the success of language selection and codification lies on the implementation and elaboration process. Bamgbose (1991:110) points out that policy-making without implementation does not lead to much progress, whereas implementation without policy decisions is difficult to achieve. Implementation is usually the production of material in any given language, and elaboration on the other hand as according to Haugen (1983) is 'the continuous process of implementation of a norm to meet the functions of a modern world'.

Graphization

According to Coronel-Molina (n.d: 3), as informed by Cooper (1989) in a case study of corpus planning in Peru, outlines graphization as one of the four major aspects of corpus planning and define it as a process of developing a writing system for a previously unwritten language.

Coronel-Molina (n.d: 4) continues to elaborate that this process of establishing a writing system is usually in correlation with codification; which is defined as a process specifically for establishing a writing norm for a selected norm. These processes are crucial to the formation of a language system as they are the deciding aspects of the direction which the norm is to take going forward (Haugen, 1989; Coronel-Molina, n.d).

There are immature attempts (in a sense that they have not undergone through the process of codification) of graphization by Khelobedu speakers. This is evident in their music production which has recently come to gain a lot of momentum in the music industry, media and social and entertainment spheres.

2.5 Restandardization

Studies indicate that there is a gap that was created by the linguistic processes of standardization in the past years which call for rectification of some sort (Odendaal, 2013: 12). In a study dealing with the issue of language standardization, correctness and society in Wales, Williams (n.d: 81) admits that in the past, particularly during the times of colonialism, many languages were at a point of disadvantage, nevertheless, he aptly states that ‘... language standardisation was essentially a tool whereby the boundaries of a fragile state could be consolidated and integrated against external and internal threat.’

In a manner of speaking, Williams (n.d: 1) blames language inequality on the process of standardization which left most spoken languages outside the system; this is evident when he arguably states that perhaps we should take a moment and:

...consider the implications of standardisation within a language of reason or state language. The distinction that is made within such languages is between the standard form and the non-standard or dialect. Again, it is the standard form that is the language of reason, while dialects are outside of reason. When we then realise that the standard form tends to be the prerogative of the dominant class the implication is evident. Issues of language purity carry an inevitable class bias and the entire issue of language standardisation is fraught with implications.

According to Mojela (1999: 19), standardization can result from a selection of one dialect or from a combination of many dialects. He mentions the case of the Zimbabwean language, the Shona standard language which originated through the amalgamation of the major varieties spoken in the then Southern Rhodesia, through an amalgamation of six major dialects to form a standard Shona language, i.e. the Zezuru, Korekore, Karanga, Manyika, Kalanga and Ndau.

Restandardization comprises the correction of some or other social injustice in the speech community by standardising the language from a broader varietal base,

thereby making the standard language more inclusive to empower its speakers (Odendaal, 2013: 12).

Schiffman (1998: 365) cites Joseph (1987:174) who is of the view that restandardization seems to be what is happening, which according to him a fresh rendition of the standard language is unfolding to ‘challenge and attempt to capture some of the domains of an older, highly prestigious literary language that has ceased to be a vehicle of oral communication’.

Joseph (1978:174) acknowledges that restandardization will at no point substitute the standard language, emphasizing that ‘the older norm will simply be elevated to a “classical” status that it will continue to inhabit, but no one will try to emulate it except for a few archaizing diehard purists – or, in the case of liturgical languages, priests and pundits’.

Furthermore, a study conducted in Europe by Willemyns (2007: 266) argues that restandardization (de-standardization) is a misapprehension created by shifts within speech communities, and as a result, there seem to be displacement and loss of dialect use which mislead speakers to hold the view that the language variety can then be used in formal settings. Willemyns (2007: 270) notes an important characteristic of de-standardization as mentioned by Mattheier (2003, pp.239f.) which is “a relativization of linguistic norms”.

As an attempt to expand the standard language, linguists need to consider including other varieties to the written and spoken forms of the ‘official’ language (Odendaal, 2013: 7 and Parakrama, 1995: 42). This process of incorporating previously disadvantaged dialects of the standard form, as it is emphasised by Odendaal (2013: 7) and Johl (2002:173), influences the existing standard by focusing on structural changes to the standard for the sake of reflecting the changing relationship between the different speech communities.

Even though this kind of restandardization is deemed as superficial (Wade 1996:11) as the standard language continues to ‘belong to the elite’, it does not erase the existence of the varieties from which the elements are taken from.

Alberts (2013: 3) mentions that the standard orthography is based on the standardised variety; therefore, there is no sign of dialectal variety, except in the spoken language.

Furthermore, Alberts (2013: 3) continues to indicate that it is the language users who can create the spelling and orthography of their language, this according to Alberts (2013: 3), requires that the language users have some degree of knowledge of the system of orthography.

Restandardization as a process does not seek to dry out dialects, but rather to make an inclusive standard language variety that is accommodative of other language varieties which have been overlooked in the past (Odendaal, 2013: 12); thus, Alberts (2013: 4)'s view that in order for a language to be able to have a written communication form, its spelling and orthography have to be standardised, and this is crucial to the restandardization process as it incorporates the dialectical variety which has no approved standardised spelling and orthography into the standardised variety which has linguistic rules (Wade, 1996: 13; Bruthiaux, 2006: 32 & Odendaal, 2013: 11).

2.6 Methodological aspects of linguistic literature review

The researcher employs mixed research methodology in this study. This is because this methodology has the capacity to:

- Provide stronger inference for the study,
- Reduce the disadvantages that one method has when being used alone
- The designs complement each other

(Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 16 & Johnson and Turner, 2003: 98)

2.6.1 Qualitative Research Methodology

One of the aspects of qualitative research methodology is to focus on description and interpretation, which can if executed properly, steer progression towards a new

concept or theory or even assess the processes of an organization (Bazeley, 2013: 8; Schwandt, 2007: 197 and Israel, 1992: 5).

In this regard, as outlined by Creswell and Clark (2007: 112), numbers are not at the core of this methodology, rather description of a detailed observed subject without having influenced nor tempted with the data (Kothari: 2004: 89 and Blakstad, 2008).

2.6.2 Quantitative Research Methodology

Creswell (2003: 134, 2009: 107) connects experiment and survey with quantitative methodology. Surveys are cross-sectional and longitudinal studies usually undertaken with the aid of questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection purposes, with the intent of generalizing the findings from the sample to the population (Babbie, 2010: 115; Bhattacharjee, 2012: 11).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature from different scholars as an attempt to form a baseline for identifying the gap that exists in linguistics, particularly in the issues of dialect-language domain. This enables the researcher to attempt to bridge the gap, leading to the next chapter of research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines in detail and justifies the research approach which consists of the research design, sampling and population, data collection and analysis, and the quality criteria. The discussions are under the subthemes of both qualitative and quantitative research methods as it is a mixed methods research project. The researcher sought to harvest lexicons of the Khelobedu dialect directly from the speech community, at the same time get the perspective of Language Practitioners pertaining to the current state of the Sepedi language variety on how it can accommodate this dialect.

3.2 Research approach

The researcher employs mixed research methodology for purpose of this study. This is because the researcher found this methodology having the capacity to:

- Provide stronger inference for the study,
- Reduce the disadvantages that one method has when being used alone
- The designs complement each other

(Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 16 & Johnson and Turner, 2003: 98)

The study adopted Ravitch and Carl (2016: 7)'s definition of qualitative research as stated to be based on the methodological pursuit of understanding the ways that people see, view, approach, and experience the world and make meaning of their experiences as well as specific phenomena within it. interviews were conducted with language experts regarding the current state of the official language of Sepedi. This assisted in providing the researcher with in-depth understanding of the behind the scene dynamics of language development, especially for South African Indigenous Languages. Walliman (2011: 192)'s argument that interviews are 'particularly useful

when qualitative data are required' proved to be relevant in this case as it afforded the researcher with imperative information.

The research also used quantitative approach. In this approach, the researcher used questionnaires as a data collection tool. Ravitch and Carl (2016: 172) mention that a questionnaire has the advantages of affording the researcher the opportunity to collect data from different people in different places, in a short space of time, from a large group of people and the data is easy to gather and decode. The questions were close-ended, with simple wording and the order of the questions.

3.3 Research design

The sequential explanatory design was used by the researcher. This design is one of the six major designs of mixed methods research approaches (Shank, 2002: 19; Stake, 2010: 76) and it is said to be a straightforward amongst the six. The design requires the collection and analysis of quantitative and then followed by qualitative data, with integration of findings undertaken during the interpretation phase of the project (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 223).

Questionnaires were handed out to randomly identified participants to fill out from four different villages. The researcher was interested in Khelobedu speakers' perception of their own dialect and their understanding and knowledge of what they speak. Hence the researcher made a provision in the questionnaire for the participants to provide words found in their dialect.

Following the quantitative data collection process, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews. A consent letter attached to an interview guide was handed to each participant before the commencement of the interview. The researcher made follow up questions and prompted to enquire further on the knowledge, opinions and perspectives of the participants.

3.4 Sampling

3.4.1 Area of the study

The quantitative phase of study was conducted in four areas located within the Mopani district, namely, Ga-Mokwakwaila, Ga-Kgapane, Ga-Maphalle and Lenyenye. The qualitative phase of this study was conducted in various departmental offices within the Capricorn district, namely, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, National Lexicography Unit for Sesotho sa Lebowa (University of Limpopo) and the Department of Translation, Interpreting and Linguistics (University of Limpopo).

3.4.2 Population

The researcher employs mixed methods, thus, there are two sets of sample units. In this study, the aim is to explore Khelobedu dialectical variety, thus, the population from which the samples will be sourced is already encapsulated in the topic of this project, the Balobedu people who largely reside in the Mopani district in Tzaneen constituted the population sample for phase-one of the study (quantitative).

The dialect speakers were not of the same educational and social background. A few of the participants had Further Education and Training, while most of them had only acquired secondary schooling.

In the second phase (qualitative), the sample units were made up of each of the following fields: academics, language practitioners, lexicographers. The sample unit had to be reduced due to the unavailability of some of the language experts as aforementioned by the researcher.

3.4.3 Sampling

For the quantitative phase of the study, the researcher used probability sampling technique as it was found to be more suited for this phase, particularly because of its generalizability effect (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 225). Simple random sampling system was adopted by the researcher; meaning that every dialect speaker of Khelobedu was afforded an equal chance to partake in the study (Walliman, 2011: 184). The population sample for this phase was 20 participants from four different villages in the Mopani district. They were drawn based on availability and willingness to participate in the study.

The study also used purposeful sampling as the researcher 'intentionally select participants who have some experience in the phenomenon' (Creswell and Clark, 2011: 173); which has the advantage of adding trustworthiness rather than generalizability to the findings (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 282). This makes the sample size of the second phase to be four participants.

The population sample total was 24 participants, 20 dialect speakers and four language experts. Issues such as gender, socio-economic and educational backgrounds were not considered by the researcher.

3.5 Data collection

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee, this letter was used by the researcher to be granted permission to conduct the study from the Tribal Authorities of the four villages. the researcher further handed the randomly picked participants with consent forms as a form of permission from the participants to partake in the study.

3.5.1 Data collection instruments

Two forms of data collection instruments were used in the study to collect data and answer the research objectives of the study, namely, questionnaires and interview (using and interview guide).

3.5.2 *Quantitative data*

The researcher conducted quantitative survey to identify and explore dialectical vocabulary of Khelobedu, in this phase, the randomly identified participants were handed questionnaires to fill out. A questionnaire as invented by Sir Francis Galton, is a research instrument consisting of a set of questions intended to capture responses from respondent in a standardised manner (Babbie, 2010: 91). The questionnaire was structured and with close-ended questions.

The researcher used thematic analysis method to analyse the dialect speakers' questionnaires and gather information about the Khelobedu vocabulary and the perception of speakers pertaining their language variety.

3.5.3 *Qualitative data*

This was followed by qualitative interviewing of professionals, i.e. language practitioners, lexicographers. Runin (2012) explains that during the interview, the researcher explores in detail the experiences, knowledge and opinions of others and learn to see the world from their perspective rather than their own. Face-to-face interviews and dialogue were used to collect data form the language practitioners.

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants, handed each participant a consent form to sign, and assured each responded of confidentiality and anonymity. In this phase, the researcher used a semi-structured interview guide, to avoid derailing from the purpose of the study. Each interview took 6-10 minutes.

The interview guide had 7 questions, of which the researcher read out to the participants, followed by prompting and clarity seeking questions based on the purpose of the study. A tape recorder was used to record the responses of the participants, which were later transcribed onto a document format.

3.6 Quality criteria

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008: 102), the quality of mixed methods largely depends on the purpose for which the researcher deems necessary for the project. In this instance, the researcher used mixed methods to source out questions from the inferences of quantitative strand to develop qualitative strand. Thus, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008: 102) state that for reasons such as these, the quality criteria are for developmental purposes.

- Internal validity

In conducting the study, the researcher strived to ensure quality throughout the research process by avoiding methodological sloppiness (Woodwell, 2014: 231). The researcher avoided confounding, as such, the researcher was careful to undertake the study in a proper manner to ensure internal validity. The researcher ensured internal validity by grounding the study on sequential methodology; using more than one data collection method to answer the research question.

- Credibility

The credibility of the findings of the study relies on the researcher to present the qualitative data from the perspective of the participant. This involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research. The researcher was careful not to temper with the recorded data, to transcribe it as it was recorded, without filtering nor diluting any single word to present the findings with credibility.

- Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. This required the researcher to document the procedures for checking and rechecking the qualitative data throughout the study to give transparency of the researcher's position in the study (Richards, *et al.* 2012: 331).

3.7 Bias

The results are not diluted by any opinion, including that of the researcher; all the data gathered from the respondents was taken for analysis as it was. The researcher took steps to minimize bias in that the research employed simple random sampling, awarding every speaker of the dialect an equal chance to participate in the study; also with qualitative data collection, the purposeful sampling was based on the availability of the language professionals more than the personal preferences of the researcher.

Thus, the researcher remained neutral in the collection and analysis of data, not taking sides; let alone to add or subtract any information from the participants.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The participants of the study project are people; therefore, the researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo's Ethics Committee to be granted permission to collect data, ensuring that the study is not harmful to the society. The researcher also handed out consent forms (attached to the questionnaire) to the participants, which clearly indicated the intentions of the researcher and their expectations from the participants. The participants' confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, they were drawn from the public voluntarily, while the qualitative participants were interviewed based on availability and willingness to participate in the study. The obtained information was solely used for the purposes of the research.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research approach employed by the researcher in executing the study, this is guided by the research problem and research objectives set out in chapter one of the study. Mixed methods approach, with sequential explanatory design as the fitting design as it is the most straightforward design. The study area, population

and sampling, the data collection procedure and ethical considerations were also discussed in this chapter. The following chapter outlines the data analysis processes.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents quantitative and qualitative data results subsequently using graphs, tables, charts and themes. An interpretation and discussion of the statistical data is also presented, attaching meaning and drawing answers for the research objectives. The data results presented in this chapter was sourced from the responses of the two set groups of participants.

4.2 Data management and analysis

There are two sets of participants, namely, 20 Khelobedu speakers and language professionals, i.e. two lexicographers, one language editor, and one translator.

The Khelobedu speakers completed a questionnaire at different time frames as the researcher afforded randomly selected community member the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the study. The information is captured onto a computer spreadsheet program using Microsoft Excel. The statistics involve calculating frequencies of the respondents to each question and converting these into percentages.

An interview guide was used to capture the data from the second set of participants. This also was executed in set time frames of the respondents based on their availability. The researcher used a tape recorder to record the interviews. The interviews are transcribed using VLC media player onto Microsoft Word and then analysed under the themes drawn from the objectives of the study.

4.3 Presentation of research results

The results are presented and discussed from the two sets of participants and categorised according to the objectives of the study using the thematic data analysis approach.

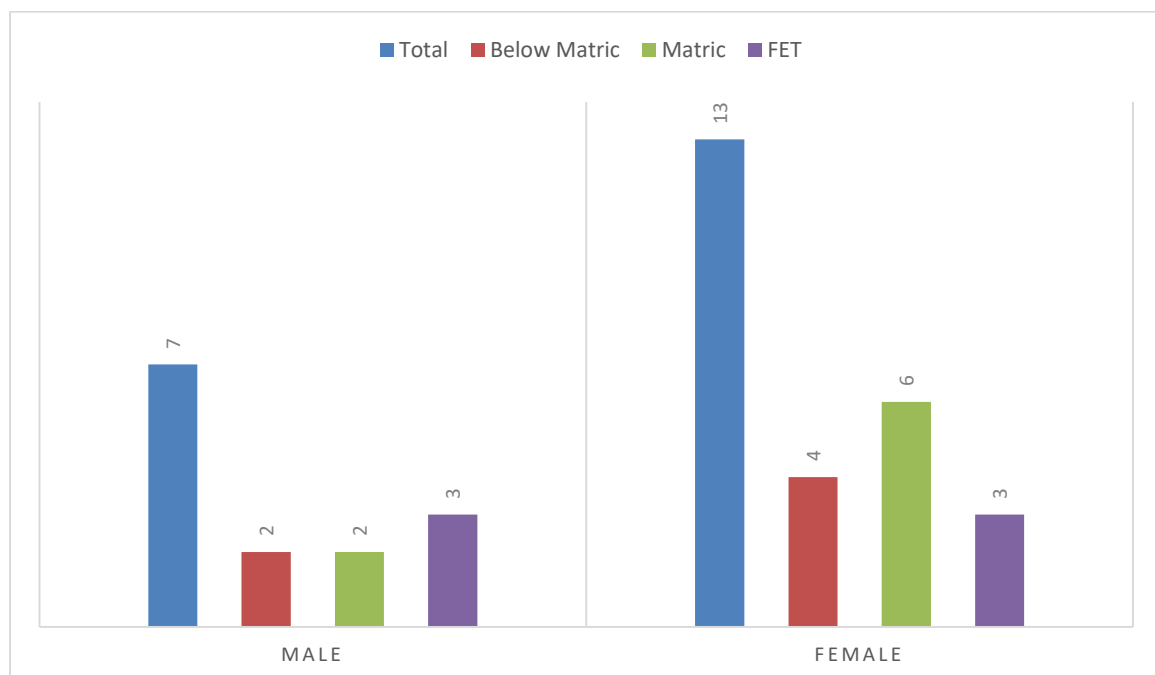
The language used in the questionnaire and the interview guide and the format of each question was such that could be easily understood by the participants. The nature of the design of the study demands that the two set data collection instruments be of different forms to assist in strengthening each of the data collection instruments.

4.3.1 Quantitative findings

- Demographic details of the participants

The results are drawn from two sections of the questionnaire, section A concerning itself with the background information of the participants, including the level of education and gender. This is represented in figure 4.1. Of the 20 participants, 7 are males between the ages of 20-35 years; highest qualification being NQF Level 4.

Figure 4.1: The total population sample



Of the total number of participants, only 1 state that Sepedi is their Home Language as it is the medium with which they were taught in school. In as much as 17 of the participants indicate that Khelobedu is their Home Language and acknowledge that what they speak is a dialect. Three of the participants state that Khelobedu to them is a language. This is indicated by percentages in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Language variety

Variety	Total Percentage
Sepedi as HL	5%
Khelobedu as HL	95%

15% of the participants who indicate that Khelobedu is their Home Language further state that what they speak is a language as they can fully express themselves and practise their culture through this variety. 80% of the 95% indicate that what they speak is a dialect because they were not taught it in school and is not found in government documents. This can further be illustrated in figure 4.2 below.

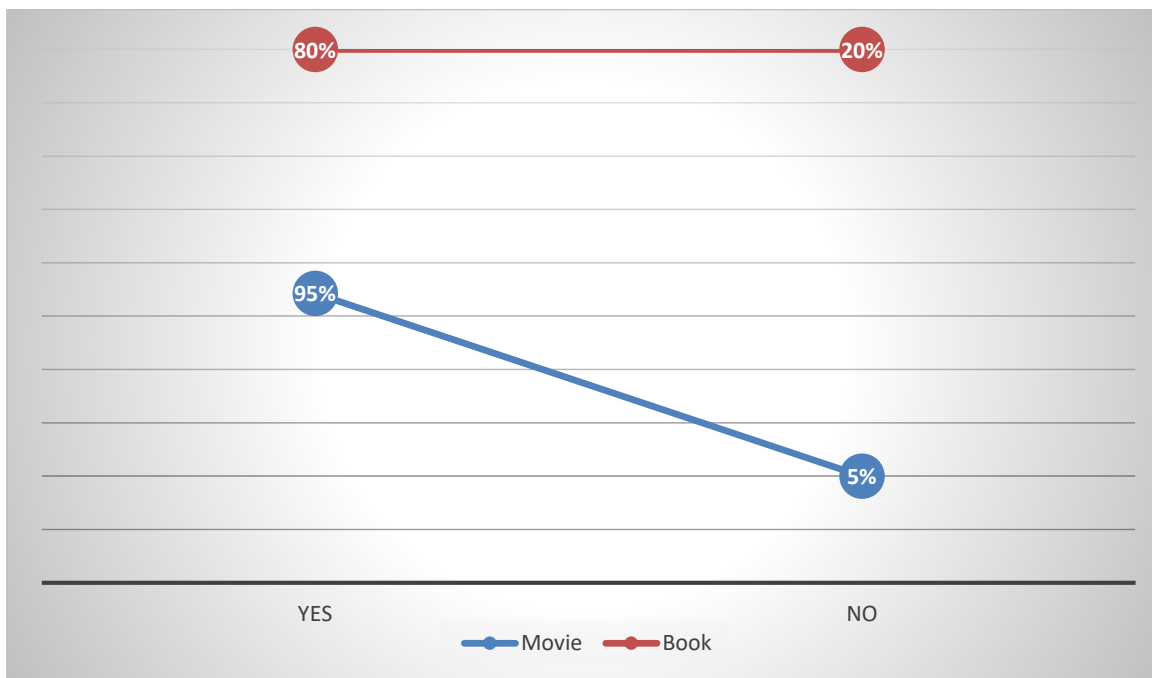
Figure 4.2: Khelobedu as a HL



- Khelobedu from the perspective of its speakers

The researcher also sought to grasp the attitude of the Khelobedu speakers towards their language variety. Questions relating to whether the participants would read books written in their language variety, watch a movie/ drama/ story performed in Khelobedu are represented below in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Watching and reading in Khelobedu



The 20% who indicated that they would not read a book written in Khelobedu went further to mention that this was mainly because they found it difficult to read the language variety. The 5% who also indicated that they would not watch a movie/ drama/ story played out in Khelobedu, indicated that it was because they would not enjoy it.

The respondents show that, to a certain extent, they do have knowledge of the two language varieties. Table 4.2 lists the words which the respondents gave as existing in both Sepedi and Khelobedu. According to the participants, these are some of the words which are found to be similar in both Sepedi and Khelobedu.

Table 4.2: List of words in Khelobedu and Sepedi

<i>Sepedi/ Khelobedu</i>	English
<i>Monna</i>	Man
<i>Mpša</i>	Dog
<i>Bana</i>	Children
<i>Sekolo</i>	School
<i>Bina</i>	Dance
<i>Tšhelete</i>	Money
<i>Meeno</i>	Teeth
<i>Nama</i>	Meat

The above words were listed by 16 of the respondents, totalling 80% of the sample unit. 4 of the questionnaires were invalid as there were no responses. This lead to 40% of the respondents to indicate that they do not know of other words that exist in both language varieties.

Thirty percent of the participants believed Khelobedu as more than 50 lexical items which, given a chance, could be added to the Sepedi language variety. Seventy percent disagreed with this.

- Khelobedu as standard

Most of the participants, making a total of 60%, indicate that they would not allow their children to be taught Khelobedu as a school subject; their reasons vary from individual to individual. To elucidate on this, a few of the responds are:

Participant 1: "... when they go to university they are going to be exposed to Sepedi and not Khelobedu"

Participant 2: "... where are they going to work because white people do not speak Khelobedu?"

Participant 3: "... because English is the mostly used language and makes communication easier than Khelobedu."

Figure 4.4 illustrates the above discussion in percentages. 40% of the participants indicate that they would allow their children to be taught Khelobedu as a school subject.

Figure 4.4: Khelobedu as a school subject



In response to the question of words that can be recommended for standardization, the participants listed words illustrated in table 4.3 below as some of the recommended words which could be synonyms in the Standard Sepedi.

Table 4.3: Recommended Khelobedu words

<i>Khelobedu</i>	English	Sepedi
<i>Booswa</i>	Porridge	<i>Bogobe</i>
<i>Khelo</i>	Thing	<i>Selo</i>
<i>Phega</i>	Crazy	<i>Gafa</i>
<i>Kheho</i>	Calabash	<i>Sego</i>
<i>Khetebha</i>	-	<i>Setepa</i>
<i>Khemake</i>	Cat	<i>Katse</i>
<i>Phate</i>	Mat	<i>Legogo</i>
<i>Khepše</i>	Soft porridge	<i>Motepa</i>
<i>Khekome</i>	Homemade peanut butter	-
<i>Khedhopša</i>	-	<i>Setlopša</i>
<i>Khedhola</i>	Frog	<i>Segwagwa</i>
<i>Khebhebhe</i>	Van (pick-up truck)	-
<i>Moghayo</i>	80 kg Maize meal bag	<i>Motumpane</i>

Khetebha- it is a utility that is used to serve porridge

Khekome- has no known translation equivalent in Sepedi

Khedhopša- wild spinach mixed with nuts

Khebhebhe- has no known translation equivalent in Sepedi

The Sepedi translation equivalent for *moghayo* is a dialectical term used by the Bapedi speech community residing within the villages of Sekhukhune District.

All the participants agreed that they do not find it difficult to write Sepedi as they were taught it in school. Meanwhile, Khelobedu is a language variety that they speak at home, without any form of orthography for reference and learning.

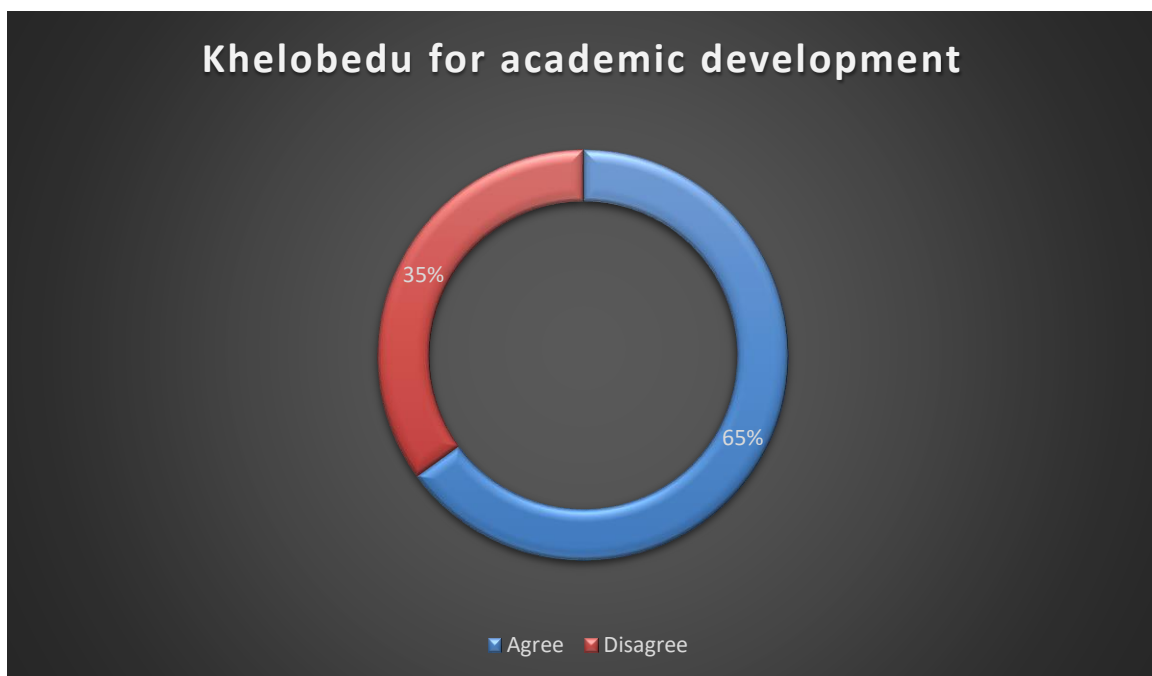
Participant X: "... we did not learn how to write Khelobedu in school"

Participant Y: "... Sepedi is easy but Khelobedu we just speak it and learn Sepedi in school."

50% of the participants agree that the above recommended words can be taught in schools and added into dictionaries, while the other half of the participants indicate that the words listed are not suitable for educational purposes or used in dictionaries.

Nevertheless, thirty five percent of the participants, as represented in figure 4.5, did not agree that the words listed in table 4.3 would make a positive contribution towards improving academic performance for school children, while 65% of the participants were of the view that Khelobedu vocabulary could assist to improve the performance of school children, reasoning that this is because Khelobedu is a language variety that they speak daily.

Figure 4.5: Khelobedu for academic development



Of the 20 participants, only one could provide the researcher with an idiom in Khelobedu.

Participant Y: *“O phepa ngwana a se o kha moro’o”* (To give birth is not an easy task)

4.3.2 Qualitative findings

The findings from the interviews attempted to find out the views of language practitioners on restandardization and the current state of the Standard Sepedi, their recommendations for future language development and their knowledge of different standardization models.

- The current state of Official Indigenous Standard Languages

According to the participants, the official indigenous standard languages (Sepedi, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele, etc.) were evaluated last in 2008; however, there are linguists who are working on these languages on a continuing basis. The 2008 language evaluation, according to the participants, was not well researched and still lacks a lot in terms of unifying indigenous language speakers. The changes are being questioned and are not used in most of the schools as part of the curriculum.

According to participant D who served on the National Language Body, the 2008 evaluation of Sepedi was the correction of the Northern Sotho Orthography Booklet no. 4 of 1988. They further stated that the process had nothing to do with improving the language but rather, it was more focused on the editorial aspects of the booklet than anything.

It is highly noted that the development of language is slower than normal as it is more political than anything else. For instance, there are still debates on language names, i.e. whether Sepedi should be named Sepedi or Sesotho sa Leboa. Such dynamics are derailing the processes of expanding the language. The participants mention that language grows, therefore, people should move along with the changes

Participant A: Linguists are busy... I can't say, yes, the last one was in 2008, the official one but they meet and discuss the challenges that they are experiencing... it is just not documented into a booklet like that...

- Restandardization

Restandardization is possible, there is no reason why it cannot be done. The participants strongly feel that there is no better time to restandardized than now as the arguments of language are spiralling out of control.

Majority of the participants have little understanding of the term restandardization, nevertheless, they refer to it as modernization. They stated that they understand restandardization to be:

Participant A: ... it means it's a language, it's always growing, so it means that we must keep on doing research, standardizing again so it should not be a once off thing, we should keep on doing it.

Participant B: ...it's when long used terms are invented to be used in this modern terminology...

Participant C: it means starting to standardize from scratch, verifying if we ever standardised in the first place

Participant D: ... a standard language is there; a written form of a language is there. When you try to restandardized the language, you try to improve the standard form of a language...

Some of the participants avoided stating whether Sepedi is standard or not as they are sceptical about the current state of the language. Participant C came out to say that they do not believe that the language has been standardised. Participant D shared the same sentiments with participant C, arguing that there are no track records. Stating that language standardization should have a process, i.e. selection.

Participant D: ... if people are saying that Sepedi has been standardised, then I will argue that the monocentric approach to standardization has been followed instead of polycentric approach.

They further stated that out of the 11+ dialects of Sepedi, only a few were considered when documenting Sepedi. They further went on to state that dialect such as Khelobedu, was never near the process of being included in the standardization process. The current Sepedi, official as it may be, is a dialect itself. It has just been given more privilege than other dialects.

Participant C: ... when they say a language is standardised, it means that other dialects were included

Participant A regards restandardization and modernization to mean the same things, stating that these processes entail considering the previous terms and adding on those terms to improve the language. They are not aware of restandardization models which are existing. The participants deem it fit for language to be modernized rather than restandardized, arguing that it should be so as this is a modern world.

The participants acknowledge that word/ term creation is done by the speakers themselves, Linguists come in with formal processes such as standardization, modernization, etc. It is stated however, that some dialects are not user-friendly, therefore cannot be accommodated. Some lexicons from dialects which are perceived as user-friendly are selected to serve as synonyms in dictionaries.

- Language Practitioners' Recommendations for Restandardization are:
 - Consultation with all language users

The participants strongly recommend that those who have their language varieties assimilated into Sepedi should be consulted when undertaking the process of restandardization.

- Not be limited to linguists only to avoid rejection

Any language must be accepted by its speakers, therefore, if they are not involved in the process, they are most likely to reject the formalized variety. An equal representation of relevant language custodians should be considered.

- Try to include majority of the dialects in the standard form

In as much as other dialects other than Sepedi have not be given the privilege of developing, the little form of orthography, grammar, etc. that the dialects may have should be considered when restandardizing.

- Select user-friendly terms

The terms which are to be included in the standard form should be user-friendly, accommodative and relatable to most of the speech communities.

- Consider models of standardization

Given the linguistic complexities of the Northern Region (Limpopo Province), PanSALB with the assistance of language practitioners should work towards developing a model for standardization.

Language practitioners need to acquaint themselves with the different models to enable them to select an appropriate and relevant model that can produce a well-structured language form. Linguists need to familiarize themselves with the polycentric approach, while on the other hand, researching models which have been used in other countries.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented data from the quantitative and qualitative sample units; presented data with the aid of tables, graphs and charts to better illustrate the research results; alongside percentages and respondents' quotes was the discussion of the findings to rationalize the findings.

Chapter 5 presents the summary, concluding remarks and recommendations of the research.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on chapter 1-4 which built up to this concluding chapter that further comprises of the summary, recommendations and concluding remarks of the study.

The study sought to answer four research questions as outlined in chapter 1 of the study and make recommendations. Qualitative and quantitative steps were followed in trying to fill and clarify a few gaps in the linguistic literature.

5.2 Research design and method

The researcher identified and shaped their research problem as:

The standardization of Sepedi, unlike the case of Shona, excluded many its dialects from the process, thus, left Khelobedu speakers outside of this medium and later subjecting them to learn it in schools, putting them at a point of disadvantage academically.

This led to the development of the following objectives:

- To evaluate the standard Sepedi variety.
- To assess the possibilities of including some aspects of Khelobedu in the standard Sepedi.
- To investigate how Khelobedu items can be accommodated in the orthography of the standard Sepedi.
- To determine processes relevant to the restandardization of the standard Sepedi.

- To suggest a model that can be followed in the process of the restandardization of indigenous language varieties.

To answer the research question and the objectives, the study adopted a mixed methods approach, employing a sequential research design to better harness the relevant data for this study.

The nature of the study postulated the study to have two set of participants, qualitative and quantitative. There were two research areas, namely, Tzaneen located in the Mopani District (Four areas, Ga-Kgapane, Ga-Mokwakwaila, Ga-Maphalle and Lenyenye) and Polokwane.

The study had a total of 24 participants combined (qualitative and quantitative). Random and purposive sampling techniques were used by the researcher to derive the sample units from the total population as guided by the objectives of the study. Data was collected via two sets of instruments, questionnaire and face-to-face interviews.

5.3 Summary and interpretation of the research findings

The process of formalizing any given language entails four processes as popularly outlined by Haugen (1966, 1972) known as the standardization model (Selection and acceptance; Codification; Implementation and Elaboration).

These four steps put language speakers at the forefront of any process of language development, change, elaboration, etc. It is only the two middle processes which are professional orientated, while selection and acceptance, and elaboration largely depend on the speech community. Nevertheless, the role played by language custodians, professionals and practitioners, institutions cannot be overlooked.

The researcher understands the cruciality of the interrelationship played by these two consociations in terms of language, and language planning and policy development.

The findings of the study reveal that dialect speakers are not optimistic about the development of their language variety. Very few believe that their dialect could be

relevant in academic progression, while 90% of the participants did not know any proverb or idiom in their dialect.

Language practitioners are not familiar with restandardization. Instead, modernization is their preferred process of language development and elaboration of function. Their concerns and views support restandardization as they are not confident about the previous standardization process; thus, they argue that proper processes need to be followed.

As discussed in chapter 1 of the study that restandardization is a process that does not seek to revoke a standardised norm, rather, it creates a platform for elaboration, modernisation, and expansion of language using the dialectical varieties of the same language family of a given norm.

Every selected norm has its language family; thus, lexicons can be harvested from the immediate family of a given language variety to bridge the gap of zero equivalence and other linguistic challenges of terminology.

5.4 Conclusions

Chapter 1 is the founding chapter with the introduction of the study, the research problem and the purpose of the study is also outlined. The study sought to evaluate the restandardization of Sepedi and assess the possibilities of the inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect in the standard language variety.

Chapter 2 outlines the review of relevant literature by prominent linguists and scholars who present their arguments views apropos of restandardization and language policy and planning, and the underlying dynamics thereof.

Chapter 3 concerns itself with the research approach, its design, sampling and population; data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research, discusses the findings using graphs, tables and charts.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher, based on the findings of the study, recommends that:

- PanSALB needs to engage with different dialect speech communities to maintain working relations with these language users.
- Dialect users need to work on documenting their language varieties, to help prevent language death.
- The Department of Arts, Sports, Culture and Recreation together with PanSALB and other relevant stakeholders need to encourage the use of indigenous African languages.
- The subject needs to be further researched, engaging Tribal Houses and various dialects as a longitudinal study.

5.6 Contributions of the study

The findings of the study shed some light into the complex language dynamics of Sepedi.

This study considers an issue that affects different stakeholders, including language policy issues and its findings will be beneficial to:

Pan South African Language Board- to help redirect the focus, resources and its mandate as a language custodian.

NLU (Sesotho sa Leboa) - with new terms which can be used when compiling Puku Ntšu

Sepedi language users as their language will be expanded, with new terms and possibly new uses. This will also expand the speech community.

Balobedu speech community, in that they will be able to be part of the Sepedi speech community and take pride in it as well.

5.7 Limitations of the study

There are over 6 dialects assimilated into the standard Sepedi. This study was only limited to 1 dialect. Further research can be undertaken for other dialects and/ or languages.

Due to insufficient time and resources, the study was only limited to 24 participants. The Tribal Houses and other Language Custodians could not be reached. This could be explored further to enrich the findings of the study.

Moreover, the study found that, unlike standard language speakers who are confident in expressing themselves in the language variety, majority of the dialect speakers have a negative attitude towards their linguistic variety.

Dialect speakers' perceptions can be investigated to establish their concerns and find ways to preserve these language varieties to avoid language deaths of dialects in rural communities.

5.8 Concluding remarks

In conclusion, it is the researcher's belief that the standardization process that was followed regarding Sepedi has done injustice to the larger speech community as majority of the dialects were overlooked in the process. Of course, it goes without say that the easy route was chosen at the expense of most of the speech community members of Sepedi or those whose dialects are assimilated into Sepedi in that when the standardization processes begun, Sepedi already had translated documents and books, thus, it was easy to use it as a standard language.

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Annexure 1: Ethical Clearance Certificate



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TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 31 August 2017

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/227/2017: PG

PROJECT:

Title: An exploration of the restandardization of Sepedi: The inclusion of Khelobedu dialect

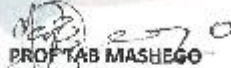
Researcher: MJ Malatji

Supervisor: Dr JR Rammala

Co-Supervisor: N/A

School: Languages and Communication Studies

Degree: Masters in Translation Studies and Linguistics


PROF. TAB MASHEGO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
- ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Annexure 2: Consent Letter

Research title: **An exploration of the restandardization of Sepedi: The inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect**

Researcher: **Jerida Malatji**

I, hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following project: “An exploration of the restandardization of Sepedi: An inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect.”

I understand that:

1. My responses will be treated with confidentiality and only be used for the purpose of the research.
2. No harm will be posed to me.
3. The research project aim has been explained to me.
4. I do not have to respond to any question that I do not wish to answer for any reason.
5. Access to the records that pertain to my participation in the study will be restricted to persons directly involved in the research.
6. Any questions that I may have regarding the research, or related matters, will be answered by the researcher.
7. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and I can withdraw my participation at any stage.
8. I understood the information regarding my participation in the study and I agree to participate.

Signature of interviewee

Signature of witness

Signature of interviewer

Signed at _____ on this ____ day of _____ 20____

Annexure 3: Consent Form

Dear participant,

Thank you for showing interest in this study.

My name is Jerida Malatji. I am a Master's student at the University of Limpopo. I am conducting a study titled "An exploration of the restandardization of Sepedi: An inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect" in Bolobedu, Tzaneen, in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Your responses to the questionnaire will remain strictly confidential.

The researcher will attempt not to identify you with the responses you provide in the questionnaire or disclose your name as a participant in the study. Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from participating at any time should you wish to do so. Kindly answer all the questions as honestly as possible.

Your participation in this study is very important.

Thank you for your time and cooperation

Signature:

Date:

Annexure 5: Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: PLEASE TICK OR MARK WITH X IN THE PROVIDED BLOCKS NEXT TO THE ANSWER THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR VIEW.

SECTION A

Gender

Male	Female
-------------	---------------

Age.....

Highest qualification.....

Home language

Sepedi	Khelobedu
---------------	------------------

SECTION B

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you consider what you speak a dialect or a language? If a language, why do you say so?**

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.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2. Would you be willing to allow your child to be taught Khelobedu as a subject at school? Yes/ No. If no, please explain your reason(s).**

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Would read a book written in Khelobedu? Yes/ No. If no, please explain your reason(s).

.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Please list at least 5 words which are found in both Sepedi and Khelobedu

-
-
-
-
-

5. Do you think that there are other words in Khelobedu that exist in Sepedi? Yes/ No..... if yes, please skip question 6.

6. If Khelobedu words were to be included in the standard Sepedi, which words would you recommend? Please list at least 5 words

-
-
-
-
-

7. Do you think that Sepedi words are more difficult to write compared to Khelobedu words? Yes/No..... Why do you say so?

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. These words that you provided, can they be taught in schools, used in dictionaries, etc.? Yes/ No.....

9. Do you think that if they are taught in schools, children would improve in their performance? Yes/ No.....

If yes, why do you say so?

.....
.....
.....
.....

10. Do you think that Khelobedu has more than 50 words which can be accommodated in the standard Sepedi? Yes/ No.....

11. Do you know of any Khelobedu idiom or proverb? Yes/ No..... If yes, please provide below

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

12. Would you watch a movie/ drama/ story that is played out in Khelobedu? Yes/ No..... If no, please state why

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Annexure 5: Interview guide

- 1. Please tell me what is your view on the current standard Sepedi**
- 2. According to your knowledge, when last was the standard Sepedi evaluated?**
- 3. What is your understanding of the term restandardization?**
- 4. Do you think that it is necessary to restandardize Sepedi, or even possible?**
- 5. If Sepedi was to be restandardised, what would be your recommendations as a language specialist?**
- 6. Which model would you recommend for this process?**
- 7. Which dialectical varieties would you recommend for inclusion into the standard Sepedi?**