

Zulu

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0. INTRODUCTION

Zulu is a language spoken in the Republic of South Africa by approximately 8,34 million people (according to the 1991 census).

Zulu belongs to the South-Eastern zone of the Bantu language family, a family of languages that occupies an area south of an ill-defined boundary that stretches from the Cameroon area on the west coast to more or less the Lake Victoria area and Kenya on the east coast. Languages of this family are found as far south as the Cape area of the Republic of South Africa.

Zulu is now recognized as one of the 11 official languages of the Republic of South Africa, with its major concentration of speakers found in the KwaZulu/Natal province. It has traditionally been regarded as one of the languages of the so-called Nguni group, others being languages such as Xhosa, Swati and Ndebele.

Zulu, like all its sister languages, is typically agglutinating in nature. Thus a verb such as the one given below, is made up of a series of prefixes and suffixes that are built around the basic root *-sebenz-* which means 'work'. *Ngizobasebenzela* 'I will work for them'. This word can be broken down as follows:

<i>ngi-</i>	subject prefix (or concord)	- I
<i>-zo-</i>	future prefix (or marker)	- shall/will
<i>-ba-</i>	object prefix (or concord)	- them
<i>-sebenz-</i>	verb root	- work
<i>-el-</i>	extension suffix	- for
<i>-a</i>	final suffix	

In this study an overview will be represented of the linguistic structure of Zulu with reference to, inter alia morphological, syntactic, semantic, discourse pragmatic, cognitive, typological and phonological issues.

1. THE NOUN

In Zulu every noun belongs to a specific category or group, which has traditionally been called a noun class. The noun as such consists of two parts, namely a noun prefix and a noun stem. It is the noun prefix which determines to which noun class a noun belongs. A noun such as *umuntu* 'person', for instance, consists of the noun prefix *umu-* followed by the noun stem *-ntu*. By virtue of the noun prefix *umu-*, we know that this particular noun belongs to noun class 1. By using the same noun stem *-ntu* but prefixing another noun prefix, for example *aba-* (the class 2 prefix), we can form the noun *abantu* 'people' which is the plural of *umuntu* 'person'. A further example is *ubuntu* 'humaneness', where the class 14 noun prefix *ubu-* is prefixed to *-ntu*. It is clear from these examples that the noun stem remains constant while the noun prefix changes in order to render a slightly different meaning every time.

For comparative and practical purposes, the various noun classes have been assigned numbers by scholars who have worked within the Bantu family of languages. We shall follow Meinhof's (1932:48pp) numbering system, and although some 23 distinct noun prefixes have been identified in the various Bantu languages, some of these prefixes are very rare and, interestingly enough, no one language has all of the noun prefixes. In the list of noun prefixes occurring in Zulu given below, it is noticeable that the class numbers terminate with class 17 and that some numbers, such as 12 and 13, do not occur at all.

1.1. Noun prefixes

Class 1	<i>umu-</i>
Class 1a	<i>u-</i>
Class 2	<i>aba-</i>
Class 2b	<i>o-</i>
Class 3	<i>umu-</i>
Class 4	<i>imi-</i>
Class 5	<i>ili-</i>
Class 6	<i>ama-</i>
Class 7	<i>isi-</i>

Class 8	<i>izi-</i>
Class 9	<i>in-</i>
Class 10	<i>izin-</i>
Class 11	<i>ulu-</i>
Class 14	<i>ubu-</i>
Class 15	<i>uku-</i>
Class 16	<i>pha-</i>
Class 17	<i>uku-</i>

Although most of the noun classes display a diversity of semantic contents, certain generalizations can be made about the significances of each of the classes. More will be said about the common significances that are found in each of the classes when we discuss the different noun classes below.

1.2 Noun classes

Class 1

Prefix: *umu-*

The prefix *umu-* occurs before monosyllabic stems and has a variant *um-* which occurs elsewhere.

Examples:

umuntu 'person', *umufo* 'fellow', *umfana* 'boy', *umfazi* 'woman', *umXhosa* 'a Xhosa person'

Main significances: personal nouns and nouns referring to tribes or ethnic groups.

Class 2

Prefix: *aba-*

The prefix *aba-* has a variant *abe-* which occurs in certain examples like *abelungu* 'white people', *abeNguni* 'Nguni people' and *abeSuthu* 'Sotho people'. Another variant *ab-* occurs before vowel commencing stems, e.g. *abenzi* 'doers', *abakhi* 'builders'; *aba-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples:

abantu 'persons/people', *abazali* 'parents', *abafundi* 'students'

Main significances: plural of class 1.

Class 1a

Prefix: *u-*

Examples:

ubaba 'my father', *unama* 'my mother', *ugogo* 'my grandmother', *uShaka* 'Shaka', *umogwaja* 'hare', *udokotela* 'doctor', *ushukela* 'sugar'

Main significances: terms of relationship, proper names, animals (often personifications), borrowed words.

Class 2b

Prefix: *o-*

A variant form of this prefix is *owo-*, as in *owomalume* 'my maternal uncles/my maternal uncle and company'

Examples:

omkani 'my wives/my wife and company', *oyihlo* 'your fathers/your father and company', *oThemba* 'Themba and company', *onesi* 'nurses', *obhejane* 'rhinoceroses'.

Main significances: plural of class 1a or to indicate 'and company'.

Class 3

Prefix: *umu-*

The prefix *umu-* occurs before monosyllabic stems and has a variant *um-* which occurs elsewhere.

Examples:

umuhi 'tree', *umuzi* 'village', *umusi* 'smoke', *umfula* 'river', *umlilo* 'fire', *umhlabathi* 'ground/soil'

Main significances: natural phenomena.

Class 4

Prefix: *imi-*

Examples:

imithi 'trees', *imithombo* 'springs of water', *imililo* 'fires', *imilomo* 'mouths'

Main significances: plural of class 4.

Class 5

Prefix: *ili-*

The full prefix *ili-* may occur before monosyllabic stems, but the variant *i-* is most often used for nouns in this class.

Examples:

itshe/ilitshhe 'stone', *ikati* 'cat', *iNgisi* 'Englishman', *itafula* 'table', *iqanda* 'egg', *iso* 'eye', *ilanga* 'sun'

Main significances: miscellaneous - anatomical terms, animals, ethnic names.

Class 6

Prefix: *ama-*

This prefix has a variant *ame-* which occurs in the nouns *amehlo* 'eyes', *ameva* 'thorns'; *ama-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples:

amasondo 'wheels', *amatshhe* 'stones', *amasango* 'gates', *amanzi* 'water', *amandla* 'strength'

Main significances: plural of class 5, plural of certain class 9 nouns, collectives.

Class 7

Prefix: *isi-*

This prefix has a variant *is-* which occurs before vowel stems, e.g. *isoni* 'sinner', *isandla* 'hand'; *isi-* occurs before consonant commencing stems.

Examples:

isidudu 'pumpkin porridge', *isiZulu* 'the Zulu language', *isisebenzi* 'worker', *isishosha* 'cripple', *isitsha* 'plate'

Main significances: miscellaneous - foodstuffs, languages, personal deverbatives, instruments.

Class 8

Prefix *izi-*

This prefix has a variant *iz-* which occurs before vowel stems, e.g. *izando* 'hammers', *izalukazi* 'old women'; *izi-* occurs before consonant commencing stems.

Examples: *izicathulo* 'shoes', *izihlalo* 'seats', *izigijimi* 'messengers', *izinkwa* 'loaves of bread'

Main significances: plural of class 7.

Class 9

Prefix *in-*

in- has a variant *im-* which occurs before noun stems commencing with a labial consonant such as *b, p, f, v*, as in: *imbuzi* 'goat', *impisi* 'hyena', *imfene* 'baboon', *imvula* 'rain'; *in-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples: *intombi* 'girl', *inhliziyo* 'heart', *inkomo* 'head of cattle', *indlovu* 'elephant'

Main significances: animals, miscellaneous.

Class 10

Prefix *izin-*

izin- has a variant *izim-* which occurs before noun stems commencing with a labial consonant such as *b, p, f, v*, as in: *izimbongi* 'bard or professional praiser', *izimpahla* 'goods', *izimfiso* 'desires', *izimvu* 'sheep'; *izin-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples: *izinyoka* 'snakes', *izincwadi* 'books', *izinto* 'things', *izingubo* 'blankets'

Main significances: plural of class 9 and class 11.

Class 11

Prefix *ulu-*

The full prefix *ulu-* may occur before monosyllabic stems, but the variant *u-* is usually used as prefix of this class.

Examples: *ufudu* 'tortoise', *uthi/uluthi* 'stick', *ukhezo* 'spoon', *uhlanya* 'madman'

Main significances: miscellaneous - long objects.

Class 14

Prefix *ubu-*

This prefix has a variant *ub-* which occurs before vowel commencing stems, e.g. *uboya* 'wool, hair', *ubovu* 'pus'; *ubu-* occurs elsewhere. The bilabial in the prefix is palatalized in certain cases, e.g. *ubu-* + *-ala* > *utshwala* 'beer', *ubu-* + *-ani* > *utshani* 'grass'

Examples: *ubuso* 'face', *ubufana* 'boyhood', *ubuhlungu* 'pain', *ubusika* 'winter'

Main significances: miscellaneous - long objects, collectives, abstract nouns.

Class 15

Prefix *uku-*

This prefix has a variant *ukw-* which occurs before stems which commence with the vowels *a-* or *e-*, e.g. *ukwenza* 'to do', *ukwala* 'to refuse'. Another variant *uk-* is used before stems commencing with *o-*, e.g. *ukosa* 'to roast', *ukona* 'to sin'; *uku-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples: *ukudla* 'food, eating', *ukusebenza* 'to work', *ukufunda* 'to learn', *ukuthanda* 'to like, love'

Main significances: infinitives from verb stems.

Class 16

Prefix *pha-*

Although *pha-* is no longer used productively in Zulu in the formation of nouns, words with this prefix are used adverbially.

Examples: *phakathi* 'inside, in the middle', *phandle* 'outside', *phambili* 'in front', *phezulu* 'above'

Main significances: locative or adverbial significance.

Class 17

Prefix *uku-*

This prefix has a variant *ukw-* which occurs before vowel commencing stems, e.g. *ukwindla* 'autumn'; *uku-* occurs elsewhere.

Examples: *ukunto* 'something, anything, toy', *ukunene* 'right side', *ukunxele* 'left side'

Main significances: place (locative), time, indefinite material.

1.3 The formation of augmentatives and diminutives

Augmentatives and diminutives in Zulu are formed by adding various suffixes to nouns. The augmentative suffix is *-azi/-kazi* and the diminutive suffix is *-ana*. Note that in some of the examples below the notion of femininity may also be expressed by the suffix *-azi* (without any reference to augmentation). In some cases, certain phonological changes also take place when the diminutive suffix is added.

Examples of augmentatives:

<i>umuntu</i> 'person'	> <i>umuntukazi</i> 'huge person'
<i>unyawo</i> 'foot'	> <i>unyawokazi</i> 'huge foot'
<i>indlovu</i> 'elephant'	> <i>indlovukazi</i> 'elephant cow, queen mother'
<i>inkomo</i> 'head of cattle'	> <i>inkomazi</i> 'cow'
<i>umufu</i> 'fellow'	> <i>umfazi</i> 'woman' (also used derogatively)

Examples of diminutives:

<i>umuntu</i> 'person'	> <i>umntwana</i> 'child'
<i>inja</i> 'dog'	> <i>injana</i> 'small dog'
<i>umlomo</i> 'mouth'	> <i>umlonyana</i> 'small mouth'
<i>intaba</i> 'mountain'	> <i>intatshana</i> 'small mountain'

1.4 Adoptive nouns

Due to contact with Western civilization concepts, a number of nouns in Zulu have been adopted from other languages, most notably English and Afrikaans. When a noun is adopted from another language it usually undergoes some change or other in order to fit in with the phonological and/or morphological structure of the adopted language, in this case Zulu. So for example, adopted nouns would be placed into some noun class or other by virtue of their adopted prefix, and sounds are adapted to fit in with the Zulu sound system. Note the following examples:

<i>igalaji</i> (class 5) 'garage'
<i>ubhasikidi</i> (class 1a) 'basket'
<i>ingadi</i> (class 9) 'garden'
<i>iwolintshi</i> (class 5) 'orange'
<i>isipilinga</i> (class 7) 'spring'
<i>ibhulashi</i> (class 5) 'brush'
<i>itafula</i> (class 5) 'table' adopted from the Afrikaans 'tafel'
<i>isitaladi</i> (class 7) 'street' adopted from the Afrikaans 'straat'
<i>ikamelo</i> (class 5) 'room' adopted from the Afrikaans 'kamer'

(As an example of an adaptation, note how consonant clusters in English and Afrikaans are 'broken' by the insertion of a vowel in some of the above examples.)

2. THE ABSOLUTE PRONOUN

Generally speaking, the absolute pronoun in Zulu is a form that is used to refer to a noun in a discourse situation. In the case of the first and second persons they obviously refer to the equivalents of the English 'I/we' and 'you'. Examples: *mina* 'I', *thina* 'we', *wena* 'you (singular)', *nina* 'you (plural)'. As with the nominal system discussed in the previous section, absolute pronouns also occur in different classes and the choice of pronoun depends entirely on the class of the noun being referred to. Thus for example, if the noun being referred to is *umfana* 'boy' class 1, then the absolute pronoun of class 1 would be used to refer to this noun, namely *yena* 'he'. If the noun belongs to class 2, for example *abafana* 'boys', then the absolute pronoun of class 2 will be used, namely *bona* 'they'. The following is a list of absolute pronouns:

1st person singular:	<i>mina</i>
1st person plural:	<i>thina</i>
2nd person singular:	<i>wena</i>
2nd person plural:	<i>nina</i>
Class	
1	<i>umu-: yena</i>
2	<i>aba-: bona</i>
3	<i>umu-: wona</i>
4	<i>imi-: yona</i>
5	<i>ili-: lona</i>
6	<i>ama-: ona</i>
7	<i>isi-: sona</i>
8	<i>izi-: zona</i>
9	<i>in-: yona</i>
10	<i>izin-: zona</i>

11	<i>ulu-: lona</i>
14	<i>ubu-: bona</i>
15	<i>uku-: khona</i>
16/17	<i>pha-: khona</i>

(Note that the same absolute pronoun is used for noun classes 16 and 17. Generally speaking, and where applicable, this observation can be made about other parts of speech as well.)

Sometimes an absolute pronoun may occur together with a noun it refers to, to express the notion of contrast, for example:

Umfana yena uthanda inyama, kodwa intombazane yona ithanda inhlanzi
'As for the boy, he likes meat but as for the girl, she likes fish'

3. THE DEMONSTRATIVE

The primary function of the demonstrative in Zulu is to express the notion of deixis. Three positions of deixis are generally identifiable, namely 'this' close to the speaker, 'that' close to the addressee, and 'that over there' at a relative distance both from speaker and addressee. Once again the notion of class agreement is manifested with the demonstrative in that a demonstrative must agree in class with the noun being referred to. For example if the noun being referred to is *umfana* 'boy' class 1, then the demonstratives of class 1 must be used with this noun, namely *lo* 'this', *lowo* 'that' and *lowaya* 'that one over there'. If the noun being referred to is a noun of class 2, e.g. *abafana* 'boys' then the demonstratives of class 2 will be used, e.g. *laba* 'these', *labo* 'those' and *labaya* 'those over there'. The following is a list of demonstratives for the three basic positions referred to above:

Class	Position 1	Position 2	Position 3
1	<i>umu-: lo</i>	<i>lowo</i>	<i>lowaya</i>
2	<i>aba-: laba</i>	<i>labo</i>	<i>labaya</i>
3	<i>umu-: lo</i>	<i>lowo</i>	<i>lowaya</i>

4	<i>imi-</i> :	<i>le</i>	<i>leyo</i>	<i>leya</i>
5	<i>ili-</i> :	<i>leli</i>	<i>lelo</i>	<i>leliya</i>
6	<i>ama-</i> :	<i>la</i>	<i>lawo</i>	<i>lawaya</i>
7	<i>isi-</i> :	<i>lesi</i>	<i>leso</i>	<i>lesiya</i>
8	<i>izi-</i> :	<i>lezi</i>	<i>lezo</i>	<i>leziya</i>
9	<i>in-</i> :	<i>le</i>	<i>leyo</i>	<i>leya</i>
10	<i>izin-</i> :	<i>lezi</i>	<i>lezo</i>	<i>leziya</i>
11	<i>ulu-</i> :	<i>lolu</i>	<i>lolo</i>	<i>loluya</i>
14	<i>ubu-</i> :	<i>lobu</i>	<i>lobo</i>	<i>lobuya</i>
15	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>lokhu</i>	<i>lokho</i>	<i>lokhuya</i>
16/17	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>lokhu</i>	<i>lokho</i>	<i>lokhuya</i>

Demonstratives may either occur after the noun they refer to or before, thus for example one may say *abafana laba* or *laba bafana*. Note that in this last instance the initial vowel of the noun has been deleted. Obviously in a discourse situation a demonstrative can be used on its own to refer to a noun that has been previously mentioned. So for example, in a discussion about tables in a room, one would use the term *leli* 'this one' to refer to the *itafula* 'table' that is closest to the speaker.

4. THE QUALIFICATIVE

Qualificatives in Zulu are words which are used to qualify some noun or other. There are various types of qualificatives, namely the adjective, relative and enumerative. Each type has its own set of concords and stems and they are dealt with separately below.

4.1 The adjective

The following is a list of adjectival concords. Once again it should be stated here that the concord always agrees in class with the noun to which it refers.

Class

1	<i>umu-</i> :	<i>om(u)-</i>
2	<i>aba-</i> :	<i>aba-</i>
3	<i>umu-</i> :	<i>om(u)-</i>
4	<i>imi-</i> :	<i>emi-</i>
5	<i>ili-</i> :	<i>eli-</i>
6	<i>ama-</i> :	<i>ama-</i>
7	<i>isi-</i> :	<i>esi-</i>
8	<i>izi-</i> :	<i>ezin-/ezim-</i>
9	<i>in-</i> :	<i>en-/em-</i>
10	<i>izin-</i> :	<i>ezin-/ezim-</i>
11	<i>ulu-</i> :	<i>olu-</i>
14	<i>ubu-</i> :	<i>obu-</i>
15	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>oku-</i>
16/17	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>oku-</i>

There are a limited number of adjectival stems in Zulu, and these are as follows:

- bi* 'bad, ugly'
- hle* 'beautiful'
- de* 'long, high'
- ncane* 'small'
- ncinyane* 'small'
- nci* 'very small'
- khulu* 'big'
- sha* 'new, young'
- dala* 'old'
- fuphi*, -*fushane* 'short'
- ningi* 'much, many'
- ngaki?* 'how much/many?'
- nye* 'other/s, some'
- bili* 'two'

-*thathu* 'three'

-*ne* 'four'

-*hlanu* 'five'

The following are a few examples of the use of adjectives:

imali eningi 'a lot of money'

izicathulo ezintsha 'new shoes'

indaba embi 'an ugly matter'

amakati amahlanu 'five cats'

abanye abantu 'other people'

Other adjectives as they are known in English, are expressed in different ways in Zulu, for example by the relative and the enumerative which are discussed below.

4.2 The relative

The following is a list of relative concords and as can be seen, these differ from the adjectival concords above.

Class

1	<i>umu-</i>	<i>o-</i>
2	<i>aba-</i>	<i>aba-</i>
3	<i>umu-</i>	<i>o-</i>
4	<i>imi-</i>	<i>e-</i>
5	<i>ili-</i>	<i>eli-</i>
6	<i>ama-</i>	<i>a-</i>
7	<i>isi-</i>	<i>esi-</i>
8	<i>izi-</i>	<i>ezi</i>
9	<i>in-</i>	<i>e-</i>
10	<i>izin-</i>	<i>ezi-</i>
11	<i>ulu-</i>	<i>olu-</i>

14 *ubu-* *obu-*

15 *uku-* *oku-*

16/17 *uku-* *oku-*

Note that, in the case of the relative, concords also exist for the 1st and 2nd persons:

1st person singular: *engi-*

1st person plural: *esi-*

2nd person singular: *o-*

2nd person plural: *eni-*

As with the adjective there are a limited number of relative stems, such as the following:

-*manzi* 'wet'

-*bukhali* 'sharp'

-*buthuntu* 'blunt'

-*bomvu* 'red'

-*luhlaza* 'green'

-*mnyama* 'black'

-*mhlophe* 'white'

-*mnandi* 'pleasant, nice'

-*makhaza* 'cold'

The following are a few examples of the use of relatives:

izingubo ezimanzi 'wet blankets'

inyama ebomvu 'red meat'

ummese obuthuntu 'a blunt knife'

ukudla okumnandi 'nice food'

Relatives may also be based on verbal forms, e.g. 'a tired person'. Here in this example there is no basic adjectival or relative stem to express the English adjectival form 'tired'. In order to express this concept in Zulu, the Zulu verbal root *-khathal-* 'become tired' is used as the

base form, and a relative concord is prefixed to it together with what is called a relative suffix. Other phonological changes take place in the verbal form as well, the final result being:

umuntu okhathelayo

person rel conc.-verb-rel. suffix
'a tired person'.

4.3 The enumerative

The following is a list of enumerative concords. Note once again that these differ from the list of adjectival and relative concords.

Class

1	<i>umu-</i> :	<i>mu-</i>
2	<i>aba-</i> :	<i>ba-</i>
3	<i>umu-</i> :	<i>mu-</i>
4	<i>imi-</i> :	<i>mi-</i>
5	<i>ili-</i> :	<i>li-</i>
6	<i>ama-</i> :	<i>ma-</i>
7	<i>isi-</i> :	<i>si-</i>
8	<i>izi-</i> :	<i>zi-</i>
9	<i>in-</i> :	<i>i-/yi-</i>
10	<i>izin-</i> :	<i>zi-</i>
11	<i>ulu-</i> :	<i>lu-</i>
14	<i>ubu-</i> :	<i>bu-</i>
15	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>ku-</i>
16/17	<i>uku-</i> :	<i>ku-</i>

These concords occur only with four stems, namely *-nye* 'one', *-phi?* 'which', *-ni?* 'what kind?' and *-mbe* 'different, strange'.

The following are a few examples of the use of enumeratives:

umuntu munye 'one person'

ihhashi liphi? 'which horse?'

zimbuzi zini lezi? 'what kind of goats are these'

(i)zimbala zimbe 'different colours'

We can observe that the adjectives, relatives and enumeratives generally follow the noun they refer to in word order, for example, *umfana omude* 'the tall boy'. In a discourse situation however, *omude* may occur before the noun it refers to, but in such a case, it is used in a pronominal sense, e.g. *omude, umfana...* 'the tall one, boy that is...'. Furthermore, *omude* may occur on its own to refer to a previously mentioned noun in a discourse, thus taking on the significance of 'the tall one (referring to the boy already mentioned)'.

5. THE VERB

The verb is by far the most complex category in Zulu. The basic core of the verb is the verb root which carries the basic meaning. So for example a root such as *-sebenz-* expresses the meaning of 'work', and various prefixes and suffixes can be added to this root to form a fully fledged verb. Thus we can have a verb such as the following, emanating from the verb root *-sebenz-*: *ngizobasebenzela* 'I will work for them'. In this verb, the agglutinating structure of Zulu is well demonstrated. Various morphemes have been added to the root to express a complete verb. These morphemes are as follows: *ngi-* subject concord, first person singular; *-zo-* future tense morpheme; *-ba-* object concord, referring to an object noun of class 2; *-el-* a so-called applied extension which conveys the meaning of 'for'; *-a* is the suffix.

Generally speaking, a verb must show some agreement or other with the subject noun to which it refers. This is done by means of a subject concord. Note the following sentence examples where the subject concord is in bold:

Umfana uyasebenza
'The boy is working'

Abafana bayasebenza

'The boys are working'

Ixhegu liyasebenza

'The old man is working'

Isalukazi siyasebenza

'The old woman is working'

The following is a list of subject concords. In some cases the negative concord differs from the positive one (and these are reflected within brackets below):

Class 1	<i>u-</i>	(<i>-ka-</i>)
Class 1a	<i>u-</i>	(<i>-ka-</i>)
Class 2	<i>ba-</i>	
Class 2b	<i>ba-</i>	
Class 3	<i>u-</i>	(<i>-wu-</i>)
Class 4	<i>i-</i>	(<i>-yi-</i>)
Class 5	<i>li-</i>	
Class 6	<i>a-</i>	(<i>-wa-</i>)
Class 7	<i>si-</i>	
Class 8	<i>zi-</i>	
Class 9	<i>i-</i>	(<i>-yi-</i>)
Class 10	<i>zi-</i>	
Class 11	<i>lu-</i>	
Class 14	<i>bu-</i>	
Class 15	<i>ku-</i>	
Class 16/17	<i>ku-</i>	

Obviously verbs can also refer to first and second persons and the concords for these persons are as follows.

<i>ngi-</i>	'I'	plural <i>si-</i>	'we'
<i>u-</i>	'you'	plural <i>ni-</i>	'you'

Examples:

Ngiyasebenza

'I am working'

Siyasebenza

'We are working'

It should be mentioned that certain verb forms may not contain a subject concord. Here reference is made for example to imperative forms where a command is being expressed, for example:

Sebenza!

'Work!' (sg.)

Sebenzani!

'Work!' (pl.)

Note that in the above examples no concords are used. In the singular command the verb root *-sebenz-* occurs together with the suffix *-a*. In the plural a pluralizing suffix *-ni* is added on. Here are a few more examples:

Shayainja! (cf. root *-shay-*)

'Hit the dog!' (sg.)

Letha incwadi! (cf. root *-leth-*)

'Bring the letter!' (sg.)

Phuzani amanzi! (cf. root *-phuz-*)

'Drink water!' (pl.)

With roots that consist of a consonant/consonant cluster only, a specialized structure occurs where in the singular *-na* is added after the suffix *-a*, for instance:

Dlana ukudla! (cf. root *-dl-*)

'Eat the food!' (sg.)

An alternative form occurs where *yi-* is prefixed to the verb root, for example:

Yidla!
'Eat the food!' (sg.)

In the plural the double suffix *-nini* is added on to the suffix *-a*, e.g.

Dlanini! (cf. root *-dl-*)
'Eat!' (pl.)

The alternative form is *Yidlani!* where only *-ni* is added.

Negative commands may be expressed by the following structure:

Singular: *Musa + uku-R-a* (where R = verb root; + indicates word boundary), e.g.
Musa ukudla!
'Do not eat!' (sg.)

Plural: *Musani + uku-R-a*, e.g.
Musani ukudla!
'Do not eat!' (pl.)

Let us now turn again to verb forms which contain subject concords. These are the verb forms which express the various tenses in Zulu and can be summarized as follows:

5.1 The present tense

The present tense in Zulu is a relatively simple structure which can be reflected as follows:

Pos. SC-*ya*-R-*a*

Neg. *a*-SC-R-*i*

(SC = subject concord; R = verb root)

Examples:

USipho uyafunda (*-fund-* = verb root)
'Sipho is learning'

USipho akafundi
'Sipho is not learning'

Abantwana bayafunda
'The children are studying'

Abantwana abafundi
'The children are not studying'

In the positive, a shortened form occurs without the *-ya-* when the verb is followed by a noun, or in some instances, by an adverb, e.g.

USipho ufunda isiZulu
'Sipho is studying Zulu'

USipho ufunda kakhulu
'Sipho is studying hard'

5.2 The future tense

The future tense in Zulu has the following patterns:

Pos. SC-*zo*-R-*a*

Neg. *a*-SC-*zu*-R-*a*

Examples:

USipho uzofunda
'Sipho will study'

USipho akazufunda
'Sipho will not study'

Abantwana bazofunda
'The children will study'

Abantwana abazufunda
'The children will not study'

In the above positive pattern, *-yo-* can be used instead of *-zo-*; and in the negative pattern *-yu-* can be used instead of *-zu-*. (The difference is one that is associated with relative distance in time: *-zo-/zu-* referring to the near future as opposed to *-yo-/yu-* which refer to the distant future.)

5.3 The perfect tense (past tense)

The perfect or past tense in Zulu has the following pattern:

Pos. SC-R-*ile*

Neg. SC-R-*anga*

Examples:

USipho uhambile
'Sipho has left'

USipho akahambanga
'Sipho has not left'

In the positive a shortened form occurs with a suffix *-e* rather than *-ile* when the verb is followed by some object or other. Compare the following:

USipho ufundile
'Sipho has studied'

USipho ufunde isifundo
'Sipho has studied a lesson'

There is another tense called the stative which in the positive is similar to the perfect tense above. The stative unlike the perfect however, expresses a present state. The patterns are as follows:

Pos. SC-R-*ile*

Neg. *a*-SC-R-*ile*

This so-called stative tense is used only with certain roots which are called inchoative roots, for example the root *-lamb-* expresses the idea of becoming hungry, and the verb *ngilambile* literally means 'I have become hungry', which in fact expresses the concept 'I am hungry' (a present state). The negative is *angilambile* 'I am not hungry'. There are a restricted number of inchoative roots in Zulu and in some cases variants or allomorphs of the *-ile* suffix occur, for example the root *-khathal-* 'become tired' becomes *-khathele* and not *-khathalile* in the stative, hence *ngikhathele* 'I am tired'. Here a variant form of *-ile* namely *-i...e* occurs where the *i* merges or coalesces with the last *-a* of *-khathal-* and *-e* is added on to the end.

Another variant of *-ile* is *-i* which occurs for example with the root *-esuth-* 'become full (of food)', hence *ngesuthi* 'I am full'; *angesuthi* 'I am not full'.

5.4 The past tense with *-a*

There is another tense in Zulu which expresses a past action and its structure can be represented as follows:

Pos. SC-*a*-R-*a*

Neg. *a*-SC-*a*-R-*a*

(The vowel *-a-* after the subject concord in both the positive and the negative is a long vowel.)

Examples:

Ngabona uthisha ngeviki elidlulileyo
'I saw the teacher last week'

This past tense is usually used to refer to actions which took place more than a day before the time of utterance, and the perfect is used to refer to an action that occurred closer to the time of utterance. However, there are no hard and fast rules regarding the exact usage or choice of tense, and other external factors such as the discourse situation and the conceptual

interpretation of the event appear to play a role as well.

The above can be regarded as the basic monoverbal tenses of Zulu which occur in main clauses. As was noted, the subject concord is obligatorily used in each of these tenses. But there is yet another concord that can be used in each of these tense forms, namely an object concord, which as can be expected, refers to some object noun or other. For example one can say *Umfana uzoyishaya (inja)* 'the boy will hit it (the dog)', where the object concord *-yi-* is incorporated in the verb to refer to the noun *inja* 'dog', which may have occurred in the discourse. The noun *inja* 'dog' can also co-occur with the object concord. As with subject concords, the object concord must agree in class with the noun that is referred to, and the following is a list of the object concords:

Class 1 & 1a	<i>-m(u)-</i>
Class 2 & 2b	<i>-ba-</i>
Class 3	<i>-wu-</i>
Class 4	<i>-yi-</i>
Class 5	<i>-li-</i>
Class 6	<i>-wa-</i>
Class 7	<i>-si-</i>
Class 8	<i>-zi-</i>
Class 9	<i>-yi-</i>
Class 10	<i>-zi-</i>
Class 11	<i>-lu-</i>
Class 14	<i>-bu-</i>
Class 15	<i>-ku-</i>
Class 16/17	<i>-ku-</i>

The object concords for the first and second persons are as follows:

<i>-ngi-</i>	'me'	plural	<i>-si-</i>	'us'
<i>-ku-</i>	'you'	plural	<i>-ni-</i>	'you'

Although the above verbs may be recognized as the basic monoverbal forms for Zulu, there are other tenses that are more complex in nature and which can be formed by combining a so-called auxiliary verb with a complement. For example one can say,

Uzobe epheka uma befika kusasa
'She will be cooking when they arrive tomorrow'

Here the auxiliary verb root *-b-* combines with the following complement to form what has been commonly called the future continuous tense. Similarly there is a past continuous tense which is also complex in nature, e.g.

Ngibe ngidlala ngo-10
'I was playing at 10'

(A contracted form of this past continuous tense also occurs, e.g. *bengidlala*)

5.5 Other verb forms

There are a number of verb forms which occur in subordinate clauses and these are outlined below:

5.5.1 The participial

The participial is a verb form which primarily expresses an action that is simultaneous with the action of the main verb, and has the following structure:

Pos. SC-R-*a*

Neg. SC-*nga*-R-*i*

(The subject concords are the same as those listed earlier, with the exception of classes 1, 2 and 6 where *e-*, *be-*, and *e-* occur respectively.)

Examples:

Ngababona bedlala
I-them-saw they-play
'I saw them playing'

Sometimes conjunctions introduce the participial clause, e.g. *uma, nxa, noma, lapho*

Abafana bazokhuluma namantombazane uma efika
'The boys will talk to the girls when they (the girls) arrive'

5.5.2 The subjunctive

The subjunctive verb form has the following structure:

Pos. SC-R-*e*

Neg. SC-*nga*-R-i

The subjunctive may be used in different contexts, the most important of which can be summarised as follows:

1. This verb form is primarily used to express the second and subsequent verb in a series of present or future consecutive actions. Examples:

USipho uvuka ngo-7 aphuze itiy e emsebenzini
'Sipho wakes up at 7, drinks tea and goes to work'

USipho uzovuka ngo-7 aphuze itiy e emsebenzini
'Sipho will wake up at 7, drink tea and go to work'

(Note the the subject concord of class 1 here is *a-*)

2. Sometimes it occurs after certain conjunctions, for example *ukuze* 'so that; in order to', *ukuba* 'that'. Examples:

Abafana bafunda ukuze baphumelele
'The boys study in order to pass'

3. The subjunctive may be used to translate the English 'should', e.g.

Ngicabanga ukuthi usize isalukazi
'I think that you should help the old lady'

4. The subjunctive may express a polite request and in such cases a so-called hortative prefix may be used before it, e.g.

Maningisize
'Please help me'

where *ma-* is the hortative prefix.

An alternative way of expressing a request is to use *ake* or its shortened form *ak'* followed by the subjunctive, e.g.

Ake ungene or *Ak' ungene*
'Please enter'

There is another verb form which expresses sequences of actions and which has the structure SC-*a*-R-*a* and SC-*nga*-R-*a*. The *a-* after the the SC is a short vowel not to be confused with the remote past discussed earlier. This verb form usually expresses past consecutive actions, although it may also be used for present consecutive actions such as in sport commentaries. Example:

Abafana bafike izolo bakhuluma nothisha
'The boys arrived yesterday and spoke to the teacher'

Yasho igongo yathi ngo-ngo-ngo! Zasukuma izinsizwa zawabeka phansi amathawula, zasondelana, zachawulisana (Extracted from Taljaard & Bosch, 1993:60)
'The gong sounds. The young men get up and put down their towels, they approach one another, they shake hands.'

5.6 Verbal extensions

The basic meaning of a verb root can be modified in different ways by merely adding certain suffixes to a verb root. In other words if we were to take a verb root such as *-bon-* 'see' and we were to add a suffix such as *-el-* to it, then the basic meaning of 'see' would be altered slightly to convey the significance of 'see for'. This type of suffix which modifies the basic meaning of the verb root is commonly known as an extension. A number of extensions occur in Zulu, each with its own significance and some of these are indicated below. In traditional works, specific terms have been used to refer to these extensions. For example:

-el- applied extension; conveys the significance of 'for/on behalf of', e.g. *-thengel-* 'buy for'; *-phekel-* 'cook for'.

-is- causative extension; conveys the significance of 'cause to do', e.g. *-bonis-* 'cause to see, i.e. show'; *-vukis-* 'cause to wake up, i.e. awaken'

-an- reciprocal extension; conveys the significance of 'one another', e.g. *-bonan-* 'see one another'; *-shayan-* 'hit one another'

-w/-iw- passive extension, e.g. *-bonw-* 'be seen'; *-thengw-* 'be bought' (the *-iw-* form occurs with roots of a consonant or consonant cluster only, e.g. *-dliw-* 'be eaten')

-akal/-ek- neuter extension, best translated by the English 'able/ible; some roots take *-akal-* and others *-ek-*', e.g. *-bonakal-* 'be visible'; *-tholakal-* 'obtainable'; *-thandek-* 'be lovable'

5.7 Auxiliary verbs

Auxiliary verbs are verbs which cannot stand on their own and which must have some complement or other following them. Many auxiliary verbs occur in Zulu, the most common of which is the auxiliary verb stem *-ba-*, which as noted earlier, occurs in compound tenses. An auxiliary verb usually governs the verb form of the complement, whether it be infinitive,

participial or subjunctive. Hereunder follow a few examples of auxiliary verbs with their complements:

1. Those followed by the infinitive -

Ngifuna ukuhamba nawe
'I want to go with you'

Umfana uthanda ukudlala ibhola
'The boy likes to play ball'

2. Those followed by the participial -

Umntwana ulibele ekhala ebusuku
'The child always cries at night'

Ude enza lokhu
'She always does this'

3. Those followed by the subjunctive -

Kufanele nibuye
'You ought to return'

Udokotela uphinde abuze
'The doctor asked again'

6. THE ADVERB

Adverbs in general tell us more about the action expressed by the verb. In other words, they tell us more about when, where, how and why an action takes place. In Zulu, adverbs are formed in different ways. For example there are certain nouns that can be used as adverbs such as *izolo* 'yesterday'. Nouns of classes 16 and 17 which are commonly known as the locative noun classes, may also be used as adverbs. We refer here to forms such as *phakathi* 'inside', *phandle* 'outside', *phezulu* 'above', *kude* 'far away' and *kudala* 'long ago'.

The most common way of forming adverbs in Zulu is by making use of numerous prefixes and/or suffixes. Traditionally the different adverbs formed in this way had been assigned names according to the type of affix used. So for example the so-called associative adverb is formed by prefixing *na-* to a base which is normally nominal in nature, and the significance conveyed is one of association, 'with, together with'. When this prefix is used, certain phonological changes take place between the vowel of this prefix and the initial vowel of the base resulting in what is commonly referred to as vowel coalescence. More will be said about this when we deal with the sound system. In brief, the changes are as follows: $a + a > a$; $a + u > o$; and $a + i > e$. These changes will also be noted with the other adverbial prefixes that will follow in this section. Examples of associative adverbs:

Ugogo uhanba noSipho
'Grandmother is walking with Sipho'

UJoji udlala nenja
'George is playing with the dog'.

The instrumental adverb is formed by prefixing *nga-* to some or other base and the significance conveyed here is 'by means of':

Ngihamba ngebhasi
'I travel by bus'

Umfana udla ngemfologo
'The boy eats with a fork (lit. by means of)'

This prefix is also used with the names of the days of the week and names of the months to express 'on/during' e.g.

ngoMsombuluko 'on Monday'
ngoDisemba 'during December'

Then there are the so-called locative adverbs which convey the significance of 'at, to, from, in', depending on the context. They are formed by means of the prefixes *e-/o-*. In some cases the suffixes *-eni/-ini* co-occur with these prefixes. So for example, the following nouns

take only a locative prefix:

<i>iGoli</i> 'Johannesburg'	>	<i>eGoli</i>
<i>iPitoli</i> 'Pretoria'	>	<i>ePitoli</i>
<i>ijele</i> 'jail'	>	<i>ejele</i>
<i>ikhaya</i> 'home'	>	<i>ekhaya</i>
<i>umhlane</i> 'back'	>	<i>emhlane</i>
<i>isitolo</i> 'shop'	>	<i>esitolo</i>
<i>ubusika</i> 'winter'	>	<i>ebusika</i>

The prefix *o-* usually occurs with nouns of class 11, e.g.

<i>ulwandle</i> 'sea/ocean'	>	<i>olwandle</i> (can also be <i>elwandle</i>)
<i>oKhahlamba</i> 'Drakensberg mountains'	>	<i>oKhahlamba</i>

The following are examples of locative adverbs where the prefix occurs together with a suffix. The suffix *-eni* occurs with nouns that end in *-a*, *-e* or *-o*. With nouns ending in *-o*, *-eni* becomes *-weni*. Examples:

<i>indlela</i> 'road'	>	<i>endleleni</i>
<i>indlebe</i> 'ear'	>	<i>endlebeni</i>
<i>into</i> 'thing'	>	<i>entweni</i>

The suffix *-ini* occurs with nouns ending in *-i* and *-u*. With nouns ending in *-u*, *-ini* becomes *-wini*.

<i>umsebenzi</i> 'work'	>	<i>emsebenzini</i>
<i>isikhathi</i> 'time'	>	<i>esikhathini</i>
<i>inkukhu</i> 'chicken'	>	<i>enkukwini</i>

In certain cases, namely when the final consonant of a noun is bilabial, phonological changes take place. So for example, a *b* consonant changes to *tsh*:

ingubo 'blanket' > *engutsheni*

Such phonological changes may be summarized as follows:

<i>b</i>	>	<i>tsh</i>	:	<i>imvubu</i>	>	<i>emvutshini</i>	'at/on the sjambok'
<i>bh</i>	>	<i>j</i>	:	<i>isigubhu</i>	>	<i>esigujini</i>	'at/in the calabash'
<i>ph</i>	>	<i>sh</i>	:	<i>impuphu</i>	>	<i>emphushini</i>	'at/in the mealie meal'
<i>m</i>	>	<i>ny</i>	:	<i>umlomo</i>	>	<i>emlonyeni</i>	'at/on/in the mouth'
<i>mb</i>	>	<i>nj</i>	:	<i>umthombo</i>	>	<i>emthonjeni</i>	'at/in the fountain'
<i>mp</i>	>	<i>ntsh</i>	:	<i>isampompo</i>	>	<i>esampontshini</i>	'at/on the bag of grass'

Classes 1a/2b deserve special mention in that they differ from other classes when adverbs are formed from them. The prefix *ku-* occurs with class 1a nouns, e.g. *kubaba*, *kumama*, and *k-* occurs with corresponding plurals in class 2b e.g. *kobaba*, *komama* etc. There is also a prefix *kwa-* which occurs as a locative prefix in certain place names e.g. *kwaZulu* 'in Zululand'.

Adverbs may also be formed from absolute pronouns, where the prefix *ku-/ki-* is prefixed to the pronoun. *ki-* is used with the pronouns *mi(na)*, *thi(na)* and *ni(na)*, e.g. *kimi*, *kithi*, *kini*. *ku-* occurs with other pronouns, e.g. *kuve(na)*, *kubo(na)*, *kuso(na)*. The prefix *ku-* also occurs with demonstratives, e.g. *kuleli* 'to/at/on this one' (class 5).

Comparative adverbs are formed in Zulu by using the prefixes *njenga-*, *kuna-* and *nganga-*. (The rules of coalescence as mentioned earlier, apply here as well.)

Njenga- conveys the meaning of 'like', e.g.

Badlala njengabantwana
'They play like children'

The prefix *kuna-* conveys the meaning of 'more than', e.g.

Indoda ihamba kakhulu kunenkosikazi
lit. 'the man walks fast more than the woman, i.e. faster'
'The man walks faster than the woman'

Nganga- expresses a comparison of size, shape, length, e.g.

Umfowethu unangoSipho
'My brother is as big as Sipho'

7. THE IDEOPHONE

The ideophone is a fascinating word category and it is sometimes difficult to identify its linguistic counterpart in other languages such as for example English. Before we look at any definitions of this category, consider some examples of sentences in which ideophones are found. As will be noted, it is sometimes difficult to provide literal translations for the ideophones, e.g.

Isivalo sivalwe ngci
'The door is closed tightly'

Inkabi ithi gxumbu emanzini
'The ox plunges into the water'

Insimbi yakhala yathi nqe nqe
'The bell tolled with a ringing sound'

As may be noted from the above sentences, the ideophone makes some reference or other to a sound produced in the carrying out of the actions concerned. It is for this reason that many linguists defined the ideophone in terms of its "sound" characteristics. As Poulos (1990:416) notes: "In fact the very name "ideophone" combines the notion of "idea" and "phone" (the word "phone" being the Greek for "sound"). Thus the ideophone to a large extent is onomatopoeic in nature. The term onomatopoeia is defined as "the formation of words whose sound is imitative of the sound of the noise or action designated, such as *hiss*" (Collins Concise Dictionary, 1986:788).

However, not all ideophones are onomatopoeic in nature, as can be seen in the following examples:

Ilokwe lalo mfazi libomvu klebu
'The dress of this woman is very red'

Le ndwangu imhlophe thwa
'This cloth is snow white'

As Doke (1935:118) notes, the ideophone is descriptive in nature. He refers to this word category as "...one which describes a predicate, qualificative or adverb in respect to manner, colour, sound, smell, action, state or intensity." An interesting observation that one can make about ideophones in Zulu is that they very often occur after the verb stem *-thi*. So for example,

Nomfana uthe bhabhalala elele
'The boy sleeps flat on his stomach'

Insimbi yakhala yathi nqe nqe
'The bell tolled with a ringing sound'

From a phonological point of view, ideophones reveal interesting characteristics in that for example, many of them are monosyllabic in nature. The occurrence of monosyllabic forms is unusual in Zulu; in fact there is a general antipathy towards them. The vowel of the ideophone is very often lengthened for more effect. Sometimes ideophones are also duplicated for example, *bhaxabhaxa* in the sentence:

Inzinkabi zihamba bhaxabhaxa
'The oxen are sloshing through the mud'

8. THE IDENTIFYING COPULATIVE

The identifying copulative is a construction which translates the English verb 'to be' with a following nominal form. We refer here to examples such as, 'Sipho is a teacher' *USipho*

nguthisha, 'His father is a chief' *Uyise yinkosi*. As can be seen from the above examples, a type of a prefix (sometimes called a copula) occurs before the noun in order to express this kind of verb 'to be' construction. There are numerous variant forms of this prefix, inter alia *ng-*, *y-*, *l-* and *w-*. The choice of variant is determined largely by: i) the initial vowel of the noun; and ii) the class of the noun. For example *w-* and *ng-* occur with nouns commencing in *u-*:

Ngumuntu or *Wumuntu*
'It is a person'

Furthermore, *ng-* occurs with nouns commencing in *a-* or *o-*, e.g.

Ngamanzi
'It is water'

Ngobaba
'It is father and company'

As a general rule, *y-* occurs before nouns commencing in *i-*, e.g.

Yisitsha
'It is a dish'

Yinja
'It is a dog'

Alternatively *l-* may occur with nouns of class 5 and class 11, e.g.

Lihhashi
'It is a horse'

Luluthi
'It is a stick'

In speech the prefix can be left out completely, but in such cases tonal changes take place on the initial vowel of the noun. Briefly speaking, the tone on the initial vowel becomes low when forming a copulative construction. So for example, the noun *úmúntu* (HHL) 'a

person' becomes *umuntu* (LHL) 'it is a person'. One other observation we can make about the use of the copulative construction is that a subject concord may be used before the abovementioned prefixes where reference is made to some previously mentioned subject, e.g.

Uyinkosi

'He is a chief' (referring to my father)

The negative form may be formed in different ways, the simplest of which is the following structure: *a*-SC-CP-noun, where CP is the copulative prefix, e.g.

Akuyinkabi

'It is not an ox'

Anginguthisha

'I am not a teacher'

Alternatively one could use a more complex construction such as the following:

Akusiyo inkabi

'It is not an ox',

where an additional formative *-si-* co-occurs with an absolute pronoun. This construction appears to express more emphasis.

Future and past tenses of the identifying copulative also occur and these involve the use of the verb *-ba* 'to be', followed by a complement which contains the copulative prefix, e.g.

Ngizoba nguthisha

'I will be/become a teacher'

Ngaba nguthisha

'I was/became a teacher'

9. THE DESCRIPTIVE COPULATIVE

The descriptive copulative construction translates the English verb 'to be' but serves to express some or other attribution or description of the subject. It is therefore based on word categories such as the adjective and relative.

- With adjectives

This construction translates an English sentence such as the following:

'This boy is tall'

Lo mfana mude

Note here that only the second part of the adjectival concord is used, i.e. *mu-* together with the stem *-de*. With first and second persons, the subject concord is used as well, for example

Ngimusha

'I am young'

Umuhle

'You (sg.) are beautiful'

In these two instances the adjectival concord of class 1 occurs after the subject concord. With the 1st and 2nd person plural forms, the adjectival concord of class 2 is used, e.g.

Sibasha

'We are young'

Nibahle

'You (pl.) are young'

The negative of this construction is simply formed by adding the negative prefix *a-*, e.g.

Lo mfana akamude

'This boy is not tall'

Angimusha

'I am not young'

Awumuhle

'You are not beautiful'

- With relatives

In the positive the subject concord is merely prefixed to the relative stem, e.g.

Ummese ubuthuntu

'The knife is blunt'

Umgwaqo ubanzi

'The road is wide'

The negative is simply formed by using the negative prefix before the subject concord, e.g.

Ummese abuthuntu

'The knife is not blunt'

Umgwaqo awubanzi

'The road is not wide'

Under the heading of descriptive copulative, linguists have traditionally also incorporated constructions which are based on locatives, e.g.

Usekhaya neg. *Akasekhaya*

'She is at home'

Ubaba useGoli neg. *ubaba akaseGoli*

'Father is in Johannesburg'

Alternatively the negative may contain the demonstrative *kho(na)* followed by the locative, for example:

Akekho ekhaya

'She is not at home'

Ubaba akekho eGoli

'My father is not in Johannesburg'

10. EXPRESSION OF POSSESSION

Traditionally the semantic expression of possession has been dealt with in terms of the so-called possessive word category. This word category has been analysed morphologically as one which consists of possessive concord and some base or other. The list of possessive concords is as follows:

Class 1	<i>wa-</i>	Class 2	<i>ba-</i>
Class 3	<i>wa-</i>	Class 4	<i>ya-</i>
Class 5	<i>la-</i>	Class 6	<i>a-</i>
Class 7	<i>sa-</i>	Class 8	<i>za-</i>
Class 9	<i>ya-</i>	Class 10	<i>za-</i>
Class 11	<i>hwa-</i>		
Class 14	<i>ba-</i>		
Class 15	<i>kwa-</i>		
Class 16/17	<i>kwa-</i>		

So for example an English phrase such as the following: 'The chief's cattle' would in Zulu be expressed by *Izinkomo zenkosi* 'The cattle of the chief'. (Note the process of vowel coalescence between *za-* + *inkosi*.) The following are a few more examples:

Amaphephandaba omfana

'The newspapers of the boy'

Ibhuku lentombazana

'The book of the girl'

Isicathulo sengane

'The shoe of the child'

Abantwana bothisha

'The children of the teacher'

Note that the base in each of the above examples is a noun. Other word categories may also function as bases, such as for example pronouns, demonstratives, locatives:

inja yami 'my dog'

inja yalo mfana 'the dog of this boy'

abantwana basesikoleni 'children of the school'

It is interesting to note that a variant form of the possessive concord occurs when the base is a noun of class 1a, e.g.

izicathulo zikamama 'shoes of my mother'

inja kababa 'the dog of my father'

The full list of possessive concords with this class is as follows:

Class 1	<i>ka-</i>	Class 2	<i>baka-</i>
Class 3	<i>ka-</i>	Class 4	<i>ka-</i>
Class 5	<i>lika-</i>	Class 6	<i>ka-</i>
Class 7	<i>sika-</i>	Class 8	<i>zika-</i>
Class 9	<i>ka-</i>	Class 10	<i>zika-</i>
Class 11	<i>luka-</i>		
Class 14	<i>buka-</i>		
Class 15	<i>kuka-</i>		
Class 16/17	<i>kuka-</i>		

Recent research conducted by Bosch (1995) has highlighted the shortcomings of the traditional recognition of a word category *possessive* in Zulu and has advocated a whole new approach which is based on cognitive/semantic principles. Bosch (1995) rightly observes that the traditional possessive word category does not account for the many ways in which the concept possession can be expressed in Zulu. There are in fact various constructions which can express possession and these she plots on a continuum with an extreme pole on the left which is nominal in character, and another pole on the right which is verbal.

N NN NVN NV

<----->

As Bosch (1995) notes, there are certain lexical items such as nouns which express the concept possession, e.g.

ubaba 'my father'

umama 'my mother'

and these are represented by N on the continuum above.

Nouns in juxtaposition (NN) also reveal possession in examples such as the following:

USipho ugeza umntwana ubuso
lit. Siphso washes the boy the face
'Siphso washes the boy's face'

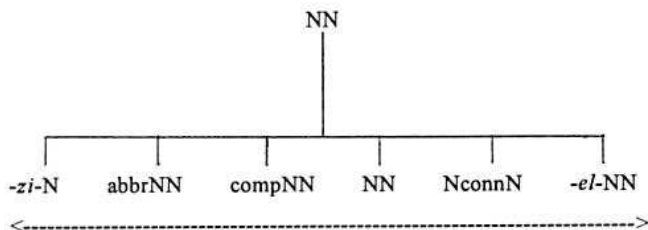
Then there is the so-called associative copulative construction represented by NVN in sentences such as the following:

Umfana unenja
'The boy has a dog'

Finally there are certain verbs (V) which express the notion of possession, e.g. *-fuy-* in a sentence such as the one below. (The verb root *-fuy-* on its own conveys the significance of 'to own stock'.)

Umakhelwane ufuyile
'The neighbour has many cattle'

The multi-faceted nature of the NN construction was also investigated in her study and a number of variables were postulated on a sub-continuum:



In brief each of these variables may be interpreted as follows:

-zi-N - reflexive prefix plus noun, e.g.

Intombazane izipenda ubuso
'The girl paints her face'

abbrNN - compound nouns containing an initial abbreviated/reduced form of noun,
e.g.

usomashibhini 'shebeen owner'

compNN - compound nouns, e.g.

umninipulazi 'farm owner'

NN - nouns in juxtaposition, e.g.

Udokotela uvula umntwana umlomo
'The doctor opens the child's mouth'

NconnN - nouns connected by a possessive concord, e.g.

inja yomfana 'the boy's dog'

-el-N - applied extension followed by nouns in juxtaposition, e.g.

Izisebenzi zamtshontshela ubaba izithelo
'The workers stole father's fruit'

As was demonstrated in her work, the continuum approach provides a more holistic perspective on the nature of possession in Zulu and her analysis interestingly enough reveals

many other facets such as for example the concepts of inherent possession on the left side of the continuum versus established possession on the right.

11. INTERJECTIONS

The interjection is a word category used to convey emotions. Like the ideophone, the structure of the interjection in Zulu has a fixed form and does not show any agreement with any other word category in an utterance. In fact the interjection can be used on its own, independent of any other word category. The following are a few examples of interjections in Zulu:

(i) Expressing agreement or permission:

ehee! 'yes/that's right/ I agree'

yebo! 'yes/ OK'

(ii) Expressing denial, negation or refusal:

chal/qhal! 'no/never/not at all'

yeka! 'stop/leave alone'

hhayi! 'no/don't/stop'

-bo may be suffixed to the above words to convey a stronger meaning.

(iii) Expressing surprise, joy or disappointment:

hhawu! (strong disapproval or angry surprise)

maye! (surprise, dismay, sympathy)

12. TYPOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON ZULU LINGUISTIC STUDIES

Of late, researchers have become more and more aware of the importance of typological considerations for solving language-specific problems in Zulu. Typology involves a

comparison of languages and entails in many cases a consideration of a historical or diachronic perspective of relevant issues. Some of these, pertaining to Zulu, are discussed below.

12.1 The relative suffix

In Zulu there is a relative suffix *-yo* which is used when relatives are based on verbal forms, e.g.

Umfana osebenzayo
'A boy who is working'

Insizwa esebenzayo
'A young man who is working'

Although its use is not compulsory in certain tense forms, its true nature has never been clear in traditional linguistic studies. However, a comparison of this suffix with its occurrence in other sister languages serves to throw much light on its origin.

By way of introduction we may note that the relative suffix *-yo* is an invariable form, which means that it does not change in form. Interestingly enough if one had to look at Swahili, a very significant observation can be made regarding the occurrence of the relative suffix. In Swahili the relative suffix is not invariable in form. It in fact agrees in class with the antecedent. On further investigation it becomes clear that the relative suffix in Swahili is actually an anaphoric pronoun, e.g.

Swahili
mtu asomaye 'a man who reads'
kengele iliayo 'a bell which rings'

In the first example, the so-called relative suffix *-ye* agrees in class with *mtu*, and in the second, *-yo* agrees with *kengele*.

In an article entitled "Instances of semantic bleaching in South-Eastern Bantu", Poulos (1986) hypothesized that the Zulu relative suffix has its origins in the anaphoric pronoun. He argues that through the process of semantic bleaching the anaphoric pronoun as it is expressed in Swahili, has developed into an invariable form. Semantic bleaching is a process whereby the most general form becomes invariable in nature. It is known that class 9 is recognized as a general class in Zulu and it is therefore this form *-yo* which has been selected as the invariable form. Another general class in Zulu is class 17 and it is thus not surprising that a variant relative suffix occurs, namely *-kho*. So that one can also say,

umfana osebenzakhho 'a boy who is working'
insizwa esebenzakhho 'a young man who is working'

12.2 The reflexive prefix

There is a grammatical formative in Zulu which can occur in verbs and which like the relative suffix, is invariable in form. We refer here to the reflexive prefix *-zi-* in examples such as the following:

Inkosikazi yazigeza
'The woman washed herself'

USipho wazikhohlisa
'Sipho cheated himself'

As can be seen from the above examples, the prefix *-zi-* does not change in form and its exact nature and origin have always been problematic. In her doctoral thesis Bosch (1995) makes certain interesting observations about the possible origins of this prefix by looking at other languages in the same family. She notes for example, that in Babungo, a Bantu language spoken in the North-Western zone, a reflexive relationship is actually expressed by using a lexical item for 'body' plus a possessive pronoun, e.g.

Babungo
m əs ð *ŋw āā* *ŋw āā*
I wash-pf body my
'I washed myself'

(where pf = perfective).

In another language Londo, also of the North-Western zone, the word for 'body' is used on its own, e.g.

Londo
 ò-' sà-kpém-i -ndò
 you s.-NEG-watch out pf 9-body
 'you don't watch out for yourself'

Yet another Bantu language, Chimwi:ni, spoken in the North-Eastern zone, uses the word *nu:hu* meaning 'soul/spirit' followed by a possessive pronoun ending to express reflexiveness, e.g.

Chimwi:ni
 mw-ana ø- tum- iŋ-e nu:hu-y-e
 child SP-bite-T2-TV soul-his
 'The child bit himself'

(where SP = subject prefix; T2 = tense marker; TV = terminal vowel).

From these interesting observations she hypothesizes that a possible origin of the reflexive prefix in Zulu could well have been in lexical items expressing 'body/spirit/soul'. As she notes, Guthrie has postulated proto-forms for these lexical items as follows:

'body'
 *bidi, *-djimba, (*-dutu, *-jutu) *-yutu (Guthrie, 1971:147)
 'spirit'
 *-djmu, *-kitj, (*-pepo) (Guthrie, 1971:154)

What we have here then is a situation where an invariable grammatical formative has evolved from a fully fledged lexical item. This process is commonly referred to in contemporary studies as grammaticalization and is a process which can through a diachronic perspective, throw much light on the exact status of grammatical Zulu today. In fact it could be argued that the Zulu relative suffix referred to earlier has also evolved through a process of grammaticalization (in addition to that of semantic bleaching) in that it also evolved from a

lexical item namely an anaphoric pronoun.

12.3 The diminutive

A process of grammaticalization can also be observed in the evolution of the diminutive suffix *-ana* as it occurs in Zulu, e.g.

umntwana 'child'

injana 'small dog'

Poulos (1986) observes that a lexical item *-ana* in certain Bantu languages expresses the meaning of 'child' e.g.

Chewa

<i>mwana</i>	class 1	'child'
<i>ana</i>	class 2	'children'

Venda

<i>nwana</i>	class 1	'child'
<i>vhana</i>	class 2	'children'

Southern Sotho

<i>ngwana</i>	class 1	'child'
<i>bana</i>	class 2	'children'

He postulates that this lexical item with the proto-form **-yana* (Guthrie, 1971) became a grammatical formative through a process of grammaticalization in a language such as Zulu. Furthermore he states that the process of semantic bleaching has also been operative in this instance since it is quite clear that the general feature of diminution or smallness of size (as expressed by 'child') has been retained by the diminutive suffix *-ana*.

Con- tinuant	Appro- ximant	V	M	P			w			j			
Con- tinuant	Nasal	V	N	P	m	ɱ		n		ɲ		ŋ	
Con- tinuant	Trill	V	M	P				r					

A - Aspirated	N - Nasal
BV - Breathy Voice	P - Pulmonic
G - Glottalic	PV - Partially Voiced
L - Lateral	V - Voiced
M - Medial	VL - Voiceless

Table of Clicks:

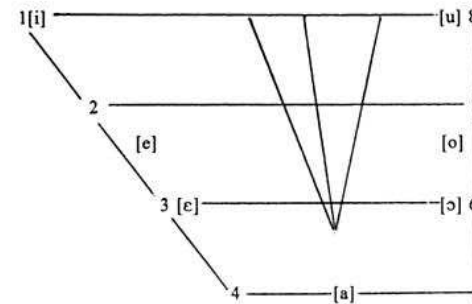
Manner of articulation Place of articulation

	Dental	Palatal	Alveo-lateral
VL		ʃ	ɬ
A	ʃh	ʃh	ʃh
V	lg	ʃg	lg
N	ɱ	ɱʃ	ɱ

13.2 Vowels

The vowel system of Zulu is simple in the sense that there are only five vowels, the high vowels being *i* and *u*, the mid-vowel being *o*, and the low vowels being *a* and *e*. The symmetry prevailing between the vowels not only pertains to height but to front versus back as well. Thus it can be noted that *i* and *e* are front vowels, *a* is a central vowel and *u* and *o* are back vowels. These vowels are plotted below on a vowel diagram. The numbers refer to the positions of the so-called cardinal vowels and these are used here to act as reference points.

The following is a chart of the Zulu vowel system:



i - *ukulima*

e - *ukuthenga*

a - *ukulala*

u - *ukuya*

o - *ukuloba*

It can be noted here that the two mid-vowels have slightly raised variants in certain environments. Thus a raised variant of *e* and *o* occurs when the vowel in the next syllable is a high vowel in words such as the following:

ngithengi

ababoni

13.3 Sound changes

Sound changes constitute an important aspect of the sound system of Zulu. It is often the case that a sound would undergo some change or other when brought into contact with another sound due to incompatibility. In some cases it is merely the influence of a particular sound which causes a change. Some of these sound changes are listed below.

1. The homorganic nasal of class 9 usually causes a change when followed by certain sounds. Note for example how the aspirated sounds below become unaspirated and ejected under the influence of this nasal:

$N + ph [p^h] > mp [mp]$ *impendulo* 'an answer, reply' cf. *-phendul-* 'answer'

$N + th [t^h] > nt [nt]$ *intengo* 'price' cf. *-theng-* 'buy'

2. The passive extension *w* also causes certain changes when it occurs after certain consonants. Examples:

$p [p'] + -(i)w- > tsh [tʃ]$
-tap- 'extract, draw out' $>$ *-tatshw-*

$ph [p^h] + -(i)w- > sh [ʃ]$
-boph- 'tie' $>$ *-boshw-*

3. The diminutive extension *-ana* causes sound changes when suffixed to a noun stem that ends in a syllable which contains a bilabial, e.g.

$-b- [β] > -tsh- [tʃ]$ *indaba* $>$ *indatshana*

$-mb- [mβ] > -nj- [ɲdʒ]$ *ukhamba* $>$ *ukhanjana*

4. The locative

The locative suffix *-ini/-eni* also causes changes when the final syllable contains a bilabial consonant and also if it ends in a back vowel, that is *o* or *u*, e.g.

$m [m] > ny [ɲ]$ *umlomo* $>$ *emlonyeni*

$ph [p^h] > sh [ʃ]$ *amaphaphu* $>$ *emaphashini*

5. Vowel coalescence

Instances of vowel coalescence occur in Zulu. This is because Zulu does not allow the juxtapositioning of two vowels within a syllable. If such a situation should arise due to the

prefixing of adverbial formatives for example, then the two vowels merge as follows:

$a + a > a$

$a + i > e$

$a + u > o$

Examples:

$na + amadoda > amadoda$

$na + ingane > nengane$

$na + ubaba > nobaba$

13.4 The nature of the syllable

The syllable may take on various forms in Zulu. It may for instance consist of a vowel only (V) or it may consist of a consonant together with a vowel (CV) or it may consist of a nasal only (N) - such a nasal is commonly referred to as a syllabic nasal. Look at the following examples:

Vowel only (V)

umuntu

Consonant and vowel (CV)

ukudla

Note that under C, consonant clusters are also included. So for example *-dla* in *ukudla* would also constitute a CV syllable.

Nasal only (N)

In the following examples the *m* in the noun prefix constitutes a whole syllable:

umsila

umfundi

13.5 Aspects of tone

Zulu, like all its sister languages, is a tone language. By this is meant that each syllable in Zulu carries its own tone, but perhaps more important than this is the fact that tone alone may differentiate between the meanings of words. There are two basic tone levels in Zulu, namely high (H) and low (L). Consider the following examples where you will note that firstly each syllable is associated with its own tone, and secondly, note how tone alone can distinguish meanings of words in each of the following pairs (the acute accent represents the high tone and the grave accent represents the low tone):

ínyàngá (HLH) 'moon; month'

ínyàngà (HLL) 'medicine man'

úmfundísi (HLHL) 'teacher'

úmfundìsi (HHLL) 'pastor'

-dúmà (HL) 'be tasteless'

-dùmá (LH) 'roar; be famous'

The basic tones of a word are those which occur when the word is used in isolation. So for example the basic tones on *abafana* are as follows:

ábàfánà (HLHL)

It is interesting to note that the tones of a word may undergo changes when that word is preceded or succeeded by another word. So for example note that the final low tone of *abafana* becomes high when followed by a word which has an initial high tone. Thus *ábàfáná ábádè* (HLHH + HHL).

Obviously the basic tonal patterns of lexical items in isolation need to be known before any further observations can be made by tonal changes that might take place when the lexical item occurs in different environments. So for example, when it comes to verbal forms it is

important to know what the basic tonal pattern of the verb stem is before one can predict its tonal patterns in different environments. The basic form of a verb as far as tone is concerned, is the infinitive, and verbs have been placed into two different categories depending on the tonal patterns of their infinitive forms. The two tonal categories are known as the low and high categories. So for example the stem *-za* is said to belong to the low category, because in its infinitive form it carries a low tone, thus *íkúzá* (LHL). The stem *-fa* on the other hand is said to belong to the high category because in its infinitive form it carries a high tone, thus *íkúfá* (HLH). With longer verb roots obviously the situation becomes more complex, but as a general rule the verb stem will belong to the low category if there are only low tones in its basic form, and to the high category if there is at least one high tone in its stem. So for example the stem *-vula* belongs to the low category because in its infinitive form the stem carries only low tones, thus *íkúvùlá* (LHLL). On the other hand *-hamba* belongs to the high category because in its infinitive form, the stem contains at least one high tone, thus *íkúhámhá* (HLHL). Note that the high tone in the prefix does not play a role in determining whether a verb stem belongs to a low or high category.

14. INTERLINEAR TRANSCRIPTION

The following is an interlinear transcription of a Zulu text with morpheme by morpheme glosses. The text has been extracted from *Ulwazi lwesiZulu Ibanga 4* by Nxumalo, Kunene & Mtshali, page 81. As was noted earlier, it is sometimes difficult to identify clear-cut morpheme boundaries in certain Zulu words because of sound changes that occur across morphemes.

Umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu. Sisho njalo isiZulu. Lokho kusho ukuthi
 Person he/she-is-person by-people. It-says so Zulu. That it-says that

ngabanye abantu abakwenza ube ngumuntu ngempela.
 it-is-other people that-they-it-make you-be it-is-a-person indeed.

Yikuhlala nabantu okwenza ube ngumuntu ophelele.
 It-is-to-live with-people that-it-makes you-be it-is-a-person who-is-complete.

Uma sikhuluma ngomuntu ophелеle sisho umuntu okwazi
If we-speak about-person who-is-complete we-say person who-it-knows

ukuxhumana nabanye ngendlela abantu abaxhumana ngayo.
to-join-each-other with-others by-way people that-they-join-each-other with-it.

Indlela esemqoka abantu abaxhumana ngayo yikukhuluma
Way which-is-important people who-join-up-each-other with-it it-is-to-talk.

Ngeke umuntu akwazi ukukhuluma engazange ahlale nabantu.
Never person who-can to-talk he-never he-stayed with-people.

Kunendaba ethi kwelinye izwe ingane encane yake
There-is-story which-says in-another country child which-is-small it-was once

yebiwa yizimfene. Zahlala nayo kayaze yakwazi
it-was-stolen by-baboons. They-stayed with-it so-that-it-was-not it-could

ukuthintana nabantu. Le ngane yagcina seyenza umsindo ofana
to-get-in-touch with-humans. This child it-ended it-made noise which-is-like

nowezimfene. Ngisho nokuhamba lokhu yayingakwazi.
that-of-baboons. I-say and-to-walk that he-did-not-know-it.

Yayigaqa njengazo izimfene.
He-crawled-on-hands-and-knees like-them baboons.

'A human is a human through humans. That is a Zulu saying. That means that it is other people who make you a proper person. It is by living with people which makes you a complete person.

When we speak of a complete person we mean a person who is able to communicate with other people in the way that people communicate with each other. The important manner in which people communicate, is by talking. A person cannot talk if he/she has never lived with people.

There is a story which says that in another country a small child was once stolen by baboons. They stayed with it so that it could not have contact with humans. This child ended up making noises just like baboons. It could not even walk. It crawled on hands and feet just like the baboons.'

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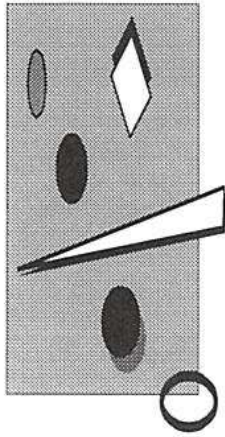
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