

The Interpretation of “*Botlokotsebe*” V/S “*Bosenyi*”

Pule Alexis Phindane

*Language and Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Humanities,
Central University of Technology, Free State Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa
E-mail: pphindane@cut.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Terminology. Language Practitioner. Standardization. Criminal Activities

ABSTRACT The present paper is based on the findings from a study conducted to examine the interchangeable use of the concepts ‘*botlokotsebe*’ (mischief) and ‘*bosenyi*’ (crime) as an English equivalent term ‘crime’. This study is thus a survey in which questionnaires were used to collect data from 165 (of which 15 are experts in the language practice) Sesotho speakers. The respondents were intentionally selected from language users in Motheo and Thabo Mofutsanyana districts in South Africa. Documents from different domains (where these terms are appearing) were also analysed to assess the everyday use and usage of these terms in distinct contexts. The results show that ‘*botlokotsebe*’ cannot denote criminal activity but ‘*bosenyi*’ is the relevant equivalent term to describe any crime. The implications of these findings are discussed. The study also provides an insight as to how Sesotho language users should be careful and cautious in implementing certain terms without following relevant sources. It also proposed that ‘*bosenyi*’ be regarded as superordinate term referring to criminal activities.