

**ASPECTS OF PRONOMINALISATION
IN
NORTHERN SOTHO**

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	THE TRADITIONAL VIEW ON PRONOMINALISATION	2
1.3	PROBLEMATIC ISSUES CONCERNING THE TRADITIONAL VIEW	5
1.4	PURPOSE OF STUDY	9
1.5	OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	9
1.6	CRITICAL QUESTIONS	9
1.7	RATIONALE	10
1.8	LITERATURE REVIEW	11
1.9	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	12
1.10	METHODOLOGY	13
1.11	DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	14
1.12	CONCLUSION	14

CHAPTER 2

THE MODERN APPROACH TO PRONOMINALISATION

2.1.	INTRODUCTION	16
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2.2.	COREFERENTIALITY AND AGREEMENT:	
	BASIC PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING PRONOMINALISATION	17
2.3.	PRONOMINALISATION AS A DELETION PROCESS	22
2.4.	CONCLUSION	38

CHAPTER 3

PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS AS A PROCESS OF SUBSTITUTION

3.1.	INTRODUCTION	40
3.2.	PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF THE OBJECT CONCORD: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.	41
3.3.	DISCOURSE PRAGMATIC FUNCTION OF PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF THE OBJECT CONCORD	49
3.4.	CONCLUSION	50

CHAPTER 4

PRONOMINALISATION OF NOUN PHRASES IN PARTICLE GROUPS

4.1.	INTRODUCTION	52
4.2.	FOUR SYNTACTIC ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH PRONOMINALISATION IS REGARDED AS THE RESULT OF SUBSTITUTION.	53
4.3.	PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF SUBSTITUTION	56

4.4.	PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF DELETION	57
4.5.	CONCLUSION	59

CHAPTER 5

PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS IN DOUBLE TRANSITIVE STRUCTURES AND INDIRECT RELATIVE CLAUSES

5.1	INTRODUCTION	61
5.2	PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS IN DOUBLE TRANSITIVE VERBS	62
5.3	INDIRECT RELATIVE CLAUSES	68
5.4	CONCLUSION	69

CHAPTER 6

	GENERAL CONCLUSION	71
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	BIBLIOGRAPHY	75
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

What is generally known as traditional view on pronominalisation is mainly based on the view of Doke as formulated in his work, *Textbook of Zulu Grammar* (1927). Wilkes (1976) is the first linguist to make a critical evaluation of Doke's ideas and to indicate that the whole issue of pronominalisation in African languages calls for serious investigation. His initial investigation prompted linguists such as Louwrens (1981, 1985, 1991) and Prinsloo (1987) to further refine his theory on pronominalisation, as can be seen in publications such as the following:

Wilkes (1976) Oor die voornaamwoorde van Zulu met besondere verwysing na die sogenaamde demonstratiewe en absolute voornaamwoorde in "Studies in Bantoetale, Jaargang 3.1".

Louwrens L.J (1981) Perspektiewe op Wilkes se delesiehipotese oor pronominalisasie in Bantoe in "Studies in Bantoetale, Jaargang 8.1".

Louwrens, L.J. (1985) Contrastiveness and the so-called absolute pronouns in Northern Sotho in SAJAL, Vol.5, No.2.

Prinsloo, D.J. (1987) Perspektief op pronominalisasie in Noord-Sotho in SAJAL, Vol.7, No.1.

Louwrens ,L.J (1991) Pronominalisation - the absolute pronoun and the demonstrative in Aspects of Northern Sotho grammar, Via Afrika, Limited.

A discussion on the views of pronominalisation will be given in the following paragraphs, followed by a discussion of problems surrounding the traditional view. This will be followed by a detailed discussion of the modern approach as formulated by Wilkes, Louwrens and Prinsloo. The modern approach views pronominalisation in terms

of two discourse-related principles, that is coreferentiality and agreement. Broadly speaking, the modern approach understands pronominalisation as the result of the deletion process, although it does make provision for some cases of substitution. The traditional approach view pronominalisation as the result of substitution.

1.2. THE TRADITIONAL VIEWS ON PRONOMINALISATION

From the existing literature on the issue of pronominalisation it becomes clear that pronominalisation is generally regarded as the result of substitution. Doke in his *Textbook of Zulu Grammar* (1927) initially formulated this view.

(Doke 1927: 88) defines the term ‘pronoun’ as:

“a word which signifies anything concrete or abstract without being its name.”

Doke thus defines a pronoun as a word, which can substitute a noun or a noun phrase.

This is clearly a syntactic definition referring to the function of the pronoun, which is in line with Doke’s functionalist approach. Wilkes (1976: 61) notes the following in this regard:

“In sy sintaktiese definisie van voornaamwoorde, stel Doke dit dan ook onomwonde dat hulle woorde is wat in die plek van naamwoorde in sinne gebruik kan word”.

Wilkes (1976: 61) gives the following examples to illustrate Doke's point of view:

- (1) (a) **Ngithanda bona** ‘Ek hou van hulle.’ ‘I love them.’
- (b) **Baletheni bonke** ‘Bring (julle) almal.’ ‘Bring them all.’
- (c) **Ngiyabathanda laba** ‘Ek hou van hierdies.’ ‘I love these ones.’

According to Doke's theory the absolute pronoun **bona** ‘them’ in example (1) (a), the quantitative pronoun **bonke** ‘all’ in (1) (b), and the demonstrative pronoun **laba** ‘these ones’ in (1) (c) are all appearing in the place of a noun or nouns belonging to class 2.

Further, (according to Doke's definition of pronominalisation,) absolute pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and quantitative pronouns are to be regarded as pronouns since they appear in the place of or substitute nouns and/or noun phrases.

Taljard (1994: 1) points out the following in this regard:

“The term ‘pronoun’ also refers to this point of view: pro=for/in the place of: nomen/noun.”

Doke's theory on pronominalisation clearly reflects a case of direct grammatical projection. This statement can be motivated as follows: In languages such as English and Afrikaans, pronominalisation is clearly a case of substitution, where the pronoun does indeed substitute a noun. Compare the following examples:

English

- (2) (a) The students say *the students* are tired.
(b) The students say *they* are tired

Afrikaans

- (3) (a) **Die studente sê *die studente* is moeg**
(b) **Die studente sê *hulle* is moeg.**

(Louwrens, 1981:31)

From the examples above, it is clear that ‘they’ and ‘**hulle**’ simply substitute the noun phrase ‘the students’ and **die studente** respectively, thus giving rise to the perception that the sole function is to substitute nouns and noun phrases.

Prinsloo (1987: 23) points out the following concerning this traditional view:

“Pronominalisation in the Bantu languages has traditionally been described in terms of European standards and criteria applicable to pronominalisation in languages such as Afrikaans or English and have often been artificially forced on Bantu in general and Northern Sotho in particular.”

Thus, the principles which underlie pronominalisation in the European languages, have been directly projected onto the Bantu languages, leading to the assumption that pronominalisation in these languages is also a substitution process.

The traditional approach of pronominalisation in Bantu completely overlooks the real nature of pronomina in Northern Sotho.

1.3. PROBLEMATIC ISSUES CONCERNING THE TRADITIONAL VIEW

When traditional theory as formulated by Doke (1927) is applied to Northern Sotho, certain problems can be identified. These problematic issues will be addressed in the paragraphs, which follow.

According to Louwrens (1991: 92) the traditional viewpoint maintains that the sentences below in example (4) (a) - (c) are regarded as pronominalised versions of the sentences in example (5) (a) - (c).

- (4) (a) **Bona ba a apea.**
'They are cooking.'
- (b) **Tšeo ke tša ka.**
'Those are mine.'
- (c) **Bohle ba tsena sekolo.**
'All attend school.'
- (5) (a) **Basadi ba a apea.**
'Women are cooking.'
- (b) **Dijo ke tša ka.**
'Food is mine.'
- (c) **Bašemane ba tsena sekolo.**
'Boys attend school.'

Louwrens (1991: 92) refutes the traditional view by presenting the following two arguments:

Firstly, the most important feature of pronominalisation, which is universally accepted, is that it must not alter the meaning of sentences. This principle forms the basis of the first point of criticism against the traditional view.

When example (5) (a) is compared to its supposed pronominalised version in (4) (a), it is clear that a semantic difference exists between these two sentences. In example (4) (a) the subject is being emphasized and/ or contrasted. The sentences could either mean ‘they in particular’ or ‘they in contrast to somebody else’, are cooking. In (5) (a) the unpronominalised subject is unemphasized or neutral without any element of contrast or emphasis. This semantic difference is difficult to explain, when it is assumed that **bona** ‘they’ in example (4) is nothing more than pronominal substitute for **basadi** ‘women’.

The difference in meaning between the unpronominalised form and its alleged pronominalised equivalent cannot be accounted for within a substitutional approach since it is not clear how a mere substitution of a pronoun can give rise to a semantic difference of this nature.

The same argument holds for example (4) (b) and (c). In example (4) (b) the demonstrative or deictic meaning which is seen in **tšeo ke tša ka** ‘those are mine’ is clearly absent in the unpronominalised version, **dijo ke tša ka** ‘food is mine’ in (5) (b). This also shows that the demonstrative cannot be regarded as a mere pronominal substitute for the noun **dijo** ‘food.’ In example (4) (c) the quantitative meaning in **bohle ba tsena sekolo** ‘all attend school’ is also absent in the unpronominalised version, **bašemane ba tsena sekolo** ‘boys attend school’ in (5) (c).

From the examples above it is clear that the sentences in example (4) cannot be regarded as the pronominalised version of those in example (5), since very definite semantic differences exist between them.

The second point of criticism against a substitutional approach to pronominalisation is that pronouns are regarded as words, which stand or act in the place of nouns. The problem with this definition is encountered where the so-called pronouns are used in apposition to the nouns, which they supposedly substitute.

The so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun is very often found in apposition to a noun. In examples such as these it is difficult to ascertain the function of an absolute pronoun because it obviously does not perform the function of a pronoun.

Louwrens (1985: 59) formulates this as follows:

“Within a theory which regards the absolute pronoun as a word which is used as a noun, it is impossible to determine the exact status of the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun in such instances.”

Compare the following in this regard:

- (6) (a) **Yena Malome o tseba Sesotho.**
‘Specifically uncle knows Sotho.’
- (b) **Malome yena o tseba Sesotho.**
‘Uncle, on the contrary knows Sotho.’

The traditional view identifies **yena** ‘him’ in example (6) (a) and (6) (b) as a pronoun.

The problem is, however, encountered as the traditional definition states that a pronoun is a word, which substitutes a noun. **Yena** ‘him’ in example (6) (a) and (6) (b) has obviously not substituted **Malome** ‘uncle’, since **Malome** ‘uncle’ which is the nominal antecedent, is still present.

The traditional view has thus failed to explain the function of the so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns when they are used in apposition to the noun, which they claim to substitute. The same argument applies to demonstrative and quantitative ‘pronouns’. These ‘pronouns’ often appear in apposition to their nominal antecedents, making it difficult to explain their so-called ‘pronominal’ function in these cases.

1.4. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to define the nature of pronominalisation with specific reference to the concepts ‘substitution’ and ‘deletion’.

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to analyse pronominalisation in N.Sotho in order to:

- 1.5.1. Confirm that pronominalisation is indeed in some cases an instance of substitution.
- 1.5.2. Identify other functions that pronominalisation can fulfill beyond substitution.
- 1.5.3. Elicit examples that demonstrate other functions beyond substitution.

1.6. CRITICAL QUESTIONS

- 1.6.1. Is defining a pronoun as ‘a word that substitutes or replaces a noun’ a valid definition of a pronoun in N.Sotho?
- 1.6.2. Which authentic examples are there to justify the extension of pronominalisation beyond a process of substitution?
- 1.6.3. Which other functions do the so-called pronouns perform beyond the substitution of a noun?

1.7. RATIONALE

Until the early eighties it was believed that pronouns substitutes nouns. The first problem that was identified by Wilkes (1976) is the function of the pronoun when it appears together with the noun, which it is believed to substitute. Doke’s (1927) definition, which is a mere projection in N.Sotho from the European languages, is questionable according to Louwrens (1991), Prinsloo (1987) and other recent researchers.

Within the work that exists so far, there are a number of approaches that have been used to study the grammar of N.Sotho. There are scholars whose work is considered as authoritative in this area. Some of these works are considered as classics in understanding the grammar of N.Sotho as a language. One such scholar is Doke (1927). He defines a pronoun as a word, which substitutes or replaces a noun and his definition of a pronoun has been used as a blueprint. Follow up studies has indicated that the definition is limited. Wilkes (1976), Louwrens (1981, 1985, and 1987) and Prinsloo (1987) have helped to identify other functions beyond substitution. The definition of pronominalisation in N.Sotho cannot be limited in its reference to substitution only since this reflects the fact that the distinctive features of N.Sotho as a language have not yet been fully explored and are not fully understood.

This study will contribute significantly in developing the understanding of the N.Sotho grammar. At this stage the available literature, including prescribed books used for instruction in the teaching and learning of the language, do not do justice in terms of describing the complex nature of the process of pronominalisation.

1.8. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review will be used to offer a synthesis of what has already been written on the topic as explored in the works of other authors. It will also be used to identify if there are any gaps in the literature to date.

The existing research on pronominalisation covers:

- Pronominalisation as a substitution strategy advocated by Doke (1927)
- Pronominalisation as a deletion strategy advocated by Wilkes (1976), Louwrens (1981, 1985, and 1991). and Prinsloo (1987)

The literature available is limited in that:

- it does not clearly define the process of pronominalisation.

- it does not identify other functions that pronominalisation can fulfill beyond substitution.
- it does not define the nature of pronominalisation with specific reference to the concepts ‘substitution’ and ‘deletion’.

This research endeavors to provide examples from Northern Sotho prescribed set works instances where pronominalisation can perform functions beyond substituting a noun.

1.9. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Doke’s contribution has established a conceptual framework, which has led to a ‘prescriptive’ way of defining pronominalisation in N.Sotho. By defining a pronoun as ‘a word, which substitutes or replaces a noun ’ Doke has channeled and restricted the function of pronominalisation to that of substitution. The underpinning thinking that led to this conceptual framework can be traced back to standards and criteria in European languages such as English and Afrikaans, which are not necessarily applicable to African languages, especially N.Sotho as Prinsloo (1987) argues. The works of other scholars such as Wilkes (1976) and Louwrens (1981, 1985, and 1991) have made a significant contribution to expand the framework that includes other functions of pronominalisation. This has brought to light the understanding of deletion as another concept of pronominalisation.

The work of these other scholars has proved fruitful in extending the concept of pronominalisation to other parts of speech like adjectives, demonstratives, and also concords. It has been established that these linguistic units operate at dual levels. On one level they would serve their primary function, e.g., as a part of speech such as an adjective, or demonstrative, or in the case of concords, serving as markers of concordial relationships. On another level they will serve as pronouns where a noun has been deleted. This will be their secondary function.

This study deals with the theory of pronominalisation in relation to instances of substitution and deletion. This study would like to demonstrate that there is a need to expand the theory of pronominalisation.

1.10. METHODOLOGY

The methodological orientation of this study is based on a conceptual analysis within a non-empirical research design. Unlike empirical studies that would depend on an ethnographic research, observations, case studies, surveys etc. referred to by (Mouton, 2001), this study will review relevant literature on pronominalisation in N.Sotho. A conceptual analysis will be done by using authentic examples to elicit how the concept of pronominalisation is wider than the given definition.

Doke's concept of pronominalisation can be seen as a prescriptive approach towards N.Sotho as a language. His work has enforced a predetermined definition that channels pronominalisation to substitution only. In this study a descriptive approach is adopted. Authentic examples in the language are descriptively used to explore other instances of pronominalisation beyond substitution. The descriptive versus the prescriptive approach to language study is a useful tool in doing conceptual analysis of pronominalisation. Literary works that constitute a pool of prescribed reading for Grade 8-12 (without any time limit) will be used as corpus, from which authentic examples will be extracted. In some cases, the University of *Pretoria Sepedi Corpus* (PSC) , consisting of 6 million words, has been consulted.

1.11. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

After (1.6.1) it has been established that the given definition of a pronoun (Doke, 1927) is applicable to N.Sotho even though it is limited, (1.6.2) examples are extracted to demonstrate that there are functions that pronouns perform beyond substitution. (1.6.3) Those other functions are identified, a discussion of the results will ensue. A final analysis will be made to summarise the results and draw conclusions on the study.

1.12. CONCLUSION

In the previous chapter we were basically introduced to the most important contributions made by Doke (1927), the first linguist who attempted to define the so-called pronouns in N.Sotho. The only problem with his definition is that it was prescriptive and a direct grammatical projection of European languages on non-European languages. His definition left a gap in literature.

Wilkes (1976) was also one of the most important linguists who also made a mark with his contributions. He followed Doke (1927), but his view differed from that of Doke (1927) in that he identified loopholes in Doke's (1927) definition. Whereas Doke's (1927) views are regarded to be traditional, Wilkes' (1976) views are regarded as the modern views. Other linguists already mentioned in chapter 1 later followed him.

The purpose of this study, the objectives, the research question broken up into critical questions, rationale, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and discussion of results are briefly outlined.

CHAPTER 2

THE MODERN APPROACH TO PRONOMINALISATION

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Wilkes (1976) together with Louwrens (1981, 1985 and 1991) and Prinsloo (1987) brought new and exciting insights in their pioneering publications concerning pronominalisation. These authors succeeded in unveiling the real character of pronomina

in Bantu without being preoccupied or influenced by criteria holding good for European languages.

Louwrens, (1994: 153) defines pronominalisation as

“A term used to refer to the process whereby a word or a word group which agrees with a noun (i.e. an anaphor) acquires the status of a pronoun/pronominal form due to the deletion, in specific contexts, of the noun to which it refers.”

The most important aspects of the modern view on pronominalisation is the fact that the whole process is redefined in terms of two discourse related principles, that is, coreferentiality and agreement. In the following paragraphs these two principles will be discussed and their relationship with the pronominalisation process will also be explained.

2.2. COREFERENTIALITY AND AGREEMENT: BASIC PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING PRONOMINALISATION.

Louwrens (1981: 37-38) is of the opinion that pronominalisation should be redefined in terms of the concepts of coreferentiality and agreement.

Coreferentiality, according to Taljard (1994: 5) can be defined as:

“The ability to refer the same object/person as the unmentioned noun”.

She points out that any word, which is in coreference with a word, can be used as a pronoun.

Compare also the definition given by Louwrens (1994: 43):

“A term used to refer to instances where two words refer to the same person or thing due to the fact that they agree with one another.”

Compare the following example: Ramaila (1974: 7-8)

- (7) **Lebakeng lona leo, go be go bile go le ngaka¹, ye e bolelago gore ge yena a lefša ka diponto tše lesome, a ka ya le baepi, a ba rakela sepoko seo ka dihlare. Dihlopha tše ntši tša banna tša be tša lefa ngaka yeo² tša ya nayo bošego kua merakwaneng ya bagologolo.**

‘At that time there was a traditional doctor, who said that if he can be paid ten pounds, he can go with diggers to chase away the ghost with traditional medicines. Many groups of men paid that traditional doctor and went with him during the night to the graveyard.’

In the above-mentioned example **ngaka¹** ‘doctor’ is introduced as new information into the discourse, since it is mentioned for the first time, thus being brought into the addressee’s consciousness for the first time. **Ngaka yeo²** ‘That doctor’ is coreferential with **ngaka¹** ‘doctor’ since both nouns refer to the same doctor.

From the definition given by Louwrens, it is clear that a close connection exists between coreferentiality and agreement, since the principle of coreferentiality is dependent on agreement.

Taljard (1994: 5) describes agreement as follows:

“The phenomenon according to which any word appearing in a specific syntactic relationship with a noun agrees with the noun by means of an agreement marker.”

Compare the following example:

(8) **Bana ba ja legapu.**

‘Children eat watermelon.’

The subject concord **ba** ‘they’ in the above-mentioned example agrees with the noun **bana** ‘children’. **Ba** ‘they’ is an agreement marker.

Louwrens (1994: 9-10) formulates the following detailed definition:

“Words such as verbs, pronouns, adjectives etc. which occur in a particular relationship with nouns in sentences are brought into concordial agreement with such nouns by means of agreement morphemes also called concords.”

According to Louwrens (1994) the most salient example of agreement is observed in the relationship which is established between nouns and verbs through subject and object concords.

Compare the following example:

Subject agreement

(9) **Mma o apeile nama.**

‘Mother has cooked meat.’

The subject concord is **-o-**‘she’ and **mma** ‘mother’ the subject.

Object agreement

(10) **Ruri le a se tseba Sesotho.**

‘You really know Sotho very well’.

The object concord is **-se-** ‘it’ and **Sesotho** ‘Sotho’ is the object. This kind of agreement between the subject and object noun phrases on the one hand and verbs on the other is known as verbal agreement. Also compare the agreement between:

Nouns and adjectives

(11) **Monna yo mogolo.**

‘A big man.’

Nouns and relatives

(12) **Kgomo ye e fulago.**

‘A cow that is grazing,’

but

(13) **Dikgomo tše di fulago.**

‘The cows that are grazing’

Nouns and different types of pronouns

(14) **Selete sohle.**

‘The whole region.’

but

(15) **Motse wohle.**

‘The whole village.’

(16) **Yena moithuti.**

‘Particularly the student.’

but

(17) **Bona baithuti.**

‘Particularly the students.’

(18) **Borotho bjola.**

‘That bread.’

but

(19) **Nama yela.**

‘That meat.’

This type of agreement is known as nominal agreement. As was pointed out previously, a strong relationship exists between agreement and coreferentiality. Whenever agreement is present, coreferentiality between the forms agreeing with one another is also present. This implies that all forms displaying agreement (verbal and nominal) also display coreference and can therefore function as pronouns. In terms of definitions given by Louwrens (1994: 9,10) it would imply that the subject concord, object concord, demonstratives, adjectives, relatives etc. can all function as pronouns.

This can however, only be the case if the noun with which the words/forms agree has been deleted or in the selected few cases where the pronominal form has substituted the said noun. This in turn implies that for all the above-mentioned forms, a primary and a secondary function can be distinguished.

Before explanation of these primary and secondary functions, attention first has to be paid to pronominalisation as a process of deletion. This point of view seems to be directly in contrast with the traditional view, according to which pronominalisation is the result of a process of substitution.

2.3. PRONOMINALISATION AS A DELETION PROCESS.

In contrast to the substitution theory, which considers pronouns to be words that are able to replace nouns in sentences, the deletion hypothesis considers a pronoun as a word, which refers to a noun, which has been deleted or omitted.

2.3.1. Pronominalisation of subjects by means of the subject concord.

In order to illustrate pronominalisation as a process of deletion, the case of the subject concord will perhaps provide the clearest example. Compare the following example:

- (20) (a) **Bana ba tsena phapošing.**
'Children enter into the class.'
- (b) **Ba bula dipuku tša bona.**

‘They open their books.’

(c) ***Bana bula dipuku tša bona**

In the first sentence (20) (a) **Bana ba tsena phapošing** ‘Children enter into the class’, the subject concord **ba** ‘they’ functions solely as an agreement marker, marking the subject relation existing between the subject **bana** ‘children’ and the verb **ba tsena** ‘they enter’. Since it appears in apposition to the subject noun **bana** ‘children’, it has no pronominal function. In the second sentence (20) (b) the subject noun **bana** ‘children’ does not appear. It has been deleted since the referent it refers to is assumed to be given information. Given information, as it is already known, can be deleted from the discourse because it is redundant.

Based on the fact that the subject concord, which agrees with the subject also, appears in a coreferential relationship with the said subject noun, the subject concord can now function as a pronoun. From the given example, it is obvious that pronominalisation cannot be regarded as the result of a substitution process, since this would imply that example (20) (b) **Ba bula dipuku tša bona** ‘They open their books’ is the pronominalised version of ***Bana bula dipuku tša bona** example (20) (c) **which is ungrammatical.**

It can therefore, be concluded that a primary and a secondary function can be distinguished for subject concords. Its **primary function** is that of agreement marker, marking the subject relation which exists between subject and verb as in example (20) (a). Its **secondary function** is that of a pronoun, which can be fulfilled only in cases where the subject noun (or noun phrase, for that matter) has been deleted, as in example (20) (b).

It has, however, to be kept in mind that the subject concord does not lose its primary function when it appears as a pronoun. Even in cases where the subject noun has been deleted, the subject concord retains its function as an agreement marker.

2.3.2. Qualificatives as pronouns

For the purpose of this discussion, the term ‘qualificative’ is used to refer to any word or word group which serves to qualify or to describe a noun. It has already been indicated that qualificatives such as demonstratives, quantitatives and all forms of adjectives, possessives and relatives and the so-called absolute pronouns can all function as pronouns. They can function as pronouns since these forms all appear in relationship of agreement and coreferentiality with their nominal antecedents. It is, however, important to understand that the primary function of these forms is not a pronominal one but that of a nominal determiner. These forms can only fulfil a pronominal function if the nominal antecedent, with which they agree, has been deleted.

In the paragraphs which follow, pronominalisation as a deletion process is discussed with regard to single word nominal determiners i.e. demonstratives, quantitatives and ‘absolute’ pronouns, and nominal determiners consisting of word groups, i.e. adjectives, relatives and possessives.

(a) DEMONSTRATIVES

The primary function of the demonstrative is to qualify the nominal antecedent. The demonstrative can either precede the antecedent or follow after it, although the basic position is the post-nominal one. This is valid regardless of the subject or the object status of the antecedent. Furthermore there does not seem to be any semantic difference between the pre-nominal and post-nominal usage. Compare for example:

- (21) (a) **Batho bao ba fihlile.**
(b) **Bao batho ba fihlile.**
‘Those people have arrived.’

Batho bao/Bao batho=Subject Noun Phrase.

‘Those people.’

(22) (a) **Batho ba ja nama yeo.**

(b) **Batho ba ja yeo nama.**

‘The people eat that meat.’

Nama yeo/Yeo nama=Object Noun Phrase.

‘That meat.’

Pronominalisation of the demonstrative takes place when the nominal antecedent, with which the demonstrative is in agreement, is deleted. It should be kept in mind that the qualificative function of the demonstrative retained in cases such as these and that the pronominal function is added to its basic/primary function.

Compare this example culled from the PSC:

(23) **E be e le letšatši la nubeyara, ge mmago Phuti a boa Borwa. Phuti ka mahlahla a thoma go phuthulla merwalo. ‘Ke rata diroko , e sego mangina’, gwa bolela Phuti ka lethabo a šupile diroko tše pedi. Ge a botšwa gore ke tša gagwe ka moka a gatelela gore, ‘ke rata tše’, a tsepeletše ye tala le ye sehla ka mahlo.**

‘It was a New Year’s day when Phuti’s mother returned from the south. Phuti quickly started to uncover her mother’s luggage. ‘I love dresses, and not earrings’ said Phuti joyfully pointing at two dresses. When she was told

that they were all hers, she emphasized that, ‘I love these ones’, looking attentively at a green and fawn one with her eyes.’

In the given text above the referent of the demonstrative **tše**, ‘these’ namely **diroko** ‘dresses’, in **....ke rata tše...** ‘I love these’ is old or known information since it has been

introduced to the reader earlier in the story as **.ke rata diroko...** ‘I love dresses.’ The demonstrative **tše** ‘these’ in **... ke rata tše...** ‘I love these...’ refers unequivocally to specific dresses, namely the dress which has been brought by Phuti’s mother.

When the writer of the story finds it necessary to refer back to the dresses, she uses the demonstrative **tše** ‘these’ in the phrase **...ke rata tše...** ‘I love these...’ She does this to indicate that the dresses referred to here are exactly the same as those which have been discussed earlier. The referential function of the demonstrative is, therefore observed in that it is used to refer back to referents, which are already known to the reader. The referential usage of demonstratives is necessitated by the pragmatic need to refer back to a referent, which has previously been mentioned in a given context of discourse. The fact that the referential function of the demonstrative has been retained supports the argument that the pronominal status of the demonstrative is the result of deletion of the nominal antecedent.

(b) QUANTITATIVES

The principles which govern the use of demonstratives are also valid for quantitatives.

Compare the following example:

(24) (a) **Bana bohle ba fihlile.**

(b) **Bohle bana ba fihlile.**

‘All the children have arrived.’

Bana bohle/Bohle bana=Subject Noun Phrase.

‘All the children.’

(25) (a) **Bana ba jele nama yohle.**

Bana ba jele yohle nama.

‘The children ate all the meat.’

Nama yohle/Yohle nama. = object noun phrase

‘All the meat.’

In these examples, the quantitatives have no pronominal status, since they appear in apposition to the nominal antecedents **bana** ‘children’ and **nama** ‘meat’ ‘respectively’!

In the following example taken from PSC, the quantitative **bohle** ‘all’ has attained pronominal status since the nominal antecedent assumed to be **batho** ‘people’ has been deleted.

(26) **Ka se ye felo, ka dula ka ntlong le ge bohle ba ile kerekeng.**

‘I didn’t go anywhere, I stayed in the house even though all of them went to church.’

(c) **‘ABSOLUTE’ PRONOUNS**

With reference to the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun, the situation is somewhat more complex, since the primary discourse function fulfilled by these forms is directly related to their positions in relation to the antecedent.

When used **in apposition to subject nouns**, the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun may appear either pre-nominally, that is it may precede the noun or it may appear post-nominally. In cases such as these where the pronoun appears together with the subject noun, the so-called ‘pronoun’ has no pronominal qualities-it is fulfilling its primary function, i.e. that of nominal determiner/qualifier. When the subject noun is preceded by the pronoun, the discourse pragmatic function fulfilled by the pronoun is one of emphasis.

Compare the following example:

(27) **Re kwele ge re thoma ra re ditaba tše di tlogo latela tsebišano ye ke tše pedi. Taba ya pele ke ya yena Theodor Mokwena, yo a laodišago tša go gobatšwa ga gagwe o re: [...] ‘Taodišo ye kopana ye e tšwa molomong wa Theodor[...] Taba ya bobedi e šele mo kgaolong ye e**

laodišwa ke Simson monna wa kua Bopedi' [...].Simson yena taba ya gagwe o e laodiša ka botelele le ka botlalo.

Ramaila (1974:

18,19)

‘We heard when we started that there would be two issues that would follow the introduction. The initial news is about specifically Theodor Mokwena who narrates about his assault. He says: “[...] This short narration is from Theodor’s mouth [...] The second issue in this section is narrated by Simson a man from Bopedi [...]’ Simson on the other hand narrates his version in a lengthy and detailed manner.’

In this short story titled ‘Moloi ga a na mmala’ the reader is presented with two versions of a certain incident, as told by two individuals, viz Theodor Mokwena and Simson. By using the so-called pronoun **yena** ‘him’ pre-nominally in **yena Theodor Mokwena**, the author emphasises the fact that the first version is specifically that of Theodor Mokwena.

He furthermore indicates that the story told by Theodor Mokwena is much shorter than the version given by Simson. He therefore uses the pronoun **yena** ‘him’ in a post-nominal position in **Simson yena** to highlight the contrast between the two stories told by these two characters. From the above it is clear the discourse pragmatic function of the so-called pronoun is directly linked to its syntactic position: In cases where the pronoun is used pre-nominally, it has an emphatic or specifying function. The post-nominal use of the pronoun is associated with a contrasting function.

Louwrens (1991: 101) summarizes as follows:

“It should be clear that these words are used in apposition to nouns to fulfil one of two possible discourse functions, i.e. to *specify/ particularise* the subject noun, in which case the pronoun appears *pre-nominally*, or to *contrast* the referent of the subject noun with another referent in the

context of discourse, in which case the pronoun occupies the *post-nominal* position.”

With regard to the possible pronominal status i.e. the secondary function of these so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns, Taljard (1994: 6) points out that:

“these words can attain pronominal status, but only and only when the noun with which it agrees is deleted. Their pronominal status is therefore not based on the fact that they substitute a noun but on the fact that the noun is regarded as given information and therefore deleted”.

Compare this example from Matsimela (1996: 15)

- (28) (a) **Lekgeswa yena lehono o tla nkela kae?**
‘As for Lekgeswa, how will he Lekgeswa escape me?’
- (b) **Yena lehono o tla nkela kae?**
As for him, how will he escape me?’

The pronominal status of **yena** ‘him’ is therefore based on the fact that the subject noun Lekgeswa is regarded as given information and therefore deleted.

Sentences such as those in 28 (b) can of course be interpreted as having either a specifying or a contrastive semantic implication. The reader or the addressee will have to rely on the discourse context to provide him/her with the necessary information to correctly interpret such an example. This implies that an isolated sentence provided without any contextual information, cannot be properly interpreted with regard to the specifying/contrastive implication expressed by the pronoun.

Compare for example:

- (29) **Yena o fihlile ka iri ya botshelela.**

‘(S)he arrived at six o’ clock.’

Without any contextual information it is not possible to determine whether the referent of the pronoun **yena** ‘him’ is being specified or whether (s)he is being contrasted to someone else.

The so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns can also be used **in apposition to object nouns**, in which case they fulfill their primary function, i.e. that of nominal determiner /qualifier. There is however an important difference with regard to ‘absolute’ pronouns appearing in apposition to subjects and those appearing in apposition to objects. Louwrens (1991: 102) indicates that object nouns, which appear in their basic post-verbal position, may only be preceded by the ‘absolute’ pronoun, but it may never be followed by the pronoun. This implies that an object noun, which appears in its basic syntactic position, may be emphasised but not contrasted unlike the subject noun, which can be specified or contrasted. Compare the following example on pre-nominal use of the ‘absolute’ pronoun from the PSC.

(30) Bjale seeta se be se ba bontšhitše wona mohlolo wa mafelelo!

‘Now the shoe showed them that very last miracle.’

The object noun **mohlolo** ‘miracle’ appears in its basic post verbal position and is preceded by the ‘absolute’ pronoun **wona** ‘it’. This so-called pronoun again has no pronominal qualities.

An object noun appearing in its basic, post-verbal position can never be contrasted, i.e. followed by the ‘absolute’ pronoun. This might be because of pragmatic reasons. Louwrens (1991: 103) highlights the fact that contrast suggests that there must at least be two referents in the context of discourse of which one is brought into a contrasting relationship with the other. The problem we encounter here is that the object noun, which occurs in the basic slot in sentences, indicates the final nominal information, which cannot be contrasted with any other information after the object. Sentences such as the following are therefore ungrammatical:

(31) * **Bjale seeta se be se ba bontšhitše mohlolo *wona* wa mafelelo!**

The post-nominal use of a pronoun to contrast an object in its basic post-verbal position is therefore ungrammatical. Louwrens (1991: 103) indicates that the only way, in which an object noun can be contrasted, is by moving it to the pre-verbal position.

Compare the following example from Masenya (2000: 12):

(32) **Selina: Rapitsi o a bogwa o a tseba. O re o be a šikere molamo mo gare ga batho?**

Lolo: Molamo *wona* a ka se o tlogele. Gape o be a swana le motsomi. Ge nkabe a tlike le dimpša , o be a tla ba a feleletše e le morema wa nnete.

‘Selina: Rapitsi is crazy you know. Are you saying he was carrying a stick in the midst of people?’

‘Lolo: On the contrary a stick he would never leave. Furthermore, he is like a hunter. Again he would have been like a real hunter if he had brought his dogs along’.

In (32) above, the object noun phrase **molamo *wona*** ‘on the contrary a stick’ appears in the pre-verbal position. The semantic implication in this particular instance, is that Rapitsi might leave other things behind, but not the stick.

A secondary, pronominal function can be fulfilled in cases where the object noun is deleted.

Compare the following example from PSC regarding an object represented by an ‘absolute’ pronoun in the normal post-verbal position.

(33) **Motse wa gagwe ke serantlatla komatona ya banna, wa bona**

Ø *wona, o bone lewatle...*

‘His home is a mansion the real man’s secret, you see it you have seen the sea...’

In this case **wona** ‘it’ is fulfilling the pragmatic function of a pronoun because it is referring to a deleted object noun **motse** ‘village, home’.

An obvious question with regard to the pronominalisation strategy employed in (33), is why the speaker chose to pronominalise the object noun by making use of an ‘absolute’ pronoun, instead of using the object concord, e.g. **wa o bona, o bone lewatle**, ‘if you have seen *it*, you have seen the sea’. The fact that the speaker chose to utilise the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun, is a clear indication that (s)he wished to place particular emphasis to on the referent of the pronoun, or, alternatively to contrast it with some other referent. Using the more neutral pronominalisation strategy by means of an object concord would not fulfill this particular pragmatic function.

(d) WORD GROUPS

As was indicated above, the relevant word groups are adjectives, relatives (both verbal and nominal) and possessive constructions. The different constructions will not be discussed separately, since they are all governed by the same principles. Again, the primary function of these word groups is to qualify nouns. They can function as nominal qualifiers of both subject and object nouns. Their dominant syntactic position is the post-nominal one, although they can also appear pre-nominally.

Compare, by way of illustration, the following example in which the pronominal use of the adjective is illustrated taken from PSC:

(34) **Ge ba le ka fase ga mehlare ba rema dikgong, Mokgadi a goeletša Mokgatšana, ‘Na o tseba dinoga?’ Mokgatšana a fetola ka la gore, ‘Ee ke tseba Ø tše tala.’**

‘When they were underneath the trees chopping wood, Mokgadi shouted at Mokgatšana asking her if she knew snakes, Mokgatšana answered by saying, yes, ‘I know the green ones’.

In the given text above, the object noun **dinoga** ‘snakes’ is introduced into the discourse as new information, this new information is introduced in the hearer’s consciousness for the first time. Following this object noun there is an answer which says, **Ke tseba tše tala** ‘I know the green ones.’ **Ø tše tala** ‘the green ones’ (which is an adjective) agrees with the deleted object noun **dinoga** ‘snakes’ and is therefore able to refer to the same referent.

When the writer of the story finds it necessary to refer back to the snakes, he uses the adjective as a pronoun. The object noun **dinoga** ‘snakes’ is deleted since its referent being given information, is uniquely identifiable to the hearer. Based on the fact that the adjectival construction agrees with the noun **dinoga** ‘snakes’ and appears in a coreferential relation to it, the phrase **tše tala** ‘the green ones’ can function as an object pronoun.

This example again illustrates the fact that a primary and secondary function can be distinguished for adjectives. The primary function is that of a nominal determiner which is fulfilled when the adjective appears together with its nominal antecedent. When the nominal antecedent has been deleted, the secondary, pronominal function of the adjective is dominant.

Now compare the following examples 35-37 taken from PSC in which a nominal relative, a verbal relative, and a possessive construction respectively function as pronominal word groups:

- (35) **Dijo e be e le maphaaphaa.[...] Mogwera wa Noko ge a hlalosa gore o sepetše bjang moletlong, o ile a re ba be ba rekile Ø tše bose fela.**

‘There was plenty of food. [...] Noko's friend when explaining the whole party scene said: They bought only delicious ones.’

Just like in the cases of adjectives and the demonstratives, the same principles hold, namely that a noun can be deleted because it represents given or old information. The nominal relative **tše bose** ‘delicious ones’, which appears in concordial reference with the deleted object thus function as an objectival pronoun.

(36) **Matswale wa gagwe o be a roka marokgo. O ile a re ke thakga ngwetši ya gagwe ka go mmošša gore ka marokgo a se sa tshwenyega ka go reka, ‘ke tla go rokela!’ Lerato o ile a fetola ka gore, ‘Ke rata Ø ao a rekišwago lebenkeleng.**

‘Her mother-in-law sewed trousers. She wanted to impress her daughter-in-law by telling her that she must never worry about buying trousers because she was going to sew her some. Lerato answered by saying, ‘I like those that are being sold from the shop.’

In the example given above, it is clear that the verbal relative **ao a rekišwago** ‘those that are sold’ is functioning as a pronoun, since the nominal antecedent **marokgo** ‘trousers’ has been deleted, since it represents given information.

(37) **Koko Lydia ka ge e le sefofu o ile a roma batlogolo ba gagwe gore ba ye go mo rekela diaparo tša go ya lenyalong la yo mongwe wa batlogolo ba gagwe. Ka go se tshepagale, batlogolo ba gagwe ba ile ba reka Ø tša bona.**

‘Grandmother Lydia because of her blindness, sent her grandchildren to buy her clothes for the wedding of one of her grandchildren. Unfortunately, her grandchildren bought themselves, because of their untrustworthiness.’

As in the case with the examples discussed above, the possessive construction **tša bona** ‘theirs’ being in agreement with the deleted (object) noun, fulfills the function of (objectival) pronoun, based on the fact that the (object) noun **diaparo** ‘clothes’ has been deleted.

In all the examples used above, the qualificative word groups have a pronominal function, based on the fact that the nominal antecedents, with which they are in agreement, have been deleted. Due to the coreferential relationships existing between the antecedent and the qualificative word group, the latter can function as a pronoun when the nominal antecedent is deleted, due to its given information status.

In traditional grammars the possible pronominal function of nominal determiners has to a great extent been overlooked.

2.4. CONCLUSION

A new point of view or dimension brought by Louwrens (1981, 1985, and 1991) about the concepts coreferentiality and agreement opened up a new horizon or a new understanding in the study of pronominalisation. The concordial relationship between subjects and verbs, and between nouns and their determiners enable subject concords as well as nominal determiners to fulfill a secondary, pronominal function. The reason for this is that agreement goes hand in hand with coreferentiality - a feature which forms the basis for any theory on pronominalisation. This secondary function is fulfilled when the noun with which it appears with is deleted.

In cases where the subject concord appears in apposition to the subject noun, no pronominal function is present, and the subject concord fulfills its primary function i.e. that of agreement marker. The same principle holds for nominal determiners, their primary function being that of qualifying a nominal antecedent. This has particular for the so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns: the term absolute pronoun, which implies that the pronominal function is the only function fulfilled by these words, turns out to be a

complete misnomer. A more fitting term would rather be that of specifying /contrastive determiner.

In this particular chapter, pronominalisation as the result of a process deletion was investigated. However, some instances can be identified in which pronominalisation can be regarded as the result of substitution. According to Louwrens (1991: 109) this happens mainly in cases which do not permit nouns to agree with other words which occur adjacent to them. These cases are analysed and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS AS A PROCESS OF SUBSTITUTION.

3.1. INTRODUCTION

According to Prinsloo (1987: 25) there are two strategies by means of which object nouns can be pronominalised. The first one is when an object noun is pronominalised by means of an object pronoun, as was discussed in the previous chapter. In cases such as these, the object noun can be pronominalised by means of any qualificative, i.e. a demonstrative, quantitative, adjective etc. In these cases the pronominal status of the qualifier is the result of the deletion of the object noun, with which it is in concordial agreement.

The second strategy is when an object noun is pronominalised by means of the object concord as in the following example:

(38) **Monna o diša dikgomo.**

‘The man is looking after the cattle.’

(39) **Monna o a di diša.**

‘The man is looking after them.’

Pronominalisation by means of an object pronoun is referred to as emphatic pronominalisation whilst pronominalisation by means of the object concord is referred to as neutral pronominalisation.

In the previous chapter it was indicated that the pronominalisation of an object noun by means of an object pronoun is a deletion process. In the paragraph which follows, it will be indicated that pronominalisation of an object nouns by means of an object concord, differs substantially from pronominalisation by means of an object pronoun.

3.2. PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF THE OBJECT CONCORD: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

As mentioned earlier, this is the second strategy by means of which objects can be pronominalised. Pronominalisation by means of an object concord is a case of substitution rather than deletion. Motivation for this statement will be given in the paragraphs that follows.

Bosch (1985: 50) indicates that:

“Object agreement signifies concordial agreement between object and verb, but unlike subject agreement, objectival agreement is not an obligatory phenomenon throughout.”

If the deletion theory as it was formulated for subject concords, is to be applied to object concords, it would imply that the basic or unpronominalised form of:

(40) Ke a mo tseba.

‘I know him.’

would be

(41) Ke a mo tseba mošemane.

‘I know him the boy.’

This is clearly not the case, since the object noun phrases of Northern Sotho appear in the vast majority of cases without an accompanying object concord.

Louwrens (1981: 42) does not find it strange that the pronominal status of the subject concord and the object concord cannot be explained within the same theoretical framework:

“Dat voorwerps en onderwerpskongruensie gevolglik nie sonder meer binne dieselfde teoretiese verwysingsraam geïnterpreteer kan word nie, is dus nie verrassend nie.”

He explains this fact by indicating that the nature and function of object agreement differ considerably from that of subject agreement, since these two agreement phenomena developed by means of different historical processes, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs. On the other hand, if it is argued that pronominalisation of object nouns by means of the object concord is the result of the substitution strategy, such an assumption is not without its problems.

In the first instance, it would be difficult to explain the syntactic position in which the object concord appears, when compared to the syntactic position of the object.

Compare again example (38) already mentioned above:

Monna o diša dikgomo.

‘A man is looking after the cattle.’

Even within the substitution framework it would be difficult to explain why the object concord **di** ‘them’ in example (39) which is supposed to substitute the object noun **dikgomo** ‘cattle’ appears in a pre-verbal position whereas the corresponding object appears post verbally.

This problem is compounded when pronominalisation of object nouns by means of the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun is compared to the use of the object concord as the object pronoun. When an object noun phrase is pronominalised by means of a so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun the said pronoun appears post-verbally as in the following example:

(42) (a) **Monna o roma bana.**

‘A man is sending the children.’

(b) **Monna o roma bona.**

‘A man is sending them.’

In cases such as these, it is clear that the pronoun appears in the post verbal position, which is of course the basic object position.

Prinsloo (1987) attempts to explain this phenomenon in terms of language typology and typological change as advocated by Givon and Greenberg. Concerning the relation between the dominant sequence of basic linguistic units and the syntax of the pronouns. Prinsloo (1987) found that a morpheme, which develops from a word, would appear in the same syntactic position as the word from which it originated. This implies that all pronominal morphemes referring to objects in an SOV language would appear pre-verbally, that is in the same position as the nominal object.

Compare Prinsloo (1987: 27)

“Navorsers soos Givon (1979 (b)), Andersen (1979) en ander lê die belangrike beginsel neer dat ’n morfeem wat in ’n taal uit ’n bepaalde woord ontwikkel, in dieselfde sintaktiese posisie as die woord sy beslag sal kry.”

Pronominal object morphemes in SVO and VSO languages will on the other hand develop post-verbally. If the object noun is found after the verb, the object pronoun must appear in the same syntactic position.

Greenberg and Givon (in Prinsloo 1987) observes that in French, Bantu in general and Northern Sotho in particular, nominal objects and all nominal determiners which function as object pronouns appear post-verbally following the SVO strategy. In contrast objectival concords functioning as objectival pronouns appear pre-verbally, representing a typical SOV order.

With reference to object pronominalisation by means of the object concord, Northern Sotho displays a typical OV word order strategy. When an object is, however, pronominalised by means of another pronominal form, it displays a VO ordering of constituents. Prinsloo (1987: 27) discusses this phenomenon against the background of typological change and its influence on the development of objectival pronouns in Northern Sotho.

He points out that it is generally accepted by linguists that the Bantu languages and, therefore Northern Sotho, used to be OV languages, but have undergone a typological change to dominant VO order. This direction of development explains the syntax of object pronouns in Northern Sotho: the object concord probably came into existence when the dominant sequence in Bantu languages was SOV. At this stage object nouns appeared before the verb. The object pronoun also appeared pre-verbally because pronouns appeared in the same syntactic position as their nominal counterparts:

“Objekspronomina het pre-verbaal voorgekom omrede pronomina in dieselfde sintaktiese posisie as hul naamwoordelike antesedente optree.”

Prinsloo, (1987: 27)

A typological change from dominant SOV to the current SVO strategy then took place in Bantu. Prinsloo (1987: 27) is of the opinion that the previous pre-verbal object pronouns got stranded in the pre-verbal position and were reduced to bound object morphemes, that is object concords. With reference to the status of these concords, Prinsloo (1987: 27) concludes as follows:

“Die voorwerpskakeel verteenwoordig dus 'n historiese res uit 'n vroeëre SOV-volgordestrategie vir Bantoe in die algemeen, en vir Noord Sotho in die besonder.”

Also compare the following quotation given from Givon (Prinsloo, 1987: 28):

“The subsequent syntactic change has merely left the bound pronoun “stranded” or “petrified” in its earlier syntactic position, a rather typical state of affairs with bound morphology...”

Greenberg (in Prinsloo 1987) also supports the argument that the concord represents a historic relic of a previous OV strategy. According to Greenberg's universal 25, language change will affect nominal objects first and only at a later stage will pronominal objects be affected. This implies that if a change from (S) OV to (S) VO were to take place, object nouns would first move from the pre-verbal to the post-verbal position. Objectival pronouns will only move at a later stage.

This theory supports the argument that the object concord is a historical remnant of an earlier SOV strategy.

Concerning this issue Louwrens (1991: 53) concludes as follows:

“Dat die voorwerpskakel egter nie dieselfde sintaktiese posisies as die korefererende naamwoord inneem nie, kan daaraan toegeskryf word dat Bantoe histories gekenmerk is deur 'n basiese sintaktiese orde waarin die voorwerp die werkwoord voorafgegaan het en dat die teenswoordige posisie van voorwerpskakel 'n argaïese sintaktiese res van die ouer volgorde is.”

With reference to object pronouns which appear in the post-verbal position, it can be concluded that this seems to be a relatively recent strategy, which only developed after the word order change OV to VO had been completed. The fact that the object pronoun appears in the same position as the nominal object is in accordance with the principle which concerns the relationship between the dominant sequence and the syntax of pronouns, which was referred to earlier.

To summarize, it would seem then that the two current strategies for pronominalisation of object nouns developed at different stages in the typological development of the Bantu languages. The strategy by means of which the object noun is pronominalised by means of an object concord in the pre-verbal position seems to be the older strategy, a historical remnant of the stage where Bantu languages were still dominant SOV languages.

The second strategy by means of which objects are pronominalised by means of an object pronoun in the post-verbal position seems to be a relatively new innovation. This new innovation probably started its development after the typological change from SOV to SVO had already taken place.

However, writers such as Heine and Reh (1984: 30,31) argue against the typological approach in explaining the pre-verbal appearance of the object concord in Bantu.

The said writers strongly dispute the claim put forward by Prinsloo (1987) that typological development is responsible for the pre-verbal positioning of the object concord. Furthermore, Heine and Reh (1984: 31) dismiss the possibility that Bantu languages at some previous stage of development were dominant SOV languages:

“ ... It is highly unlikely that the Bantu languages at any stage in their development had SOV syntax...”

According to Heine and Reh (op.cit), the discrepancy between pronominal and nominal object placement can much more plausibly be explained in terms of a principle termed the

‘Language independent preferred order of constituents’ (LIPOC). This principle is said to determine the linear order of meaningful elements in language. Heine and Reh (op.cit) list

a number of preferences in linearization, which are said to be part of LIPOC, of which the following two are relevant to the issue at hand:

- (a) The preferred position of pronominal constituents is pre-verbal.
- (b) Pronominal constituents tend to precede nominal constituents.

It is easy to see how these principles could be used to explain the pre-verbal appearance of object concords in Bantu. On the other hand, it would be difficult to account for object pronouns, which do appear in the post-verbal position.

It could be argued that the pronominal use of nominal determiners in the (post-verbal) basic object position is a recent innovation, but that would call for extensive argumentation. Furthermore, writers such as Prinsloo (1987) and Louwrens (1981) have furnished such extensive evidence, supporting the viewpoint of an earlier SOV stage in the development of Bantu that it would be difficult simply to dismiss such possibility.

3.3. DISCOURSE PRAGMATIC FUNCTION OF PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF THE OBJECT CONCORD.

It has already been mentioned that pronominalisation of objects by means of an object concord is termed neutral pronominalisation. This simply means that using an object instead of an object noun phrase is a clear case of substitution, the object concord merely supplanting or substituting the object noun phrase without fulfilling any additional discourse function. The purpose of this strategy is merely to avoid unnecessary repetition of an object noun phrase, the referent of which is given information, and therefore identifiable to the reader /addressee.

Compare the following example:

- (43) (a) **Mosadi o ješa bana.**
'A woman is feeding the children.'
- (b) **Mosadi o a ba ješa.**
'A woman is feeding them.'

This is in clear contrast to cases that where a so-called 'absolute' pronoun is used as an objectival pronoun, where such a pronoun carries, apart from its pronominal function,

also the pragmatic function, also the pragmatic function of expressing emphasis or contrast.

3.4. CONCLUSION

In this chapter a discussion has been presented on pronominalisation of objects in single transitive constructions. Two strategies on which the object nouns can be pronominalised were discussed. According to the first strategy it was indicated that the object nouns could be pronominalised by means of the object pronouns appearing in the post-verbal position. In this case the pronominalisation strategy used is deletion.

According to the second strategy it was indicated that object nouns could be pronominalised by means of object concords, appearing in pre-verbal position. In this case the pronominalisation strategy used is substitution.

Certain problems regarding the pre-verbal appearance of the object concord were pointed out in this section. Two arguments have been presented which account for the pre-verbal appearance of the object concord, whilst the object noun it substitutes is in the post-verbal position.

The first argument by linguists such as, Prinsloo (1987) and others maintains the pre-verbal appearance of object concord is the result of language typology and typological change. The second argument by linguists such as Heine and Reh (1984) maintains that the LIPOC principle, that is the Language Independent Preferred Order of Constituency might be the cause of the pre-verbal appearance of the object concord whilst the object noun appears in the post-verbal position. It was furthermore indicated that pronominalisation by means of preverbal object pronouns and pronominalisation by means of preverbal object concord fulfill different pragmatic functions, the use of the object concord being a neutral strategy of simple substitution.

CHAPTER 4

PRONOMINALISATION OF NOUN PHRASES IN PARTICLE

GROUPS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Louwrens (1981,1991) and Prinsloo (1987) hold different views with reference to the pronominalisation of noun phrases in particle groups.

Louwrens (1981: 51) indicates that the noun phrases in the particle groups can be pronominalised only as a result of substitution. According to Louwrens nouns which appear in syntactic environments in which they do not agree with other words or word groups can only be pronominalised using the substitution strategy.

Compare Louwrens (1981: 51):

“Dit is juis om hierdie rede dat die weglating van die onderhawige naamwoorde in die besondere sintaktiese omgewings nie pronominalisasie tot gevolg kan hê nie.”

Louwrens (1981: 51) cites the following examples in Southern Sotho to illustrate his viewpoint:

- (44) (a) **Ba tsoma ka dintja.**
'They hunt with dogs.'
- (b) **Re tla tsamaya le basadi.**
'We will go with women.'
- (45) (a) **Ba tsoma ka tsona.**
'They hunt with them.'

(b) **Re tla tsamaya le bona.**

‘We will go with them.’

The above examples indicate clearly that the strategy used for pronominalising particle groups is substitution. Following is a discussion of four syntactic environments where (Prinsloo 1987) found that pronominalisation is also a result of substitution.

4.2. FOUR SYNTACTIC ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH PRONOMINALISATION IS REGARDED AS THE RESULT OF SUBSTITUTION.

Prinsloo (1987: 26) identified these when he supported this point of view.

Compare the following examples given by Prinsloo (1987: 26):

4.2.1. Double transitive verbs.

(46) (a) **O lemetše tate tšhemo na?**

‘Did you plough the field for dad?’

(b) **Ee, ke mo lemetše yona.**

‘Yes, I have ploughed it for him.’

(c) **Ee, ke e lemetše yena.**

‘Yes, I have ploughed it for him.’

Examples such as these will only be discussed in the next chapter.

4.2.2. Instrumental particle groups

(47) (a) **O dirang ka selepe?**

‘What are you doing with an axe?’

(b) **Ke rema ka sona.**

‘I chop with it.’

4.2.3. Associative particle groups

- (48) (a) **Madika o sa ratana le mosadiagwe na?**
'Is Madika still in love with his wife?'
- (b) **Ee o sa ratana le yena.**
'Yes, he is still in love with her.'

4.2.4. Locative particle groups

- (49) (a) **Mosadi o tsene go kgoši na?**
'Is the woman going to the king?'
- (b) **Ee, o tsene go yena.**
'Yes, she went to him.'

Prinsloo (1987: 26) indicates that the 'absolute pronouns' in the examples given above substitute their nominal antecedents regardlessly, in other words, these pronouns do not express any discourse function other than that of substituting the noun.

“In al die gevalle hierbo [...] vervang die 'absolute voornaamwoord' sy naamwoorde antesedent sonder meer, dit wil sê die voornaamwoorde druk nie enige diskoerfunksie uit nie en moet in terme van Louwrens (1981) en Givon (1979): (b)) as 'neutrale' oftewel 'anaforiese' voornamwoorde waardeer word.”

The obvious problem with the argument as explained by Louwrens (1981) and Prinsloo (1987) is the occurrence of examples such as the following, in which an absolute pronoun appears together with its nominal antecedent in a particle group:

- (50) **Ke rema ka sona selepe.**
'I chop with a specific axe.'

If such an example were to be pronominalised the pronominal status of the absolute pronoun **sona** ‘it’ would obviously be the result of deletion. Compare:

(51) **Ke rema ka sona Ø**

‘I chop with it.’

It was probably to provide for examples such as these that Louwrens (1991: 97) modified his view on the pronominalisation strategy in particle groups. He indicates that pronominalisation in particle groups can be the result of either deletion or substitution. This will depend on whether the pronoun fulfills a pragmatic function such as expressing emphasis or contrast. It will also depend on whether it is functioning simply as an anaphoric or neutral pronoun without any discourse pragmatic function. When this is taken into account, it follows that the discourse in which the example occurs, should be studied carefully.

Louwrens (1991: 97) states:

“...the context of discourse in which a particular example occurs plays a decisive role, since it will only be possible to answer this question after the context has been carefully analysed.”

If it is found that an ‘absolute’ pronoun is functioning as a pure anaphoric pronoun within a particle group, the pronominal status of the pronoun would be the result of substitution. If, however, it is found that the pronoun has a specific discourse function, such as marking emphasis or contrast, pronominalisation would be the result of deletion.

4.3. PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF SUBSTITUTION.

Compare the following example taken from PSC containing an associative particle group:

- (52) **Go šetše beke fela gore Mahlatse a ye go nyalana le Ntsobe. Go ya ka molaotheo wa kereke ya bona, ga go motho yo a ka nyadišwago ke Moruti a sa lefe lekgetho. Bona ba na le ngwaga ba sa lefe lekgetho. Ntsobe o rile ge a botšišwa ka taba ye, a fetola ka gore, ‘ke boletše le yena’.**

‘It is only a week left for Mahlatse and Ntsobe to get married. According to his or her church’s constitution the pastor marries nobody if he does not pay tithe. It is for a year that they have not been paying their tithe. When Ntsobe was asked about this, he answered by saying that, ‘I talked to him.’’

A close analysis of the context within which this example occurs, reveals that the pronoun **yena** ‘him’ simply replaces **moruti** ‘pastor’. The reason for using **yena** ‘him’ instead of **moruti** ‘pastor’ is to avoid repetition. It can be safely assumed that the same principle will hold for locative and instrumental particle groups. When the said example is analysed within context, no evidence of any discourse pragmatic function such as emphasis or contrast presents itself. This is an indication that **yena** ‘it’ should be regarded as a neutral or anaphoric pronoun, merely substituting the noun.

4.4. PRONOMINALISATION BY MEANS OF DELETION.

In the following example, taken from PSC , the pronoun again appears as a complement of the associative particle.

- (53) **Bona mo mmagongwanaka, go nyalwa moo wena le ba geno le go llelago go na le mathata. Ge o ka nyalwa wa hloka phedišano le yena (Ø) a go nyetšego, a o tla thaba?**

‘Look here the mother of my child, the marriage that you and your parents are crying for is troublesome. If you can be married and experience no life with a specific one that married you, will you be happy?’

Here the gentlemen who has given this lady a child is talking to her about the fact that she and her parents want her to get married. He is telling her how troublesome marriage is. He finally asks her that if she can be married and experience problems with that specific man she married, will she be happy?

The fact that the specifying function of the absolute pronoun has been retained supports the argument that the pronominal status of the absolute pronoun is the result of the deletion of the nominal antecedent. It should be stated very clearly, however that this interpretation rests solely on the reader's analysis and interpretation of the context surrounding the example.

The facts presented above indicate that pronominalisation in particle groups can be the result of deletion or substitution, depending on the discourse in which the example occurs. The example presented above is an illustration of the **associative particle group**. The same principle, which has been applied to this particle group, holds for the instrumental particle groups, agentive particle groups, particle groups with the locative particle **go** 'to' and copulative particle groups. In cases where the pronoun expresses a discourse function such as contrast or emphasis it can be assumed that the pronominal status of the pronoun is the result of deletion of the antecedental noun. If however, the pronoun is a neutral anaphoric one without any other discourse function such a pronoun is probably simply substituting the antecedent. It is therefore clear that it is not possible to state whether pronominalisation in particle groups is, the result of either deletion or substitution. Only a detailed discourse pragmatic analysis of the context in which such an example occurs can provide the solution.

4.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter different viewpoints on the issue of pronominalisation of particle groups have been discussed.

Although Louwrens (1981) and Prinsloo (1987) initially indicated that the pronominalisation of noun phrases in particle groups are the result of substitution, instances were identified later by Louwrens (1991) where examples were found which clearly indicated that pronominalisation of particle groups can also be the result of deletion.

According to Louwrens' (1981) initial view if the discourse pragmatic factors required the pronominalisation of noun phrases in particle groups, the only strategy that could be used was the substitution strategy.

The occurrence of examples where the so-called 'absolute' pronouns do occur in apposition to nouns in particle groups prompted Louwrens (1991) to modify his initial view on this issue. Louwrens indicated that only context of a discourse can dictate whether pronominalisation is a result of substitution or deletion.

If it is found that the pronoun carries a discourse pragmatic function, its pronominal status is the result of deletion. If, however it is functioning as a neutral pronoun, it is simply substituting the noun in the particle group.

CHAPTER 5

PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS IN DOUBLE TRANSITIVE STRUCTURES AND INDIRECT RELATIVE CLAUSES.

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an attempt will be made to explain the pronominalisation of objects in double transitive structures and indirect relative clauses. The strategy used in the pronominalisation of these structures will be discussed.

Double transitive verbs are verbs which may take two objects in the same sentences, the one being a direct object and other an indirect object. The indirect object always precedes the direct object.

Compare this example example:

(54) Motswadi o rekela bana malekere.

‘The parent is buying sweets for children.’

(Bana=IO, Malekere=DO)

It follows that both these objects can be pronominalised. The different strategies used to pronominalise these objects are the focus of the discussion, which follows.

5.2. PRONOMINALISATION OF OBJECTS IN DOUBLE TRANSITIVE VERBS

Louwrens (1991: 98) is of the opinion that if one of the two objects, that is the direct or the indirect object, needs to be pronominalised, this can be done by employing the objectival concord.

Compare the following examples:

(55) Mokgekolo o ba apeela dijo.

‘The old woman cooks food for them.’

(56) Mokgekolo o di apeela bana.

‘The old woman cooks it for the children.’(Louwrens, 1991: 48)

He indicates that if the discourse structure demands the simultaneous pronominalisation of both objects, this can only be done by pronominalising one object by means of the object concord and the other by means of the absolute pronoun.

Compare the following examples:

(57) **Mokgekolo o ba apeela tšona.**

(58) **Mokgekolo o di apeela bona.**

‘The old woman cooks it for them.’ (Louwrens, 1991: 98)

Louwrens points out that no ‘pronoun’ occurs in apposition to the direct and indirect object in the basic structure.

“The occurrence of the absolute pronoun **tšona** ‘them’ and **bona** ‘they’ above can therefore not be ascribed to the deletion of the antecedent noun.” (Louwrens, 1991: 99)

Compare the following example:

(59) **Mokgekolo o apeela bona dijo.**

‘The old woman cooks it for them.’

The absolute pronoun has no emphatic pronominal meaning in this case but a neutral one, which calls for substitution.

“The compulsory use of the absolute pronoun in examples such as those indicated above can be explained in terms of a grammatical rule which determines that only a single object may be used in a given Northern Sotho verb. Due to this restriction, the absolute pronoun is used out of necessity if the context requires that both objects should be

pronominalised at the same time.”

(Louwrens, 1991: 99)

The ‘absolute’ pronoun in this case is not used to emphasize or contrast but it has a neutral meaning. When it has a neutral meaning pronominalisation cannot result from deletion but substitution.

Compare the following example in context:

(60) Ge ke fihla ga gagwe ke ge a hlahlela dihuswane. O ile go mpona a nama a laela mošemane, go mo tswalelela tšona a nama a tla go nkgahlanetša.

‘When I arrived at his place he was busy ushering the lambs to their sleeping place. After seeing me he ordered the boy to close them for him and he came to welcome me.’ (Rammala 1975: 46)

In the above-mentioned example with the double transitive verb, the object concord **mo** ‘him’ is used to pronominalise the indirect object, whilst the object pronoun **tšona** ‘them’ which appears in the post-verbal position is used to pronominalise the direct object **dihuswane** ‘lambs.’

Further confirmation for Louwrens’ point of view lies in the fact that the following structures are to be regarded as semantically equal.

Compare the following example:

(61) Ke mo fa yona.

‘I give it to him.’

Versus

(62) Ke e fa yena.

‘I give it to him.’

The sentence above is a sentence with double transitive verb being pronominalised by means of an object concord and an object pronoun. Both structures might have resulted from a sentence like:

(63) Ke fa monna pene.

‘I give the man a pen.’

Prinsloo (1987: 30) is also of the opinion that in the pronominalisation of the double transitive verbs, the absolute pronoun is a neutral or primary or anaphoric pronoun.

“In al die gevalle [...] waarin **sona**, **yona** en **yena** hulle naamwoordlike antesedente verwag, is **sona**, **yona** en **yena** primêre/neutrale/anaforiese voornaamwoorde.”

(Prinsloo, 1987: 30)

Prinsloo is referring to the following examples:

Compare:

(64) (a) Ke lemela tate tšhemo. ‘Ek ploeg vir vader *die land*.’

‘I plough the land for my father’

(b) Ke mo lemela yona / Ke e lemela yena.

‘Ek ploeg dit vir hom.’

‘I plough it for him’

Prinsloo (1987: 30) is also of the opinion that the two objects in Northern Sotho cannot be simultaneously pronominalised by means of the object concord and that rather an alternative strategy should be opted for, thus the use of the object pronoun.

“Dit moet egter in gedagte gehou word dat twee objekte in Noord-Sotho nie gelyktydig deur voorwerpskakel gepronominaliseer kan word nie.”

(Prinsloo, 1987: 30)

The question should, however be asked whether examples do not occur in which the pronoun appearing in the post-verbal position, does indeed function as a marker of discourse pragmatic strategy such as contrast or emphasis. Investigation has brought to light the examples that occur where one of objects in a bitransitive construction appears in apposition to a so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun.

(65) **Ka ge ba sa kgolwe gore ke nna ke go romilego gore o ntšhe tšhelete pankeng, ke tla ba ngwalela lona lengwalo ka Mošupologo.**

‘As they do not believe that I send you to withdraw money from the bank, I will write them that specific letter on Monday.’

Pronominalisation of the double transitive verb would result in a structure such as the following:

(66) **Ka ge ba sa kgolwe gore ke nna ke go romilego gore o ntšhe tšhelete pankeng, ke tla ba ngwalela lona Ø ka Mošupologo.**

‘As they do not believe that I sent you to withdraw money from the bank, I will write them that specific one on Monday.’

In cases such as these it is clear that the pronoun **lona** ‘one’ is not functioning as a neutral or anaphoric pronoun, but that it has retained its discourse pragmatic function namely, the marking of emphasis. It is clear that pronominalisation in cases such as this, is not the result of substitution but of deletion.

It can, therefore be concluded that pronominalisation of objects by means of absolute pronouns in bitransitive constructions, should not be regarded *per se* as pronominalisation by means of substitution. Before any verdict on the use of the substitution or deletion strategy being used for pronominalisation can be given, the possibility of the pronoun fulfilling a discourse pragmatic function must first be investigated.

If it is found that the pronoun does indeed fulfill such a function, it must be concluded that pronominalisation is in that specific case the result of the deletion of the antecedental noun, since the ‘pronoun’ has retained its primary function, that of marking emphasis.

On the other hand, if a careful analysis of the example within the context indicates that the pronoun is functioning solely as an anaphoric pronoun, it must be concluded that pronominalisation is in that specific case the result of substitution.

5.3. INDIRECT RELATIVE CLAUSES

Even though Louwrens (1991: 100) indicates that absolute pronouns appearing in indirect relative clauses are neutral pronouns, substituting a head noun, raises questions as to whether absolute pronouns in the following examples fulfill any pronominal function:

(67) ***Dimpša tše batsomi ba sepetšego ka tšona.***

‘The dogs with which the hunters went.’

(68) ***Dipholo tše banna ba lemago ka tšona.***

‘The oxen with which the men are ploughing.’

(69) ***Moruti yo tate a ilego go yena.***

‘The minister to whom father has gone.’

(70) ***Noga ye mošemane a lomilwego ke yona.***

‘The snake by which the boy has been bitten.’

He questions this because the head noun, which agrees with the pronoun, is not deleted, since it appears initially in the sentence.

“The only function which the so-called pronoun seems to have here is to mark the syntactic relationship between the newly relativised noun and the erstwhile complement of the associative, instrumental, locative and agentive particles *le*, *ka*, *go* and *ke*.” (Louwrens 1991: 100)

To conclude: It is difficult to link the so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns in the indirect relative clauses with pronominalisation. In example 67 above

Dimpša tše batsomi ba sepetšego ka tšona.

‘The dogs with which the hunters went.’

tšona ‘they’ does not substitute the noun phrase, as **dimpša** ‘dogs’ is still present. Pronominalisation also cannot be claimed, as deletion has not taken place.

If **tšona** ‘they’ cannot be explained in terms of substitution and deletion we still cannot talk of pronominalisation. The function of **tšona** ‘they’ in this case still needs to be investigated.

5.4. CONCLUSION

Concerning the pronominalisation of objects of double transitive structures, it was found that both substitution and deletion strategy can be used depending on the discourse function of the pronoun in question.

The discourse pragmatic function that a pronoun will be fulfilling in a discourse must first be investigated before a conclusion can be reached, regarding the use of either the substitution or the deletion strategy. If it is found that in a given context the pronoun is fulfilling an emphatic function, this would imply that pronominalisation is in this specific case the result of deletion of the antecedental noun since the pronoun is functioning as a marker of emphasis or contrast.

Concerning the pronominalisation of indirect relative clauses there is still a question as to whether the so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns present in the indirect relative clause fulfill any pronominal role or function. This is questioned, as the head noun, which agrees with the pronoun is not deleted as it appears initially in the sentence. The substitution strategy

also cannot be responsible for pronominalisation, as the so-called ‘absolute’ pronoun in the indirect relative clauses does not substitute any noun.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was an investigation of aspects of pronominalisation in Northern Sotho. It was found that the majority of cases where pronominalisation occurs, result from deletion. Even so there are cases where the strategy of substitution is used to pronominalise nouns or noun phrases. The discourse context plays a very decisive role in determining the strategy to be used in the pronominalisation of nouns or noun phrases.

When certain issues concerning pronominalisation were investigated, it was found that the traditional pronominalisation theory has up to the late seventies been a textbook

example of direct grammatical projection. The traditional linguists have overlooked the real nature of pronominalisation in Bantu and more specifically in Northern Sotho.

It was furthermore found that pronominalisation cannot be studied without a clear knowledge of the relationship that exists between agreement and coreferentiality. It was indicated that since pronominalisation is essential theory of agreement and coreferentiality, all forms which agree with nouns, can function as pronouns.

It was found that qualificatives such as demonstratives and all forms of adjectives and relatives and the so-called 'absolute' pronouns could all function as pronouns.

They can function as pronouns since these forms all appear in a relationship of agreement and coreferentiality with their nominal antecedents. It must be kept in mind that these forms can only fulfil a pronominal function if the nominal antecedents with which they agree, have been deleted because of the fact that the noun is regarded as given information and not substituted *per se*. This implies that the pronominal function of these forms is a secondary rather than a primary one.

It was found that in the case of pronominalisation by means of the object pronouns appearing in the post-verbal position, the strategy used is that of deletion.

When the examples of pronominalisation with regard to absolute pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, quantitative pronouns, adjectives, nominal relatives, verbal relatives, possessive constructions functioning as objectival pronouns are investigated, it is clear that these nominal determiners retain their primary discourse function, which is to function as nominal determiners.

It is interesting to note that these word groups are also able to fulfil a secondary discourse function, which is that of a pronoun. It is the deletion strategy, which enables them to function secondarily as pronouns. In the case of subject agreement pronominalisation is also the result of deletion.

The pronominalisation of noun phrases in the particle groups is not only the result of

substitution as was initially believed. Instances were identified and examples were cited indicating that pronominalisation of particle groups can also be the result of deletion.

Of importance is the fact that discourse pragmatic factors play a decisive role in instances of pronominalisation in particle groups since discourse factors determine which strategy is going to be employed for pronominalisation.

The occurrence of examples where the so-called ‘absolute’ pronouns occur in apposition to nouns in particle groups indicates that pronominalisation is indeed in some cases the result of deletion. This would imply that cases such as: -

(71) Ke ngwala ka yona.

‘I am writing with it.’

could well be the pronominalised version of

(72) Ke ngwala ka yona pene.

‘I am writing specifically with a pen.’

It is clear that no conclusion regarding substitution or deletion can in these cases be given without taking the discourse context into consideration.

In the context where the so-called ‘pronoun’ is used to emphasise or contrast a noun or a noun phrase pronominalisation will be the result of deletion. In the investigation of the objects of double transitive structures, it has been proven that not only the substitution strategy but also the deletion strategy can be employed to pronominalise the objects.

To conclude: pronominalisation is primarily a discourse strategy, used by speakers to achieve a specific effect within the discourse. Even though the approach advocated by modern Bantu linguists does take this into account, investigation has brought to light that many of the finer implications of this point of view has not been clearly spelled out. This study was therefore an attempt to give a detailed analysis of the implications of the modern theory of pronominalisation.

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