



An Analysis of Images Based on Contrasts and Differences in Christian Themba Msimang’s Poetry

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this article are to mention and explicate the images that are differentiating and contrasting in Msimang’s poetry with an aim of highlighting the poetic meanings, themes and rhyme. The fundamental figures of speech that are identified, classified and analyzed are antithesis, irony, ambiguity and sarcasm. Their characteristics are that they all appear to contain conflicting or opposing ideas that are brought by words and phrases. The figures of speech that are based on comparisons, sound devices, exaggerations and understatement are implied. The use of these images brings about rich and varied styles with an inexhaustible sense of beauty. This is where we can detect the classic nature of the poets’ poetry. Images are used for poetic truth to compare animate and inanimate, big and small, good and bad objects in a more innovative and original way. The analysis concentrate on the expressive, referential, conative and poetic functions. The structuralism theory and approaches are adopted for this research work.

Keywords: Antithesis; ambiguity; expressive function; referential function and sound devices.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to investigate how Christian Themba Msimang explores images in

his poetry. This investigation is broadened by employing the Structuralism theory to expose the poetic merits and uniqueness. Swanepoel [1] contends that:

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The concept structure refers to the total of relations between the elements of text. Structuralism is therefore the theory and method of investigating these relations with interest in relationship between the parts of the whole, and then, between the whole of the parts.

The figures of speech enable the poet to illustrate imagery in a meaningful way. It is much easier for the analyst to single out imagery as an appeal to the senses. An image may be visual (pertaining to the eyes), olfactory, (smell), tactile (touch) auditory (hearing), gustatory) (taste), abstract (in which case it may appeal to what may be described as the mental power) and bodily effort. A poet develops the form and theme by making connections for the reader between things that may not have had connections before. Shiach, [2] endorses what other scholars uphold about imagery as follows:

(Imagery) is the collective word for images, which are pictures, sounds, tastes, or sensations created in the reader's mind by the poet's words.

Walter [3] defines image as follows:

The word "image" basically refers to a picture and imagery refers to words that creates a picture in the reader's mind.

Thwala [4] holds this idea about the concepts:

Imagery is the mental activity, which is experienced by a reader and reciter of a poem, where the language is used to represent pictures in the reader's mind. It is an integral part of any poem, therefore, a poem devoid of imagery can hardly be classified under poetry.

Imagery is the most important element of descriptive writing since it makes possible the communication of what one hears, sees, smells, feels and tastes. Effective imaginings depend to a large degree on the efficiency of senses. The figures of speech that are based on contrast are antithesis, irony, ambiguity and sarcasm. The study adds value to the wide body of knowledge on literature contents and imagery. It is explicit how imagery are identified, classified, compared and used.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

The structuralism approach is adopted for this study. It concentrates on the subjective experiences and qualitative methods for interpretive purpose. Steinberg [5]. The referential function relates to the context and content. The expressive function refers to the poet's feelings. The poetic function refers to the message that is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. The conative function influences the recipient to adopt a particular point of view. Fourie [6]. The research work combines the referential, expressive, poetic and conative functions.

The poems that are selected for analysis are the following: Ku—DBZ Ntuli (To DBZ Ntuli), *Izintaba Ezikude* (Far-distanced mountains), *UShaka Ka Senzangakhona* (Shaka, son of Senzanga khona), *Siwelai Moretele* (We cross Moretele River), *Uthando* (Love), *Siyashweleza Nodumehlezi* (We are pleading Nodumehlezi), *Yimpi* (It is War), *Onoziqu bakwa-Unisa* (Unisa graduates), *Hhawu! Ngomaganedlula* (Oh! An ill-mannered lady), *Inkondlo Yezingqalabutho* (A Poem of the Pacesetters), *Bamgudluzile* (He has been eliminated), *Mshayeleni Ihlombe* (Give him an applaud), *Iziziba Zothukela* (The Pools of Thukela River), *UBhambatha kaMakhwatha* (Bambatha, son of Makhwatha), *Xola Hleziphi* (Be appeased Hleziphi), *Isibaya Esikhulu se-Afrika* (An African great byre), *Mihle Yonkhe Imibala* (All colours are beautiful) and *Ngingene Endumisweni* (I am Glorifying).

3. RESULTS

The figures of speech that are selected for this analysis are antitheses, ambiguity, irony and sarcasm.

3.1 Antithesis

This is a figure of speech which uses contrasting words or phrases to balance a specific idea in a poem. Reaske, [7] mentions the following about antithesis:

... results when a pair or more of strongly contrasting terms are presented together. If words, ideas or clauses are widely divergent but present together there is a certain amount of resulting tension which makes the line highly provocative.

Corbett, [8] views antithesis as:

... the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, often in parallel structure.

Thwala et al. [9] observes antithesis as follows:

It is the juxtaposing of the desperate ideas and images to heighten and clarify the concepts.

Antithesis is a basically a contrasting idea which is perfected by using opposite words. The words are evocatively used to express the moods, attitudes and beliefs of the poet. They are used to express the candid emotion that is called forth by experience with an aim of helping the listener or reader.

Lutrin and Pincus [10], Tucker and Young [11] and Scheffler [12] postulate that antithesis is the figure of speech that balances the opposing thoughts, expresses the contrasting ideas and depicts parallelism.

3.1.1 Contrasting words

This figure of speech is found in the poem, KuDBZ Ntuli (To DBZ Ntuli):

UMshay' edwaleni angafi, kuf' itshe.
(Msimang, [13]).

(One who strikes the rock and does not die, but the rock be broken off.)

In poetry, the meaning of a word cannot be paralleled to the denotative meaning. The sense of a word in a poem can be seen connotatively or semantically as it is described by Heese and Lawton, [14] as follows:

The words employed by the poet need not be different in themselves from ordinary words used in straightforward prose or everyday speech; but in the context of a poem they may acquire that extension of meaning characteristic of poetic diction which stimulates and delights the imagination.

The contrasted words are "not to die" and "to be broken off". The phrasal power, reveals the use of expressive sound patterns that produce an effect of pressure caused by opposing words. The rock is conferred with the animate act of dying as if it were human.

Antithesis reveals a character who is a hard, strong and courageous person, capable of withstanding tough and rough conditions without fail. This is stated in both deverbative and metaphorical eulogues. The thoughts that are conveyed by antithesis do not accentuate opposites as literally pronounced. They arouse a certain reaction from the reader and listener. Another example of contrasting words is the following:

Ngibabukile abanombela bedilika ...
(Msimang, [15])

(I have been looking those that climb and fall ...)

This is found in the poem, *Izintaba Ezikude* (Far-distanced Mountains). The opposing words are - *nombela* (climb) and - *dilika* (fall) and they are used to bring about equilibrium. The two contradictory words are deliberately used by the poet to elucidate the actions. The poet seems to be astounded with what he sees. The equilibrium of actions is conveyed by the opposing meanings.

3.1.2 Contrasting clauses

Contrast is apparent in the praise poem of King Shaka, where the poet gives a detailed account about Senzangakhona as follows:

Obemzimba muhle nangendlala enkulu ...
(Msimang, [15])

(One who had a beautiful body even during famine ...)

A fine-looking body and famine portray two conflicting thoughts and meanings, but they are brought together to enforce certain thoughts. The combined impression is that he was a strong and able person to resist all natural forces.

In the poem, *Siwela IMoretele* (We cross Moretele River) the poet emphasizes on the sun as a symbol and sign of life. Reaske, [7] has this view on a symbol:

The usual answer is that if some picture or representation is constantly repeated it becomes a symbol.

We are anxious about the representation of one thing by another. The sun is implicit in the extract. However, the difference that is

expressed is seeing it rise and not seeing to set. The word “sun” has been left out in order to accomplish a more solid expression or to circumvent using many words. The rising and setting of the sun signify life and death. The divergence paints a graphic picture of the scene. The poet antithetically expresses:

Balibona liphuma, abalibonanga lishona ...
(Msimang, [15])

(They saw it rises, but did not see it sets ...)

The poetic language used necessitates the frequent sound effects of hope, when the sun rises, and despair, when the sun sets. The rhythm of the poet cannot be systematic because of this contrast. Seeing the sun rises divulges hope, courage and life, while seeing the sun set signifies death.

More examples on contrasting clauses are found in the poem, *Uthando* (Love):

Ngamfoma izithukuthuku kulel' unqqoqwane.
Amagquma nezikhinsi kwaphenduk'
amathafa.
(Msimang, [13]).

(I sweat while there is frost ...
The hills and steeps became the plains ...)

The poet likens sweating, which befalls when it is hot, with the frost of very cold weather conditions. Hills and steep areas are matched with plains. The thoughts are not to stress dissimilarities but to accentuate the actions and facts. It is like poetry itself which is viewed by some critics to be a literary representation derived from their commitment to metaphysical idealism. It seems to be as spontaneously powerful as the poetic inspiration that carries the knowledge of the hidden present and of the future in the form of prophetic utterances. Love seems to be an unpredictable sensation with no limits.

3.2 Sarcasm

Sarcasm is a rhetoric device which means exactly what it says in a severe and unpleasant manner. It is found in all types of poems and themes for elucidation, clarification and illustration.

3.2.1 Sarcasm in elegy

In the poem, *Siyashweleza Nodumehlezi* (We are pleading Nodumehlezi) the poet seems to be

talking to Shaka:

Phenduka, sibheke siphenduke silibuse!
(Msimang, [15]).

(Turn and look at us so that we can govern!)

His supplication is supported by the use of the same consonants and vowels. Sarcasm is set forth by the use of informative words, *phenduka* (turn) and *sibheke* (look at us). The poem is a breakthrough for sensible and logical thinking that presupposes stability, harmony, healthy atmosphere and a decent moral life. It comes as ratiocination which proposes unity, truthfulness and decency.

3.2.2 Sarcasm in satiric poem

This is an appeal to the sense of movement and bodily effort. Kinaesthetic imagery is substantiated in the real or fantasy world by means of poetic action and poetic structure. With all the submissions, we come up with the extensive understanding of poetry as a representational, uttered and creative art that has both internal and external structures scrutinized for poetic qualities. In the sample for the study the appropriate example is found in the poem, *Yimpi* (It is war):

Ekhanda, pho!
Ezibilini, bhuxe!
(Msimang, [13]).

(To be struck on the head with a stick!
To be stabbed in the entrails with a spear!)

The poet uses four words. The word, *ekhanda* (on the head) is given more encyclopedic meaning through the use of a monosyllabic ideophone, *pho!* Which give a comprehensive explanation of how the head was bashed by the knobstick. It has an onomatopoeic effect that is clearly revealed by the ideophone. The second line describes how the person is gored in the intestines or abdominal with as spear. The words “intestines” or “abdominal” are meaningful if attached with the dissyllabic ideophone *bhuxe!* The ideophone defines how the intestines are gored with a spear.

Isagila (knobstick) and *umkhonto* (spear) are both images implied through the usage of ideophone in both lines. They were not included because of the figurative device, ellipsis. They are deliberately omitted to achieve a more

compact expression. The two lines are poetic in nature because of this compactness. If the two words were contained within the two lines, they would have depicted the prosaic expression:

*Ekhanda ngesagila pho!
Ezibilini ngomkhonto bhuxe!*

*(To hit with a knobstick at the head)
(To stab with a spear at the entrails.)*

The physical strength of bodily exertion is clearly apparent when there is war. In the poem we come across head to head hostilities which leads to victory and defeat. The knobstick and spear are a conventional representation of violence, aggression, hostility and war. The opening stanza depicts traditional weapons which were habitually used for fighting, the spear and the knobkerrie. The subsequent stanza from the first one depicts weaponry developed to a higher degree of complexity, the gun, which is metaphorically called "the striking lightning", *umbani, bani!* The concluding stanza give the impression of being a revelation when the poet state that the mist has cleared, "*inkungu ... damu*"; the round ball-like sun shines, "*ibhamuza kazilelanga ... bhamu*". The end-rhyme *-amu* stresses clearness and goodness. Eventually, we find reunion and unity.

3.2.3 Sarcasm in the praise-poem

In the praise-poem, *Onoziqu Bakwa-Unisa* (Unisa graduates) the poet sarcastically discusses the commitment of women to formal education:

*Kazilusan' olusemhlane uyoncela kubani?
Kazibhodw' eliseziko uyokhwezelwa
ngubani? Onephango useyodl' iKentucky
Fried Chicken.
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(To whom are you going to suck, baby?
Who is going to add firewood at a fireplace?
At least the hungry one shall eat
Kentucky Fried Chicken.)*

The poem reveals to what extent people commit themselves to formal education. The poet congratulates the commitment of the women in obtaining distance tuition, especially in this gender equity era. The extract specifically concentrates on women. Their participation in education is ironically assessed by the poet as they are no longer able to look after their children

and they no longer cook at homes. The words that are used, *-ncela* (suck), *ibhodwe* (pot) and *iphango* (hunger) enhance the gustatory imagery. The specific thoughts of education are expressed in gustatory imagery this way. Historically, women's role in society was centred on weaving, basketry, pottery and home life, due to social transformation all opportunities are now accessible to women. Women can take up essential positions in all domains of life to develop the country in general.

3.3 Irony

Irony is a rhetoric speech which is based on contrast or difference. It expresses the opposite of what it means. It can be brought about by a word, words or phrases. The words or phrases are chosen and arranged to express meanings. Muecke, [16] says this about irony:

The 'real meaning' may be the contrary of the 'pretended meaning.'

Irony was employed in literature centuries before the time of Christ. Cuddon [17] states what the Roman rhetoricians, in particular Cicero and Quintilian, say:

Ironia denoted a rhetorical figure and a manner of discourse, in which, for the most part, the meaning was contrary to the words.

Corbett, [8] puts forth the same opinion as other scholars about irony:

... the use of a word in such a way as to convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning of the word.

Irony is used as an instrument to express the truth. It is, therefore, evident that irony is the valuable and resourceful weapon of the satirist. Muecke, [16] emphasizes two views:

- (i) That 'modern' literature must be ironical, and
- (ii) That all good literature is by definition ironical.

3.3.1 Overt irony

Muecke, [16] has this view on overt irony:

... the victim or the reader or both are meant to see the ironist's real meaning at once. What makes irony overt is a blatancy in the ironic contradiction or incongruity. The tone

in overt irony may be either congruous with the real meaning and it is then that we have an exaggeration of the tone appropriate to the ostensible meaning.

In the poem, *Hhawu! NgoMaganedlula* (Oh! An ill-mannered lady) we find an example of overt irony:

*Ntokaz' ethand' amadod' onke
Wen' othandwa ngamadod' onke,
Ntokaz' abakuthand' usundinda ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(Lady who loves every man
You who is loved by all men,
Lady who is loved even when wandering ...)*

This overtness is vivid as money seen to be like the ill-mannered lady. In irony we do not concentrate on a word, words or the phrase. Words signify the opposite of what they regularly express or they exaggerate the intended meaning.

In the poem we see that money's function as an economic entity is exaggerated to show the behaviour of an immoral lady. Money, with all its positive influences on social development is likened to negative human behaviour. It is possible and acceptable for a lady to be liked by all men, but impossible and unacceptable to be concurrently loved at all. It is an overstatement to compare a nomadic lady with circulating money.

In our example the character of the prostitute is blatantly endowed with the attributes of circulating money. Irony is a figure of speech which conveys a communication in a mocking way. However, irony always perceives inconsistency or incongruity between words and their meanings, actions and their significances as well as between appearance and reality.

3.3.2 Covert Irony

Covert irony is not meant to be obvious but rather to be detected. It is easy to detect covert irony when there is prior knowledge. In the poem, *Inkondlo Yezingqalabutho* (A poem of the pacesetters) we detect covert irony through prior knowledge:

*Ngob' ethi ubudoda beklwa
Basal' esikhungweni saseNcome;
Ngob' ethi ubuqhawe bejozi*

*Basal' esikhungweni eMaqongqo;
Ngob' ethi ubungwazi besijula
Basal' enkundleni eNdongakusuka ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(Because he says manhood's broad-bladed spear
Was left in the warren of Blood River
Because he says the heroism of broad-bladed spear,
Was left in the warren of Maqongqo
Because he says the heroism of hunting spear
Was left at Ndongakusuka's field.)*

Three historic figures and war battles are implied above. The first is Dingane battling with the Afrikaners at Blood River; the second is of Dingane against Mpande at Maqongqo and the last is of Cetshwayo against Mbuyazi at Ndongakusuka.

Nozishada, the son of Maqoboza of the Nzuzu's clan, was a general in Mpande's army and was in charge of the regiment at the battle of Maqongqo. He was a well-known warrior. In the poem the arch-rivalry between Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi becomes tense. Mbuyazi, whose famous praise name Indlovu enesihlonti (the elephant with a turf of hair), begins to have more hope of leading the kingdom. In his favour is the fact that he is the eldest son of Monase, Mpande's favourite wife. The claim of Mbuyazi to be the only surviving son of King Shaka is rumoured and strengthened. This situation compels Cetshwayo to act promptly and authoritatively, but he continues to negotiate with his rival. It becomes obvious that the person at the centre of the dispute is their father, Mpande. His double-standards perpetuate feuds, enmity and adversity in the kingdom. Mpande openly shows that he favours Mbuyazi as his successor. His actions force Cetshwayo to rethink that a person who wants to attain distinction must battle for it himself and shows that he is worth the honour. Although the historical background of the figures and battles are covert, it is explicit that the use of the broad-bladed spear and hunting spear belong to the past and cannot benefit the present situation.

3.4 Ambiguity

Ambiguity is an attempt by the poet to create mystery through using words with several meanings. Ambiguity is used to challenge the reader or listener. Reaske [7] gives this

information about ambiguity:

By suggesting several meanings this process is inevitably magnified. This is intentional ambiguity. Accidental ambiguity often occurs,... through careless composition, neglects to qualify a line or an image sufficiently confusion ..

A deeper insight into the concept of ambiguity needs a framework of communication, which encompasses the poet, text and reader. The text is the medium through which the author communicates his message and through which the reader understands and interprets the poet's message. Ambiguity is actualized when interpreted in context. It occurs when two or more distinct meanings are tenable in a context by rendering a choice between the alternatives. Many analysts have discussed ambiguity. The better-known analysts are William Empson, who published *Seven Types of Ambiguity* and Kaplan and Kris, who published *Esthetic Ambiguity*. With ambiguity the word is used in an extended sense and so gives alternative reactions for either general or specific meaning. Kaplan and Kris [18] put forth a classification of five types of ambiguity: disjunctive, conjunctive, additive, integrative and projective.

3.4.1 Conjunctive ambiguity

In this type of ambiguity separate meanings function jointly in the process of interpretation. It involves two meanings which are responded to conjointly. It underlies metaphor, symbol and sarcasm. In the poem, *Iziziba ZoThukela* (The pools of Thukela River) ambiguity is seen in the following extract:

*Ziziba ezizonzobele
Zolani ningisondezele.
Ngiyabesaba oben' ubunzulu,
Ngiphons' itshelazika ...
(Msimang, [13]).*

*(Deep and calm pools
Be quiet and attract me.
I am afraid of your depth,
I threw a stone and it sank down ...)*

This type of ambiguity is evident when we look at *iziziba* (pools) as the source of life. The pools seen literally as water sources and figuratively as sources of education are both combined to focus on life. The words *zolani* (be quiet) *ubunzulu*

(depth) and *itshe lazika* (the stone sank down) give a full description of the pools. In the praise-poems, *UBhambatha KaMakhwatha* (Bhambatha, son of Makhwatha) conjunctive ambiguity is noted prior to praising and comprehending the praises.

*Uvava lwenkunzi yakith' eMvoti ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

(Our sharp-horned bull of Mvoti ...)

The primary meaning of *uvava lwenkunzi* (a sharp-horned bull) is that of a strong and powerful beast, while the secondary is of a well-known person of strong physique and character. The meanings are ultimately shared through the process of interpretation after comprehending the diction used in the praise.

Apostrophe plays a significant role in ambiguity. In ambiguity, the primary and secondary meanings are both considered for interpretation. The message is communicated from the poet to the reader with alternative meanings.

3.4.2 Additive ambiguity

The separate meanings are not fully exclusive but differ only in degree of specificity, or in what they add to the common meaning. An example is taken from the poem, *Xola Hleziphi* (Be appeased Hleziphi). Hleziphi is the fictitious character who accepts Washesha's proposal of love. Washesha is a hero and one of the iNgobamakhosi Regiment's recruits who met his fate on iSandlwana hill during the Anglo-Zulu war. All the promises made by Washesha to Hleziphi regarding their future did not come true because of death.

In the third stanza, Washesha boldly states that:

*Hleziphiu Washesha yibutho,
Hleziphi, inhliziyoyebutho
Yinhliziyoyeyisiboshwa;
Nom' inkumbulo ingeboshwe ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(Hleziphi, Washesha is a warrior,
Hleziphi, the heart of a warrior
Is the convict's heart;
Although remembrance cannot be tied-up ...)*

Additive ambiguity is brought about by looking at *yibutho* (is a warrior) as the regiment's recruit and patriot. The poem is melodic in form as it is

written for musical accompaniment. Its lyrical form expresses love in a specific dimension: two lovers who fell apart because of death. One may expect the poem to lament, but it portrays the acceptance of their separation. The poem speaks of ancestral spirits. We tend to believe that there is life after death. In most poems we hear the animate person lamenting about the dead person, but here the opposite occurs. The extract reveals patriotism in Washesha who insists that no matter that he left his beautiful girlfriend, Hleziphi, he died for his country. Overall, the poem is the lamentation of the dead, remembering his beloved one during their happy days.

Additive ambiguity is also evident in the poem, *Onoziqu Bakwa-Unisa* (Unisa graduates) where the compound word, *bogcina lishone* means "aged heroes", that is adults who are committed to education and experienced people. For example:

*Halala nakini bogcinalishone,
Nin' eniyibambe naze namadolonzima!
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(Hurrah even to you aged heroes,
You who diligently pursued until you are aged!)*

This extract contextually highlights that no matter if it takes a lengthy period to graduate, ultimately one accomplishes his aim. The poet salutes the aged who graduate despite all odds. This poem makes us see that education is essential, effective and meaningful. It makes people keep pace with the latest developments in education and to strive to adapt successfully in a changing world.

3.4.3 Disjunctive ambiguity

The separate meanings are effective in the interpretation. Disjunctive is seen when the separate meanings function as alternatives without hindering each other. In the poem, *Isibaya Esikhulu se-Afrika* (An African great byre) ambiguity is evident in the following example:

*Yagiya yonk' i-Afrika ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

(The whole Africa danced ...)

The word Afrika refers to the continent and its inhabitants. Two separate meanings are used without inhibiting each other. This type of

ambiguity is sometimes called 'plurisignation', that is, 'multiple meaning'. Disjunctive ambiguity is also found in the poem, *Mihle Yonke Imibala* (All colours are beautiful) where the poet recites:

*Ngilithandile kakhul' ilunga,
Ngilithandile kakhul' ilungakazi ...
(Msimang [15]).*

*(I liked the male black or brown beast,
I liked the female black or brown beast ...)*

It is not easy to determine ambiguity in all the given examples without knowing their meanings. *Ilunga* (male black or brown beast with white stripes across stomach and backs) and *ilungakazi* (female black or brown beast with white stripes across stomach and backs) are the meanings attached to the beasts. The second cluster of meanings is the body, joint or internode. The third cluster is the official of an association or society. The poem should be repeatedly read to comprehend its meaning, message and central idea. A full understanding of poetic diction, themes and form encourages meaningful interpretation.

3.4.4 Integrative ambiguity

The close interweaving of meanings gives the reader a single idea. They interact to produce a complex and shifting pattern of unified meaning. Integrative ambiguity is seen in the poem, *Ngingene Endumisweni* (I am glorifying) where the poet recites as follows:

*Ngibhula kuwe nyanga yamathambo ...
Ngibuza ngabayikazel' iminyezane ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(I consult you bone diviner ...
I am asking about those wearing graduation attire ...)*

Inyanga yamathambo (bone diviner) refers to the traditional era. *Iminyezane* (graduation attires) can mean the achievements within a tertiary institution. These are symbolic elements used in a contemporary period. The warriors' *insignia* refer to the valour of the traditional period. The integrativeness for unified meaning is brought about by looking at *iminyezane* as an attire for

garlanding heroes. The old meaning of *iminyezane* has shifted to the new. This type of ambiguity is also significantly noted in the same stanza:

*Ngokwethweswa imiqhele yolwazi ...
(To be crowned with education head
ornaments ...)*

The word, *imiqhele* is ambiguous. The unified meaning is crowns that are worn by the heroes. Traditionally these were ornaments of beads or otter-skins worn around the head as a sign of rank or achievement. In contemporary times they the crowns of achievement which conferred by various institutions. In conclusion, the words *iminyezane* and *imiqhele* are each characterised by semantic shift, unified meaning and temporal setting.

3.4.5 Projective ambiguity

The meanings vary with the interpreter as they are projected. The reader is forced to invent interpretations, because a word or piece of text does not clearly signal the intended idea. It is therefore noted that subjectivity is inherent in this type of ambiguity.

Projective ambiguity is noted in the poem, Xola Hleziphi (Be appeased Hleziphi.) The distance between Hleziphi and Washesha is brought about by death. It is no longer possible for Washesha to come to Hleziphi physically, but only spiritually. It is easy for Hleziphi to follow her beloved one when she dies. The distance is shown in this extract:

*... Ngikuthumelel' umlayezo
Ozangamagagas' omoya
Ngivum' ingoma yenkumbulo
Nethemb' elingafezekanga ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

*(I send you a message,
Which comes through the air waves,
Singing the song of remembrance
And unfulfilled hope ...)*

The poem reveals that love does not end up on earth. Washesha mourns his untimely departure from this world before fulfilling the promises that he made. Despite the promises left hanging, he wishes her everything of the best throughout her lifespan until circumstances and time allow them

to meet again. The words ... *umlayezo oza ngamagagas' omoya* ... (a message which comes through the air waves ...) give an inventive interpretation because communication between the living and dead people is unlikely to happen. Subjective interpretation is necessary, especially with the full exploitation of religious or cultural beliefs.

As a spirit Washesha utters all the appeasing, calm and encouraging words to Hleziphi who appears to be the passive character or the receiver in all the stanzas. The poet creates the world in which his characters live and so he gives life to fiction. His world is not a literal representation of the external world (things as they are) or even a generalized representation, but an escape from reality into an ideal world of transcendent forms. It is a fresh vision of authenticity about two lovers who are forced by death to part. It is also a reconstruction of human consciousness of things as they are.

Projective ambiguity is also brought about by deverbative noun, which is evident in the poem, *Hhawu! NgoMaganedlula* (Oh! Ill-mannered lady) for example:

*Ngiyekeni ngiyofosha ngefosholo ...
(Msimang, [15]).*

(Leave me to dig with shovel ...)

The diction used by the poet is *ukufosha* (to dig with spade) and *ifosholo* (spade or shovel). It is a known fact that soil is dug, but in this context the poet refers to money. The real meaning is projected in the poem. The words do not signal the intended meaning until projection provides the subjective interpretation. Several meanings are suggested by intentional ambiguity in Msimang's poetry. Various words phrase or ideas are ambiguously employed for specific effect. Conjunctive ambiguity underlies metaphor and allegory. Overall, all types of ambiguities suggest meanings that are projected, added, conjoined or disjoined

4. DISCUSSION

The study is based on text-oriented approach. Most similarities and diversities in Msimang's poetry are analyzed using intertextual dimension to provide the reader with the necessary content. The research questions that guided this work are how, and to what extend are selected figures of

speech identified, categorized and employed. The selected rhetoric devices are vital for aesthetic and rhythmic qualities. They are integral to the functioning of language to all modes of discourse. Antithesis is an opposition in meanings of phrases and clauses that is emphasized by parallelism. Ambiguity is explicitly revealed as a deliberate use of expression to signify two or more distinct references. Irony is remaining the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case, and also to accomplish the rhetorical or artistic effects. Sarcasm is used as a type of humour that contains irony. The employment of the figures of speech are unravelling a glory of diction, originality of verses and logic ideas. Their intellectual meanings are highlighted by imagery on comparisons and contrast.

5. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis on images based on contrast and difference, it is deduced that antithesis in Msimang's poetry is based on contrasting words and clauses. The ideas and emotions are expressed through antithetic imagery. Sarcasm plays a major role in various types of poems by describing things or situations as they are without any mild or pleasant expressions. The use of sarcasm is displayed by the selected poetic diction. It is prevalently relentless, sharp and discordant. Play on words is looked at through a syntactical point of view and we see how it depicts creativeness, compactness and contrasts. Several meanings are suggested by intentional ambiguity in Msimang's poetry. Various words, phrases or ideas are ambiguously employed for specific effect. Conjunctive ambiguity underlies metaphor and allegory. Overall, all types of ambiguities suggest meanings in various contexts. Most poetic words or phrases in this work reflect separate meanings that are projected, added, conjoined or disjoined.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that further researches on contracts and differences made. Using a large sample member of poems, variety of poetic themes and types. The sound devices such as assonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia and rhyme need to be analyzed. The figures of speech on comparisons such as simile, metaphor, allusion,

apostrophe, zoomorphism and deification need to be defined, explained and illustrated.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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