

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Hendrikse & Poulos (1990) identify a number of so-called ‘attributive noun classes’ by means of which attributes, especially regarding size and shape, are expressed. The attributive noun class prefixes are those belonging to classes 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21 and 22. With the exception of class 11, all the attributive noun classes mentioned above are traditionally referred to as the so-called ‘diminutive’ and ‘augmentative’ classes. Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) indicate that deviations in size and shapes seem to evoke certain attitudes. They state:

“... the visual parameters of size and shape are construed metaphorically, thus abstracting away from a more concrete significance to a more abstract one. That is, the visual perception is transformed into a more cognitive perception, yielding either a positive construal of size/shape (amelioration) or a negative construal of these attributes (derogation).”

In his linguistic analysis of Venda, Poulos (1990: 22) has the following to say about diminutives:

“Apart from all possible significance [...] it can be stressed here that there is much more to say about the diminutive than first meet the eye. For [...] various attitudes can be expressed by a speaker when he uses diminutive forms in Venda, and these attributes are dependent on the context within which a diminutive is used.”

About augmentatives he states that with its formation, using the augmentative class prefixes in Venda, the nouns that are used in an augmentative sense may also be associated with some or other form of derogation.

In other instances, particularly in Venda, it appears as though different degrees of diminution may be achieved by the combination of prefixes and the diminutive suffix when both are attached to the same noun.

Canonici (1997: 115) states that classes 12 and 13 are active diminutive classes in Shona. About Zulu he states that such diminutive classes are non-existent. This then means that while some Bantu languages, Shona and Venda in particular, express diminution and augmentation by means of class prefixes, Zulu on the other hand forms diminutives and augmentatives by means of suffixes.

1.2 Problem identification

In a number of Bantu languages, so-called ‘attributive’ noun class prefixes are utilised to express attributes such as size and shape, often with added emotive overtones of amelioration or derogation. In other Bantu languages, however, suffixes, or a combination of prefixes and suffixes are used to express variations in size and shape, and the emotive perceptions of such variations. Although languages such as Zulu and Northern Sotho employ suffixes to express these variations in size and shape and their emotive overtones, frozen remnants of attributive noun class prefixes would seem to be found in these languages. In this study, an attempt will be made to indicate which prefixal and suffixal strategies are employed by different Bantu languages in the expression of these attributes. The emotive perceptions expressed by these prefixes and suffixes will also be investigated. Special attention will be paid to the strategies employed in Zulu in the formation of diminutives and augmentatives, as well as to the semantic values of these categories.

1.3 Demarcation of study: aims and objectives

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate the attributive noun classes, as well as their suffixal counterparts, firstly in Bantu, and secondly in Zulu. The investigation will be done with reference to aspects such as the following:

- The general distribution, meaning and function of the attributive noun class prefixes in Bantu.
- The distinction between those prefixes which are exclusively used to categorise size and shape deviations, namely those belonging to classes 12/13, 19, 20, 21 and 22; and those class prefixes which have a secondary function of indicating such deviations, namely the prefixes of classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11.
- The way in which these prefixes are often associated with positive or negative emotive perceptions regarding size and shape, and are therefore often used to express amelioration and derogation.
- The existence of possible frozen remnants of such attributive noun class prefixes in languages such as Zulu and Northern Sotho.
- The use of suffixes, or a combination of prefixes and suffixes in some Bantu languages in order to express variations in size and shape, as well as the emotive perception of such variations.
- The possible semantic overlap between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes, and/or between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes and so-called 'attributive suffixes'.
- The relationship between augmentative and diminutive suffixes and the notion [+ feminine] in languages such as Zulu and Northern Sotho.
- The occurrence of the Zulu suffix *-azana/-azane*, which is apparently a combination of the diminutive and augmentative suffixes.

1.4 Research methodology

Literature, relevant to the research topic, will be reviewed in order to obtain a perspective on the most recent research findings related to the topic. A typological study of the different strategies employed in various Bantu languages to express variations in size and shape and the accompanying expression of amelioration and derogation, will be undertaken. Data will be collected through the study of grammars and other relevant sources, as well as by way of interviews with mother-tongue speakers in the case of Zulu and Northern Sotho. Another source of information will be electronic corpora, namely the Pretoria Zulu Corpus (PZC) and the Pretoria Sepedi Corpus (PSC), that stand at 5.0 million words and 5.8 million words respectively. This electronic corpus is analysed with WordSmith Tools, a versatile corpus query software package developed by Mike Scott in the UK. On the basis of this comparative (typological) study, a number of conclusions will be drawn regarding the way in which the Bantu languages express variations in shape and size, and the emotive overtones expressed by these categories. Tentative hypotheses will also be advanced regarding the possible diachronic development of the so-called 'attributive' categories in languages such as Zulu and Northern Sotho.

1.5 Significance and scheme of work

This study will firstly provide a typological overview of the various strategies employed in Bantu in order to express variations in shape and size, as well as of the emotive perceptions that accompany such variations. Secondly, this study will provide an insight into the way in which shape and size variations, amelioration and derogation are expressed in Zulu through the utilisation of diminutive and augmentative suffixes. An indication will also be given of the possible diachronic development of attributive categories in this language. This study will make a significant contribution not only to the field of diachronic and comparative Bantu linguistics, but also to Zulu linguistics. This research will furthermore lead to a deeper understanding of the strategies employed in Zulu to express the semantic nuances of amelioration and derogation. The investigation

into the Bantu attributive noun class prefixes and their suffixal counterpart, with special reference to Zulu, will be pursued in the following format:

1. Introduction: Where the background into the attributive noun class prefixes is given, including the aims of study, methodology, significance and the scheme of work.
2. The distribution, meaning and function of the attributive noun class prefixes of Bantu.
3. The existence of possible remnants of attributive noun class prefixes.
4. The use of a combination of prefixes and suffixes in the expression of variations in size and shape, amelioration and derogation in Bantu.
5. The relationship between augmentative and diminutive suffixes and the notion [+feminine].
6. The possible semantic overlap between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes, and/or between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes and so-called "attributive suffixes".

CHAPTER 2

The distribution, meaning and function of the attributive noun class prefixes of Bantu

2.1 Introduction

The attributive noun class prefixes by means of which attributes, especially those regarding size and shape, are expressed, are those belonging to classes 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21 and 22. According to Hendrikse & Poulos (1990), all the attributive noun classes mentioned above are traditionally referred to as so-called 'diminutive' and 'augmentative' classes, with the exception of class 11. Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) indicate that the construal of size and shape may either be positive and/or negative. The positive construal of size/shape is termed 'amelioration' while the negative construal of these attributes is termed 'derogation'. Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) also state that deviations in size and shape seem to evoke certain attitudes. They state as the following concerning this matter:

"... the visual parameters of size and shape are construed metaphorically, thus abstracting away from a more concrete significance to a more abstract one. That is, the visual perception is transformed into a more cognitive perception, yielding either a positive construal of size / shape (amelioration) or a negative construal of these attributes (derogation)."

Before defining the attributive noun classes, it is important to explain briefly what the continuum interpretation of the Bantu noun class system really entails. This explanation will also show the position held by the attributive noun classes in the continuum.

2.2 The continuum interpretation of the Bantu noun class system

From the views of a number of traditional Bantuists on the semantic contents of the Bantu noun classes, Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 199-201) propose the following generalised summary:

(1)

Noun classes	Semantic contents
1	Human beings
1a	Proper names Kinship terms Personification
2	Regular plural of class 1
2a	Regular plural of class 1a
3	Natural phenomena Body parts Plants Animals
4	Regular plural of class 3
5	Natural phenomena Animals Body parts Collective nouns Undesirable people Augmentatives Derogatives
6	Regular plural of class 5 Mass terms and liquids Time reference Mannerisms

7	Modes of action Body parts Tools, instruments and utensils Animals and insects Languages Diseases Outstanding people Amelioratives Derogatives Diminutives Augmentatives Curtatives (shortness and stockiness) Mannerisms
8	Regular plural of class 7
9	Animals People Body parts Tools, instruments and household effects Natural phenomena
10	Regular plural of class 9
11	Long, thin entities Languages Body parts Natural phenomena Implement, utensils and other artefacts Augmentatives Derogatives
12	Diminutives Amelioratives Derogatives
13	Regular plural of class 12

14	Abstracts
	Collectives
	Location terms
	Infinitives
15	Infinitives
16	Location terms
17	Location terms
18	Location terms
19	Diminutives
20	Derogatives
	Augmentatives
	Diminutives
	Mannerisms
21	Augmentatives
	Derogatives
22	Plural of class 20
23	Location terms

(Hendrikse & Poulos 1990: 199-201)

Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 201) are of the opinion that, despite the heterogeneity of the above semantic contents, there are classes that appear to have a common underlying denominator. A denominator that results from the semantic details of each class.

A further look at the above significances of each class makes it possible to identify certain general significances that are associated with certain sets of classes. These general significances, termed 'parameters' by Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 203), are the ones that form the underlying denominator in a number of classes. Consider the following:

(2)

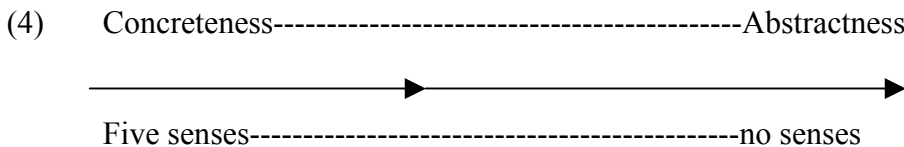
Classes	:	General significance
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10	:	Concreteness
11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, & 22	:	Attributes
16, 17, 18, & 23	:	Locatives and spatial orientation
14 & 15	:	Abstractness

(Hendrikse & Poulos 1990: 203)

The above general significances are therefore used as parameters for representing the noun classes in the continuum, that is:

(3) Concreteness Attribution Spatial orientation Abstractness

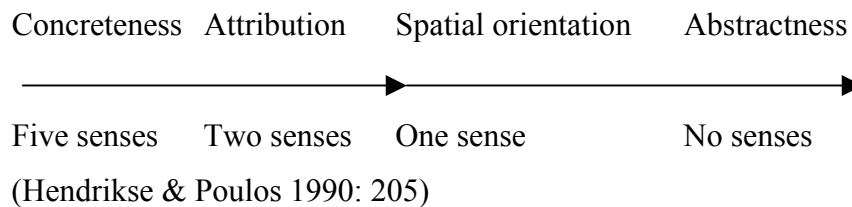
In order to complete the continuum, the objects under each parameter have to be sorted and categorised. According to Hendrikse and Poulos (1990: 204), these objects are sorted according to their perceptual properties, and according to their selective qualitative attributes. Other objects are perceived in relation to some fixed points, both in space in time, hence the spatial orientation. On the other hand nominalisation brings into the noun universe abstracts such as qualities. A further categorisation of these parameters shows that concreteness can be perceived by all 5 senses, whilst less concrete nouns, in this case abstract nouns, cannot be perceived by any senses. These two parameters, concreteness and abstractness, then form the two extreme poles of the continuum. Consider the following example:



(Hendrikse & Poulos 1990: 205)

Sorting entities by means of senses is further used in order to categorise objects in the remaining two parameters, that is, attribution and spatial orientation. Attribution seems to focus on size and shape. The only senses that can be used to perceive size and shape are the visual and the tactile senses. On the other hand, the visual sense is the only sense with which spatial orientation can be perceived. A complete representation of a continuum will then be as follows:

(5)



In order to understand what this study entails, one should bear in mind the definition of the continuum. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines the continuum as follows:

"something that changes or develops very gradually so that each part is very similar to the previous and the following parts."

(Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 1995 : 293)

2.3 Attributive noun classes as defined in Hendrikse & Poulos ' (1990) continuum interpretation of the Bantu noun classes

This study will then focus on the attributive nouns, which form the second parameter in the continuum. The attributive nouns can be defined directly from the continuum as those nouns that signify size and shape, and are less concrete than the so-called concrete nouns, and that can be perceived by two senses, that is, the visual and the tactile senses.

As already mentioned in the introduction, Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 203) identify classes 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21 and 22 as attributive noun classes. The significance of the above attributive classes will be briefly illustrated in the examples that follow. This will be done by looking at what these noun class prefixes signify in a number of Bantu languages from different zones.

In Venda, the language spoken mainly in an area that is bordered on the North by the Limpopo river, and is found in Guthrie's zone S, classes 11, 20 and 21 can be referred to as attributive noun classes. Consider the following example in this regard:

(6)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
11	lu-	lutukana	'tall, thin boy'	mutukana 'boy' class 1
20	ku-	kuthu	'a small thing'	tshithu 'thing' class 7
21	ḁi-	ḁidenzhe	'large leg'	muḁenzhe 'leg' class 3

(Poulos 1990: 53, 63, 65-66)

In example (6) above, the class 11 prefix *lu-* brings about the significance of length and narrowness, whilst the class 20 prefix *ku-* brings about the diminutive significance. The prefix of class 21, *ḁi-*, expresses the idea of bigness.

In Ganda, the language spoken in Uganda and belonging to Guthrie's zone E, the prefix of class 12, that is *ka-*, is used to indicate the smallness of an object, whilst the prefixes of classes 20 and 22, *gu-* and *ga-* respectively, are used to indicate the hugeness of an object. Consider the following example in this regard:

(7)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
12	ka-	k.èèyó	'small broom'	lw. èyó 'broom' class 11
20	gu-	guntu	'huge thing'	kintu 'thing' class 7
22	ga-	gáà.só	'enormous eyes'	líi.só 'eye' class 5

(Cole 1967: 44; 50 - 51)

The Shona languages spoken in Zimbabwe use the prefixes of classes 12 / 13 to indicate small things. The prefixes being *ka-* and *tu-* respectively. Consider the following example on the use of classes 12 and 13.

(8)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
12	ka-	kakova	'small river'	rukova 'river' class 11
13	tu-	tukova	'small rivers'	hova 'rivers' class 10

(Fortune 1955: 54)

Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 205-206) state as follows about another facet of human cognition operating parallel to the continuum:

“Parallel to this continuum operates another facet of human cognition which has a significant effect on our understanding of noun categorization in the Bantu languages. In the human being's internalisation of a categorial system he develops a natural recognition of standards and norms. [...] Once these prototypes are well established in his mind, he is quite capable of identifying any deviations from these prototypes or norms.”

The norm in the categorization and classification of nouns in Bantu languages is that the semantic content mostly refers to the concreteness of entities. Once something different from the envisaged standard attracts the attention of the speaker / listener, it is seen as a deviation from the standard. In the case of the attributive nouns, their contents have to do, not with the concreteness of objects, but with attribution, which is associated with the size and shape of entities. This in itself is a deviation from the norm. As in all languages, it is natural for one to expect some of these deviations to be reflected in the semantic categorial system. The Bantu noun class system is no exception in accommodating such deviations from the norm.

This takes us back a little to the notion of size and shape. According to Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) the deviations from the norm seem to be only associated with the size and shape notions. In the Bantu noun system this deviation from the norm is formally accommodated in two ways. On the one hand, there are prefixes that are used in a secondary sense to reflect the size and shape deviations, namely, classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11, and on the other hand, there are specific classes that exclusively categorize size and shape deviations, namely classes 12/13, 19, 20, 21 and 22.

In the following paragraphs, the prefixes of Bantu noun classes that are used in the secondary sense to reflect the size and shape deviations will be discussed first, then the prefixes of specific classes that exclusively categorize size and shape deviations.

2.4 The Bantu noun class prefixes with the secondary function of reflecting size and shape deviation

Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) identify classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11 as noun classes whose prefixes are used in a secondary sense to reflect the deviations in size and shape. One may then ask as to what is meant by the use of class prefixes in their secondary sense. In order to answer this question, we look at Fortune's (1970: 88) explanation of the term "secondary function" of prefixes. In his explanation, Fortune (1970: 88) states that the norm, in the nominal class meaning, or of a certain number of meanings is carried by the

prefixes, only when it is combined or prefixed to the noun stem for which it is a primary prefix. This can be illustrated by using the class 7 prefix of Zezuru, one of the dialects of Shona, spoken in Zimbabwe. Consider the following example:

(9)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation
7	chi-	chi-rongó	'waterpot
(Same as above)		chi-gar-o	'seat'

(Fortune 1970: 88)

The primary reference carried by this prefix *chi-* in its primary function, is that of an 'instrument'. The combination of the stem with its primary prefixes can be further illustrated in the following examples:

(10)

Class	Prefix	Noun stem	Meaning	Example	Interpretation
1	mu-	-kadzi	'female'	mu-kadzi	'woman'
2	va-	-kadzi	"	va-kadzi	'women'

(Fortune 1970: 88)

In example (10) above, the noun stem *-kadzi* 'female', combines with the prefixes of classes 1 and 2, that is *mu-* and *va-* respectively, to express the significance of woman/women. These prefixes are performing a primary function in the above example. The significance 'woman / women' conveyed in (10) is primary and, is brought about by the use of the primary prefixes.

To deviate from this norm, we find another system in which noun stems combine with a number of prefixes, other than their primary ones. This can also be illustrated by an

example taken from the Zezuru language, in which the stem *-kadzi* combines with a class 7 prefix, *chi-*. Compare:

(11)

Class	Prefix	Noun stem	Meaning	Example
7	chi-	-kadzi	'female'	chikadzi

(Fortune 1970: 88)

When the class 7 prefix, *chi-*, is used with the noun stem *-kadzi*, as in example (11) above, additions to the basic significances of the stem *-kadzi*, that is “woman / women”, are made. In which case, *-kadzi* will convey the following significances:

- an indifferent sort of a woman;
- a short, stout woman; or
- the ways of a woman.

(Fortune 1970: 88)

This is what the term "secondary sense" is all about, namely, the combination of noun stems with prefixes for which they are not primary, bringing about a different semantic significance. Fortune (1970: 29) is of the opinion that each noun class contains nouns and other complex nominal constructions for some of which the prefix is primary and others for which the prefix is secondary. Such a combination, in most cases, leads to the deviation from the regular significance, as shown in the examples in (10) and (11) above. Since this study deals with the deviations in size and shape, we shall then look at the significances conveyed by the prefixes of classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11, in a number of Bantu languages.

What should be borne in mind is that, from the point of view of their references, the secondary references are of two kinds. According to Fortune (1970: 88), certain

secondary prefixes indicate that the specimen, which would otherwise and normally be indicated by a primary prefix and stem, deviates in some way from the norm. The types of deviations from the norm referred to, vary according to the particular prefix, selected from the set of classes, which can be used in a secondary sense. Prefixes that can be used in a secondary sense are those of classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11. When the class 5/6 prefixes in Venda are used in a secondary sense, they convey the idea of bigness or greatness. This then marks the first kind of secondary reference. Consider the following example:

(12)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	derived from
5	li-	linona	'big clod of earth'	nona 'clod' class 5
		liḁu	'huge hut'	nḁu 'hut' class 9
6	ma-	madu	'huge huts'	(same as above)

(Poulos 1990: 31)

The second kind of secondary reference is the one that is brought about by the use of the class 7/8 prefixes. This happens when certain nouns are transferred from their original classes to class 7/8. In most cases, the use of the said class prefixes in a secondary sense conveys a diminutive significance. The following examples, in Venda, clearly illustrate this:

(13)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
7	tshi-	tshivhudu	'small hill'	muvhudu 'hill' class 3
8	zwi-	zwivhudu	'small hills'	" " "
7	tshi-	tshikedzi	'small sack'	khedzi 'sack' class 9

8 zwi- zwickedzi 'small sacks' " " "

(Poulos 1990: 38)

There are nouns in Venda class 11, which relate to a particular shape like length, tallness or narrowness, especially of a person or object. Compare:

(14)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
11	lu-	lutukana	'tall, thin boy'	mutukana 'boy' class 1
		luḡila	'long, narrow path'	nḡila 'path' class 9

(Poulos 1990: 54)

Class 11 may also have a diminutive significance. This can be illustrated as follows:

(15)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
11	lu-	lusunzi	'small species of ant'	sunzi 'ant' class 5

(Poulos 1990: 54)

In Shona, the class 5/6 prefixes, *ri-* and *ma-* respectively, have a secondary function of signifying bigness, largeness or hugeness. Consider the following example:

(16)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
5	ri-	(ri-)ḡuka	'large beast'	mhuka 'beast' class 9

6	ma-	masikana	'large girls'	musikana	'girl'	class 1
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(Fortune 1955: 77)

According to Fortune (1955: 82) the class 7/8 prefixes, *ci-* and *zi-*, are used in a secondary sense to indicate short and stout things. Consider the following example in this regard:

(17)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from		
7	ci-	cikadzi	'short and fat woman'	mukadzi	'woman'	class 1
8	zi-	zikadzi	'short and fat women'	"	"	"

(Fortune 1955: 82)

When used in a secondary sense, the class 11 prefix *ru-*, in Shona, indicates long and thin things, especially when used with noun stems referring to objects. When the same prefix, that is *ru-*, is used with noun stems indicating or involving people, the nouns then acquire the significance of leanness. Compare the following example:

(18)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from		
11	ru-	rupanga	'thin light knife'	ɓanga	'knife'	class 5
11	ru-	rucembere	'thin frail old woman'	cembere	'old woman'	class 9

(Fortune 1955: 93)

As can be seen from the examples discussed in this section, the prefixes of classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11 can be used with a secondary function of indicating the shape and size deviations. From the above examples, it can be deduced that the prefixes of classes 5/6

convey the significances of bigness and largeness, whilst those of classes 7/8, indicate diminution. The class 11 prefix on the other hand, conveys the diminutive significance, tallness and thinness.

2.5 The Bantu noun class prefixes that are exclusively used to categorize size and shape deviations

Class 12/13, 19, 20, 21 and 22 are identified by Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) as those classes that exclusively categorize size and shape deviations. These class prefixes have a primary function of expressing differences in size and shape. This means that when these prefixes are used with noun stems, the idea or rather the significance of size and shape is brought forth. The sole function of these prefixes is therefore to express size and shape. Although examples to illustrate the above are very limited in the Bantu languages already referred to in this study, a few representative examples will be given.

In Shona, the class 12/13 prefixes ka- and tu- are used to refer to small things. Consider the following example in this regard:

(19)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
12	ka-	kakova 'small river'		rukova 'river' class 11
13	tu-	tukova	'small rivers'	hova 'rivers' class 10

(Fortune 1955: 54)

In Zezuru, one of the Shona dialects, the class 19 and 20 prefixes indicate smallness and thinness, and bigness respectively. Compare the following example:

(20)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from	
19	svi-	svimbúdzi	'small, thin goat'	mbudzi	'goat' class 9
21	zi-	zibére	'a big hyena'	bere	'hyena' class 5

(Fortune 1970: 107-108)

In Ganda, the class 12 prefix *ka-* has a diminutive connotation, for example:

(21)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from	
12	ka-	kàlénzí	'little boy'	mulénzí	'boy' class 1

(Cole 1967: 44)

The Ganda class 13 prefix, *tu-*, has a diminutive significance denoting small quantities of liquid and granular substances, for example:

(22)

Class	prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from	
13	tu-	túnnyó	'a pinch of salt'	múnnyó	'salt' class 3
		túzzí	'a drop/small quantity of water'	mázzí	'water' class 6

(Cole 1967: 47)

The Ganda class 20 and its plural, class 22, signify the idea of bigness. Consider the following example in this regard:

(23)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
20	gu-	gúù.so	'enormous eye'	líì.só 'eye' class 5
22	ga-	gáà.so	'enormous eyes'	" " "

(Cole 1967: 50-51)

In Venda the class 20 prefix, *ku-*, signifies the idea of smallness whilst the class 21 prefix, *di-*, expresses the idea of bigness or greatness. Compare the following example:

(24)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
20	ku-	kutukana	'a small boy'	mutukana 'boy' class 1
21	ḍi-	ḍiḍenzhe	'large leg'	muḍenzhe 'leg' class 3

(Poulos 1990: 64,66)

When looking at the attributive noun class prefixes that have been mentioned in the previous paragraphs, it becomes clear that there are those prefixes with an augmentative significance, and those with a diminutive significance. In the following example, the augmentative and diminutive classes of each of the studied languages are tabulated:

(25)

Language	Diminutive classes	Augmentative classes
Shona (and its dialects)	12/13, 19	21
Venda	11, 20	21
Ganda	12/13	20, 22

Hendrikse & Poulos (1990: 206) indicate that the deviations in size and shape seem to evoke certain attitudes. They state as follows:

"... The visual parameters of size and shape are construed metaphorically, thus abstracting away from a more concrete significance to a more abstract one. That is, the visual perception is transformed into a more cognitive perception, yielding either a positive construal of size/shape (amelioration) or a negative construal of these attributes (derogation)."

This study will then look at how, in each tabulated language in (25) above, the noun prefixes are used to express the positive connotation of shape and size, and the negative construal of these attributes.

2.6 The expression of amelioration in Bantu through the use of noun class prefixes

The positive construal of size and shape can be expressed in Bantu by means of the diminutive class prefixes, as well by as the augmentative class prefixes. In the following paragraphs it will be shown how a number of Bantu languages express amelioration through the use of the diminutive and/or augmentative classes.

2.6.1 The expression of amelioration in Bantu through the use of the diminutive noun class prefixes

In Shona the prefixes of class 12/13 and 19 are used to signify smallness, usually in a favourable light, that is, as pleasing to the eye. This connotation is brought forth mostly when these prefixes, mentioned above, are used with stems that indicate something small and likeable, for example:

(26)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
12	ka-	karurimi	'small tongue'	rurimi 'tongue' class 11
13	tu-	tufodya	'a little tobacco'	fodya 'tobacco' class 9
19	ši-	šinguruve	'a little pig'	nguruve 'pig' class 9

(Fortune 1955: 94-95, 103)

The ameliorative significance is more clearly portrayed in context. Using a noun with the Shona class 19 prefix in a sentence, the ameliorative significance can be clearly illustrated. The sentence is spoken in the context of feeling sorry for the referent. Consider:

(27)

Si + ana < Sana 'small child'

Šana šangu šitema šinogwara; ndinoširapa.

'My small black child is sick; I will treat it.'

(Fortune 1955: 103)

Reading the sentence in example (27) above in the context of feeling sorry for this referent, in this case *šana* 'small child', one gets the idea that the small child is or was dear to the speaker.

In Venda, diminutives can be used in context to express a favourable attitude. To illustrate this, the noun stem is used with the class 20 prefix *ku-* in the context of endearment. Consider the following example in this regard:

(28)

Kusadzi uku a si u naka.

'This small woman is very beautiful.'

(Poulos 1990: 83)

The diminutive prefix *ku-* in the above example is used with the stem *-sadzi* 'woman' to praise the beauty of this particular woman. To the speaker, although this woman might be bigger in build, she is seen as a small, loveable and beautiful creature. This sentence is said in the context of love.

As has already been indicated in the introduction of this section, the diminutive noun class prefixes are not the only prefixes that can lead to a favourable perception of objects. Augmentative noun class prefixes may also be used in this regard although examples to illustrate this are scarce.

2.6.2 The expression of amelioration in Bantu through the use of augmentative noun class prefixes

In example (25) it was indicated that classes 20, 21 and 22 are regarded as augmentative classes. This means that the affixing of the prefixes of these classes to stems bring about the idea of bigness or of greatness. Such bigness and / or greatness may be perceived in a favourable manner, in the context of praise, encouragement or appreciation.

In Ganda, for instance, the class 1 noun, *muja* 'man', can be augmented by using the class 21 prefix *zi-*, which then becomes *zija* 'great big man'. When this noun, *zija* 'great big man', is used in the context of encouragement by someone who loves and believes in the referent, the ameliorative significance is expressed. For example:

(29)

Cienda iwe *zija*.

'Go on now, you great big man'.

(Fortune 1955: 105)

This sentence is said by a mother, encouraging her small boy not to give up but to go on with whatever he is doing.

2.7 The expression of derogation in Bantu through the use of noun class prefixes

Derogation is defined in Poulos (1990: 88) as a way of degrading or expressing a low opinion of the person or object referred to. As is the case with amelioration, as discussed in the previous paragraphs, derogation in Bantu may be expressed by means of diminutive and augmentative noun class prefixes.

2.7.1 The expression of derogation in Bantu through the use of diminutive noun class prefixes

In Shona the use of the prefixes of class 12/13 may have a derogatory effect, especially when used with stems indicating something naturally large and / or important. Consider the following example in this regard:

(30)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
12	ka-	kamurume	'small man'	murume 'man' class 1
13	tu-	tuvanhu	'small people'	munhu 'person' class 1

(Fortune 1955: 94-96)

In example (30) above, both *murume* 'man' and *munhu* 'person' refer to important beings, (as in human beings). When these nouns are used in the context of belittlement, they then express a low opinion of both 'man' and 'person'.

When the class 21 prefix in Venda, *ku-*, is used in a scolding context, it brings about the derogatory effect regarding the referent. For example:

(31)

Kusadzi uku ku na vhuyada

'This short woman is always dirty'

(Poulos 1990: 83)

2.7.2 The expression of derogation in Bantu through the use of augmentative noun class prefixes

In Shona the use of augmentative class prefixes bring about the idea of 'inviting insults'. This happens when the augmentative class 21 prefix, that is *zi-*, is prefixed to class 5 nouns. The class 5 prefix *ri-* has a secondary function of expressing augmentation. When the class 21 prefix, *zi-*, is affixed to class 5 nouns, such a combination brings about a degrading opinion of the referent, especially when used in the context of insult. Compare the following example:

(32)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
21 + 5	<i>zi-</i> + (<i>ri-</i>)	<i>zi-gadzi</i>	'huge woman'	<i>mukadzi</i> 'woman' class 1
(same as above)		<i>zi-dzikana</i>	'monster of a girl'	<i>musikana</i> 'girl' class 1

(Fortune 1970: 105)

According to Cole (1967: 50-51), in Ganda, anything with features that are bigger than normal, is disapproved of, and also invites criticism. Such features may lead to the referent being perceived as sinister. This perception can lead to the degrading of the nature of the referent due to its unacceptable features. The class 20 prefix *gu-*, in Ganda,

may have a pejorative implication of sinisterness when used in the context of disapproval and / or criticism. Consider the example below in this regard:

(33)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Derived from
20	gu-; gw-	gw.oya	'enormous feather'	ky.oya 'feather' class 7
(same as above)		gúù.só	'enormous eye'	líi.so 'eye' class 5
(same as above)		gw.âná	'big, fat child'	mw. âná 'child' class 1

(Cole 1967: 50)

2.8 Summary

In the continuum interpretation of the Bantu noun class system, attributive nouns are regarded as being less concrete than the so-called concrete nouns, and as nouns that can be perceived by two senses.

In Bantu, attributive noun classes can be divided into two categories.

There are classes 5/6, 7/8 and 11, which are used in a secondary sense to express deviations in size and shape on the one hand, and on the other, classes 12/13, 19, 20, 21 and 22 which are exclusively used to signify the attributes of size and shape.

Classes that exclusively express size and shape deviations are further divided into those that express diminution, and those that express augmentation.

In the Bantu languages investigated for this study, diminutives and augmentatives are formed in the following classes:

Language	Diminutive classes	Augmentative classes
Venda	11, 19, 20	21
Shona	12/13,	21
Ganda	12/13	20, 22

Both the diminutive and augmentative nouns can either express amelioration and/or derogation, depending on the context within which such nouns are used.

In the languages studied, more examples are found of diminutives with the ameliorative implication than of augmentatives with the same implication.

Augmentative prefixes convey, in most instances, the idea of derogation, depending on the context within which they are used.

CHAPTER 3

The existence of possible frozen remnants of attributive noun class prefixes

3.1 Introduction

It is common knowledge that languages belonging to one family, in this case the Bantu family, will be expected to share common characteristics. For example, a Bantu noun consists of a so-called class prefix and a stem. Characteristically, nouns from other languages in the Bantu family must also consist of a class prefix and a stem. Another important feature of the Bantu language family is that all nouns are assigned to various noun classes by means of their class prefixes. When referring to a number of languages in the Bantu family, we find that attribution is represented by the prefixes of class 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, as discussed in the previous chapter. Looking at this norm and the position of the majority of languages in the Bantu family, it would then be expected of languages such as Zulu and Northern Sotho to follow suit. This section of the study will investigate the position in Zulu and Northern Sotho respectively, as far as attributive noun class prefixes are concerned. In the case where such noun class prefixes could not be found in these languages, factors leading to their demise will be discussed and if possible, some visible traces of these classes will be given. The strategies currently used to express attribution in Zulu and Northern Sotho will also be discussed.

3.2 The position in Zulu

Poulos & Bosch (1997: 3) indicate that the various noun classes have been assigned numbers by scholars who have worked within the Bantu family of languages. In various Bantu languages, some 23 distinct noun prefixes have been identified. It is interesting to note that no one language has all 23 noun prefixes. Some of these prefixes are very rare. According to Meinhof's (1932: 48) numbering system, the Zulu noun class prefixes

terminate with class 18, with class 12 and 13 not occurring at all. Compare the following list of noun class prefixes and their semantic contents:

(34)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Semantic content
1	umu-/um-	umuntu/umlungu	'person'	Class of persons
2	aba-/abe-	abantu/abelungu	'persons'	Regular plural of class 1
1a	u-	ugogo	'grandmother'	Proper names Terms of relationships Personification Loan words Animals
2a	o-	ogogo	'grandmothers'	Regular plural of class 1a
3	umu-/um-	umuthi/umfula	'tree'/'river'	Living or moving objects
4	imi-	imithi	'trees'	Regular plural of class 3
5	i(li-)	i(li)dolo	'knee'	Objects found in pairs Foreign words
6	ama-	amadolo	'knees'	Regular plural of class 5 Plural of some nouns in class 9
7	isi-/is-	isitsha/isando	'dish'/'hammer'	Instruments Deverbatives
8	izi-/iz-	izitsha/izando	'dishes'/'hammers'	Regular plural of class 7
9	in-/im-	inyoka/imfene	'snake'/'baboon'	Animals Persons Deverbatives Miscellaneous
10	izin-/izim-	izinyoka/izimfene	'snakes'/'baboons'	Regular plural of class 9 & class 11
11	u(lu)-	ulwembu/uphondo	'spider'/'horn'	Long and abstract objects
14	ubu-	ububi	'bad thing'	Abstracts and collectives
15	uku-	ukudla	'food'	Infinitive class
16	pha-	phambili	'in front'	Locative class
17	uku-	ukunene	'to the right'	nouns denoting time, place,

				abstract concepts with a locative implication.
18	mu-	muva	'back/behind/later'	Adverbials (my addition)

(Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 13-26)

When looking at the semantic contents of all the classes listed above, none of them show any kind of attribution. If there are frozen remnants of attributive noun class prefixes in Zulu, what were their forms and in which class did they belong? In the following section we are going to review the findings of academics, like Wilkes (1990), on this subject.

3.2.1 Wilkes' (1990) view of the existence of possible frozen remnants of attributive noun class prefixes in Zulu

When writing about the indefinite relative concord *oku-*, Wilkes (1990: 36) points to a striking relationship between this indefinite relative concord, diminutives and derogative nouns. Although this relationship may seem accidental at face value, according to Wilkes (1990: 36) it is in fact reminiscent of the two strategies found in African languages according to which nouns are diminutivized and derogativized. The one strategy being the suffixal strategy used mostly by the Southern Bantu languages, and the other being the prefixal strategy, discussed in chapter two of this study. Wilkes (1990: 37) mentions the great parallelism between the functions of the indefinite copulative concord *oku-* and that of the diminutive and derogative class prefixes. These functions are as follows:

- Both signify derogation and/or endearment,
- Both are prefixed to nouns without replacing the original prefixes of those nouns.

In the context of love and affection the copulative noun *yingane*, interpreted as 'it is a child' may be used with the indefinite relative concord *oku-* to express endearment. The copulative noun then takes the form of *okuyingane* interpreted as 'poor little child'. Consider:

(35)

Okuyingane kusinde ngokulambisa.

'The poor little had a narrow escape.'

On the other hand such a noun can be used in the context of belittlement to express derogation. Consider the following example in this regard:

(36)

UDladla upaka lokhu *okuyimotshwana* yakhe eduze kweyami.

'Dladla parks that good- for- nothing car of his next to mine'

Wilkes (1990: 37) then brings another point to the fore concerning this indefinite relative concord *oku-*. He states that if *oku-* is/was a relative concord, it implies that the construction of which it formed part must have had a head noun at some earlier stage. As it is the norm in African languages that nouns should be grouped into classes, Wilkes (1990: 37) is of the opinion that this erstwhile head noun must have been a member of a noun class with prefix *uku-*, which is not to be confused with the infinitive prefix *uku-*, of class 15. Wilkes (1990) argues that this head noun is a relic of an emotive noun class that does not exist any longer, based on the fact that there are 3 of only 5 nouns in Zulu which have a class prefix *uku-* but which do not belong to the infinitive class. Compare the following example in this regard:

(37)

ukunto / ukuntoko / ukuthokozi 'plaything, pet'

(Wilkes 1990: 37)

Another noticeable feature of the above nouns, according to Wilkes (1990: 37), is the fact that their class prefix *uku-* appears in the place of a prefix or a pre-prefix of the nouns from which they have been derived namely, *u(lu)tho* in the case of *ukuthokozi*, and *i(N)to*

in the case of *ukunto*. This is said to be a typical feature of the class prefixes of diminutive nouns.

If the above indicators are correctly interpreted, then it seems more than likely that a noun class prefix *uku-*, which must not be confused with the *uku-* of class 15, had been part of the noun class system of Zulu during earlier times. Wilkes (1990: 37) is of the opinion that there are factors that lead to the demise of this emotive class in Zulu. These factors include the following:

- The class contained a limited number of nouns, which operated within a very restricted syntactic environment.
- The undoing of this class is due to the demise, in a number of African languages, of the diminutive classes to which the *uku-* class was semantically related.

According to Wilkes' (1990) theory, the undoing of these classes in a number of African languages lead to the emergence of the suffixal strategy, currently used in the Southern Bantu languages, to express emotions.

3.3 The suffixal strategy as a means to express amelioration and derogation in Zulu

Wilkes (1990: 37) is of the opinion that in languages where the suffixal strategy had developed, this has usually lead to the undoing of the prefixal strategy. As this is said to be the characteristic feature of the languages in the Southern zones, Zulu employs the suffixal strategy to express deviations in size and shape. These suffixes are the diminutive *-ana*, and the augmentative suffix *-kazi*. In this section of study, before investigating how amelioration and/or derogation is expressed by either of the said suffixes, the general significance of each of these suffixes will be briefly discussed.

3.3.1 The suffix *-ana* in Zulu

According to Van Eeden (1956: 722) the suffix *-ana*, which has *-ane* as its variant, is used to form nominal diminutives and is thus called the diminutive suffix. In this section of study, all nouns with the diminutive suffix *-ana* will be called 'diminutive nouns'. Van Eeden (1956: 722) also points out that this diminutive suffix *-ana* cannot be suffixed to any noun, meaning that it is used with a limited number of nouns. Van Eeden (1956) is of the opinion that nouns that take the suffix *-ana* are said to express smallness, youth, and small quantity. This implies that a diminutive noun can either express smallness, youth or small quantity. These significances will be termed **primary** significances of the diminutive suffix *-ana* in this study. It must also be pointed out that the aforementioned significances of *-ana* are revealed when the diminutive nouns are used **out of context**. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(38) Significance	Example	Derived from
a. Smallness		
	<i>indlwana</i> 'a small house'	<i>indlu</i> 'a house'
	<i>umfanyana</i> 'a little boy'	<i>umfana</i> 'a boy'
b. Youth		
	<i>inkosana</i> 'the son of a king'	<i>inkosi</i> 'king'
	<i>umntwana</i> 'a child'	<i>umuntu</i> 'a person'
c. Smallness in quantity		
	<i>izinsukwana</i> 'few days'	<i>isinsuku</i> 'days'
	(Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 142)	

Apart from the primary significances expressed by the diminutive nouns when used out of context, we find that, when the very same diminutive nouns are used in different

contexts they acquire a kind of **emotive** significance. This emotive significance is mostly determined by the context within which these diminutive nouns are found. Since the expression of smallness, youth and small quantity by the diminutive suffix *-ana*, out of context, has been termed its primary significance, the expression of the emotive significances by this suffix will be called its **secondary** significance. These emotive significances involve a person's feelings and therefore, a diminutive noun may be perceived in a favourable and/or unfavourable manner, giving rise to the expression of amelioration and/or derogation by these nouns. Unlike the primary significances of the diminutive nouns that do not depend on the context, the expression of amelioration and/or derogation by the suffix *-ana* is **highly dependent** on the context. The following section of this study will investigate how the diminutive suffix *-ana* expresses amelioration and/or derogation in context.

3.3.1.1 The expression of amelioration by the diminutive suffix *-ana*

Amelioration, which is the positive construal of size and shape, is expressed in Zulu by using the diminutive suffix *-ana* in context. When a diminutive noun that signifies smallness, **out** of context, is used **in** the context of praise, its smallness is perceived in a favourable way, thus conveying a positive construal of the said object. Compare the following example:

(39)

Bakwakhele *indlwana* kanokusho dade!

'They have built you a beautiful small hut sister!'

Okwaphi lokhu *okomfanyana* okuhlakaniphe kangaka?

'Where does this clever little boy come from?'

Diminutive nouns that express youth out of context, may be used to express love and affection in the context of admiration. Consider the following example in this regard:

(40)

Ngizoyilobola *le ndodakazana* yakho enhle, Mkhize.

'I will pay lobola to this lovely daughter of yours, Mkhize'.

Ngiyamthanda ngempela *lo mSushwana* wami mama.

'I really love this cute Sotho speaking girl of mine, mother'.

In the context of feeling pity for the referent, the diminutive noun may convey the significance of endearment. Compare:

(41)

Lesi *salukazana* esixhuga kangaka asisizwa ngani?

'Why is this poor old woman not assisted?'

The diminutive suffix *-ana* may be combined with another diminutive suffix *-nyana* to express the feeling of love and affection, in the context of praise. For example:

(42)

Lelukwe kahle leli *khanjanyana* lakho weKhosi.

'Your well formed little head has been well braided Khosi.'

The nouns that express small quantity out of context may be used in the context of jest to express humour. Consider the following example in this regard:

(43)

Ungathi uholo *ubadlana* lolu bese uzenza isiqumama.

'Earning such little salary then you make as if you are a stinking rich man.'

3.3.1.2 The expression of derogation by the diminutive suffix *-ana*

In the context of disgust and/or insult, a diminutive noun may convey a derogatory or pejorative significance. Consider the following example:

(44a)

Uqhoshe ufile dade ngalolu pete *lwendlwana* yakho engazisi.

'You are so boastful (sister) about this insignificant knock-kneed hut of yours!'

(44b)

Ake utshele lo *mfazana* wakho angangibhedeli!

'Will you tell this good for nothing wife of yours not to speak rubbish to me!'

The *indlwana* 'little house' may not be little in the literal sense. The reason why this little house is referred to as an 'insignificant knock-kneed hut' might be because the speaker wants to ridicule and scorn the owner of this little house. This brings us to the point that, in a context of ridicule as in example (44a), the house is not the target for these remarks. Instead the belittlement is directed to the owner of the house. This example shows us how the speaker felt in that heated moment when this statement was uttered. We can also say that the state in which the speaker is when uttering a certain remark plays a very important role in conveying derogation and/or pejoration.

In example (44b), the referent *umfazi* 'woman' is being insulted by someone as being 'good for nothing'. It is in such contexts of insult within which diminutive nouns may be found to express derogation. It also happens in the context of disapproval, especially the disapproval of behaviour, that diminutive nouns may express derogation. Consider:

(45)

Lo *mthakashana* ucabanga ukuthi uzobulala ingane yami!

'This good for nothing / wicked witch thinks that she will kill my child!'

Another interesting factor about the diminutive suffix *-ana* is that, when it is added to human nouns or other nouns perceived in the Zulu culture as nouns signifying importance, the unfavourable attitude of insignificance will be expressed, **in** or **out** of context. Consider the following example in this regard:

(46)

Diminutive noun

Derived from

insizwana 'an insignificant young man'

insizwa 'young man approaching manhood'

indojanya 'an insignificant man'

indoda 'a man'

umushana 'a good for nothing medicine'

umuthi 'medicine'

According to Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 142) the extended form of the diminutive suffix *-ana*, that is *-anyana*, that denotes something **very** small is also found. For example:

(47)

Noun		Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
<i>inja</i>	+	<i>-ana</i>	<i>injana</i>	'a small dog'
<i>inja</i>	+	<i>-anyana</i>	<i>injanyana</i>	'a very small dog'

(Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 142)

Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 142) are of the opinion that this extended suffix *-anyana* may also be used in a derogatory manner to suggest something of no importance. This usually happens when this suffix is added to human nouns that express important things. According to the *English-Zulu, Zulu-English Dictionary* of Doke et al.. (1990: 405), the noun *inkosi* 'king/paramount chief' is referred to as a term of respect for royalty or for a person in high governmental authority. When the so-called extended diminutive suffix

-anyana is suffixed to the noun *inkosi* 'king/paramount chief' the noun acquires an insignificant significance. Compare:

(48)

Noun	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
inkosi +	-anyana	<i>inkosanyana</i> (Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 142)	'an insignificant chief'

3.3.2 The suffix *-kazi* in Zulu

The suffixs *-kazi* in Zulu is said to express bigness in size, greatness, and importance. Van Eeden (1956: 726) states the following regarding the suffix *-kazi*:

'-kazi tree [...] op as 'n ougmentatiefsuffiks, d.w.s. om grootheid, belangrikheid, voortreflikheid, ens. uit te druk (maar dié funksie van hierdie suffiks is klaarblylik 'n sekondêre).

-kazi appears [...] as an augmentative suffix, that is, to express bigness, importance, excellence, etc. (but this function of these suffixes is evidently secondary).

In the above quotation, Van Eeden (1956: 726) is of the opinion that the augmentative suffix *-kazi's* function to express the idea of bigness or greatness, importance and excellence or of being first rate, is secondary in nature. Van Eeden (1956) regards the expression of the feminine gender by means of *-kazi* as its primary function. Thus he says that the augmentative suffix *-kazi* is used as an augmentative, to a limited extent, with nouns that denote people and animals (probably to prevent confusing it with the feminine suffix *-kazi* in Zulu.) Compare the following examples of *-kazi* used with an augmentative function:

(49)

Augmentative noun	Derived from
<i>itshekazi</i> 'a rock'	<i>itshe</i> 'a stone'
<i>imotokazi</i> 'a really big/good car'	<i>imoto</i> 'a car'

(Taljaard & Bosch 1988: 146)

from expressing the aforementioned significances, Van Eeden (1956: 726) says that the augmentative suffix *-kazi* is used to a certain extent as a pejorative or derogatory suffix, in order to express contempt and belittlement. Poulos (1994: 111) on the other hand is of the opinion that it is the context within which *-kazi* is used that plays a significance in expressing the pejorative meaning. In the following paragraphs we will investigate how derogation and/or amelioration is expressed by the so-called augmentative suffix *-kazi*.

3.3.2.1 The expression of amelioration by the augmentative suffix *-kazi*

In the Zulu culture there are nouns that represent things that are regarded as important. For instance, *umuthi* 'a tree' is a plant from which the Zulu people get healing herbs, wood for fire, shade to rest under after a tiring day's work on the fields, material for building their houses, sticks to fight with, food, to mention a few. All these characteristics of a tree given above are of great importance to the Zulu people. When a noun like *umuthi* 'a tree', is perceived by the people in this manner, it means that it has a positive influence on the said people's lives. In the following examples we will see how the addition of the augmentative suffix *-kazi* to this noun may change the original significance of the said noun. Compare the following example:

(50)

Noun	Suffix	Augmentative noun
umuthi 'a tree'	-kazi	<i>umuthikazi</i>

Because of the addition of the augmentative suffix *-kazi* to the noun *umuthi* 'a tree' the augmentative noun *umuthikazi* will mean the following:

- the provider of good shade
- a good resting place
- a provider of good firewood
- a tree whose bark provides excellent healing herbs

Because of the positiveness associated with the general perception of the noun *umuthi* 'a tree', the augmentative noun *umuthikazi* acquires the significance of:

- admiration
- being seen in a favourable light
- praise
- recommendation

When we look at an example of the formation of augmentatives given by Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 146), we find the following explanation of the augmentative noun:

imoto 'a car' *imotokazi* 'a **really** big/**good** car'

The augmentative noun *imotokazi* has been explained, in the above quotation as 'a really big car' or as 'a good car'. One may then ask why an augmentative noun is explained in this way. In order to provide answers to the above question, we need to look at the way the Zulu people perceive the referent *imoto* 'a car'. Culturally, *imoto* 'a car' was not known to the Zulu people. It is something that came with the western civilization. A person who owns a car is perceived as someone who is wealthy, and who leads a modern life style. This is because of the following characteristics of a car:

- it makes movement easy
- you move whilst seated

- it is comfortable
- it is expensive, it can not be afforded by any person

Because of the above attributes attached to the noun *imoto* 'a car', its augmentative form *imotokazi* will signify the following:

- a car that one brags about
- a spacious car
- a strong car
- a new model
- a well built car
- a car good for kings
- a car that will never let its owner down

All the above attributes show the favourable attitude with which the noun *imotokazi* is perceived in Zulu. We can therefore add that the function the said object has in that community plays an important role in its perception. The augmentative noun *imotokazi* conveys not only bigness in size of the referent but the **high quality** of this car. Although Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 146) said nothing about their explanation of the augmentative noun *imotokazi* as 'a really big/good car', we believe that the idea that the augmentative suffix *-kazi* conveys not only bigness and greatness, but also the high quality of the referent, had crossed their minds. We also believe that that is why Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 146) used the adverb 'really' and the adjective 'good' to explain *imotokazi* not just as just any car, but as a **'really good car'**.

One may be tempted to look at all augmentative nouns and come to a conclusion that these nouns indicate largeness and/or greatness of an object in and out of context. A careful investigation of these augmentative nouns shows that there are those augmentative nouns whose significances go beyond bigness or greatness. Compare the following example:

(51)

Noun		Suffix	Augmentative	Interpretation
			noun	
indlu 'a house'	+	-kazi	<i>indlukazi</i>	'a very big house'
umuthi 'a tree'	+	-kazi	<i>umuthikazi</i>	'an outstanding tree'
injobo 'loin-covering'	+	-kazi	<i>izinjobokazi</i>	' beautiful loin-covering'
isiziba 'a deep pool'	+	-kazi	<i>isizibakazi</i>	'a very deep/dangerous pool'

When dealing with the significances of augmentative nouns one should bear in mind that their ameliorative significance is determined by the context within which they are used. In the *University of Pretoria Zulu Corpus (PZC)* there are a number of augmentative nouns that have been used in different contexts to convey a positive construal of size and/or shape.

Another notion that comes from investigating the augmentative nouns using the *PZC* is that it seems as if amelioration is conveyed when *-kazi* is suffixed to nouns perceived with positiveness. Take for instance the use of the noun *intando* 'love charm' with the suffix *-kazi*. It is a long-standing belief in the Zulu culture that love is enhanced by using a love charm. As love leads to the origin of big families, which will, in future, bring wealth to that family, *intando* 'love charm' is perceived with, and is associated with positiveness. This can be further illustrated by the use of *-kazi* with nouns such as *intando* 'love-charm' and/or *into* 'thing; property'. Compare:

(52)

Intandokazi 'favourite / favorite wife'

(Doke et al.. 1990: 784)

Yaze yabukeka kahle-ke *intandokazi* yami!

'How good looking is my favourite.'

Intokazi' 'fine girl / fine woman.'

(Doke et al.. 1990: 798)

Baba, ngiyithanda ngempela le ntokazi.

'Father, I really love this fine woman.'

3.3.2.2 The expression of derogation by the augmentative suffix -kazi

According to Poulos (1994: 111) the significance of 'bigger than normal' is expressed when the augmentative suffix *-kazi* is added to nouns denoting the parts of the human body, which are regarded as **abnormal** when they are enlarged. By abnormal we mean that the body part referred to becomes very different from usual in a strange, worrying, wrong, or dangerous way. Such significance is clearly conveyed when these nouns are used in context. In a context of disapproval, the augmented noun, *amazinyokazi* 'very big teeth', may express abnormality. Consider the following example in this regard:

(53)

UMsomi wayiluma kanye inyama ngamazinyokazi akhe amakhulu, yaphela.

'Msomi gave the meat one bite with his filthy big teeth, and finished it.'

In the above example, it does not necessarily mean that Msomi has big teeth, thus the use of the adjective *-khulu* 'big' with the augmentative noun. The significance expressed here is that of filthiness, due to the way in which Msomi bit the meat. It might also be due to the condition of the teeth that they are referred to as filthy. Such an implication draws the referent, in example (53) Msomi, nearer to the fore. The mere fact that Msomi is regarded as having *amazinyokazi* 'filthy big teeth', tells us that he is perceived as someone who is uncivilized and of low character, of whom the speaker/writer has a low opinion. Such a statement would never be said in the presence of the referent because it could bring him into disrepute. Consider also the following example:

(54)

Unganginyatheli ngalolo *nyawokazi* lwakho olungagezwa!

'Do not stamp on me with that filthy (bigger than normal) foot of yours!'

When said in the context of disgust, the augmented noun, *nyawokazi* 'filthy big foot' in (54) above, conveys the significance of dislike, not of the augmented noun, but of the referent that possesses this feature.

A derogatory attitude with pejoration may be conveyed when the augmentative noun *ubusokazi* 'a frightening face, a face full of scars, a face that is not well groomed' is used in the context of disgust. Consider the following example in this regard:

(55)

Hhayi bo baba, ngiphupha ngibona *ubusokazi* obungayiwa!

No, no father, I see in my dream a face that is beyond ordinary!

3.4 The position in Northern Sotho

Northern Sotho, like Zulu, as discussed in 3.2, employs Meinhof's numbering system. According to Lombard, Van Wyk & Mokgokong (1993: 30), there are 18 noun classes in Northern Sotho. The following is a list of the Northern Sotho classes, the prefixes, example nouns and their semantic contents respectively.

(56)

Class	Prefix	Example	Interpretation	Semantic content
1	mo-	mosadi	'woman'	Persons
2	ba-	basadi	'women'	Regular plural of class 1
1a	Ø	mme	'my mother'	A mixed class consisting of

			persons, animals, birds, insects, plants, names of domestic animals, dances and songs, names of diseases, personification.
2a	bo-	bomme 'our mothers/ mothers'	Distributive and associative plurality
3	mo-	morwalo 'load/freight'	Impersonal objects
4	me-	mehlare 'trees'	Plural of impersonal objects
5	le-	lesogana 'young man'	Natural phenomena Parts of the body Vegetables and fruits Nationality Abstracts Birds and animals Collective concepts
6	ma-	masogana 'young men'	Regular plural of class 5
7	se-	selepe 'axe'	Instruments Language / cultures Typifying conduct Exceptional people Parts of the body Animals and insects Plants
8	di-	dilo 'things'	Regular plural of class 7
9	n-	ntho 'wound'	Animals Parts of the body People Natural phenomena Utility articles Action
10	di-	dinoga 'snakes'	Regular plural of class 9
14	bo-	bophelo 'life'	Abstracts Groups and quantities Locality Ordinal numerals Concrete objects

15	go-	go fa	'to give'	Infinitives
16	fa-	fase	'on the ground'	Locative class
17	go-	godimo	'on top'	Locative class
18	mo-	mošola	'across'	Locative class

(Lombard, Van Wyk & Mokgokong 1993: 30-50)

The semantic contents of the Northern Sotho noun classes do not reveal any trace of a class that contained attributive nouns in the past. In this section of the study Gauton and Taljard's (1988: 114) assumption of the existence of the relics of the emotive class in Northern Sotho will be discussed briefly.

3.5 The possible existence of the relics of an emotive noun class in Northern Sotho

According to Gauton & Taljard (1988: 114), relics of the simultaneous usage of a diminutive and/or emotive prefix together with a diminutive suffix, can be found in Northern Sotho. This phenomenon is illustrated in example (57) below. Compare:

(57) S.32 Northern Sotho:

- *mmutla* (cl.3) (< *mo-butla*) 'rabbit' >
kgabutlana (< *kga*(= *N(cl.9)+*ga*(cl.12))-*butl(a)-ana*)
 'small rabbit'
- *leribiši* (cl.5) 'owl' >
kgaribišana (< *kga*(= *N(cl.9)+*ga*(cl.12))-*ribiš(i)-ana*)
 'small owl / owlet'

(Gauton & Taljard 1988: 114)

3.6 The suffixal strategy as a means to express amelioration and derogation in Northern Sotho

Like Zulu in the previous section, Northern Sotho expresses diminution and augmentation by means of suffixes. In this section of the study we will discuss how amelioration and augmentation is expressed in Northern Sotho, first by the diminutive suffix then by the augmentative suffix.

3.6.1 The expression of amelioration by the diminutive suffix

Diminution in Northern Sotho is expressed by the diminutive suffix *-ana* with its alternative form *-ane*, and *-nyana* or its alternative *-nyane*. The diminutive suffixes *-ana* and *-nyane*, together with their alternative, *-ane* and *-nyane*, express ordinary diminution of nouns. According to Lombard et al.. (1993: 82) these suffixes express relative smallness, describe objects which are smaller than normal, and imply youth. Lombard et al.. (1993: 82) are of the opinion that there are instances where you find that these suffixes will convey an emotional connotation, such as that of love. Consider the following example:

(58)

Mosadi wa ka o na le *molongwana* o mobotse.

'My wife has a well formed little mouth.'

In the context of liking, the speaker refers to the mouth of his wife as well formed. The mouth per se might not be well formed but, because the speaker loves the referent, the referent's mouth seems good and loveable to him. This also tells us more about the good relationship between the speaker and the referent. Compare:

(59)

Mosatšana wa ga go o na le mmele o mobotse.

'Your dear little wife has a beautiful body.'

The sentence in example (59) above conveys endearment as it is said in the context of appreciation of beauty or just admiration.

3.6.2 The expression of derogation by the diminutive suffix

When the diminutive suffix *-ana* or *-nyana* is used in the context of dislike, it conveys the significance of disgust and hate. Consider the following example in this regard:

(60)

Mosadinyana yo a se nago maitshwaro o tšwa kae?

'Where does this good-for-nothing woman without manners come from?'

In other instances, a combination of the diminutive suffix *-ana* and *-nyana* may be used in a noun. This double diminution conveys a more intense form of diminution with a derogatory significance. Compare:

(61)

Noun	Suffix 1	Diminutive noun	Suffix 2	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
mosadi	+ -ana	> mosatšana	+ -nyana	> mosatšanyana	'disgusting woman'

Mosatšanyana wa ga go ke moloi.

'Your good-for-nothing, disgusting wife is a witch.'

3.6.3 The expression of amelioration by the augmentative suffix.

In the *Pretoria Sepedi Corpus (PSC)*, an electronic (machine-readable) corpus of 5.8 million running Sepedi words (tokens) built at the University of Pretoria by G-M. de Schryver and D.J. Prinsloo, the suffix *-gadi* is found as a suffix that expresses "*bong*", gender and / or "*bogolo*", bigness or largeness. Northern Sotho expresses augmentation

by means of the augmentative suffix *-gadi*. According to Lombard et al.. (1993: 83) the term augmentative refers to the enlargement or increasing of an object. When used in an augmentative sense, the augmentative suffix *-gadi* is used to express a positive perception of the referent. Consider the following example in this regard:

(62)

Noun	Suffix	Augmentative noun	Interpretation
kgomo +	-gadi	kgomogadi	'an outstanding cow'
tlou +	-gadi	tlougadi	'an outstanding elephant cow'

(Lombard et al.. 1993: 83)

Kgomo 'cow' is referred to as *kgomogadi* 'an outstanding cow' in the context of appreciation, especially when she performs her duties well. In this case this cow might be giving excessive milk and thus it is appreciated. In the case of *tlougadi* 'an outstanding elephant cow', it might be the way in which she leads the herd that lead to her being appreciated. The context of appreciation in which these nouns are used tells us more about how close to the speaker's heart these referents are.

According to Poulos (1994: 68), certain instances occur in Northern Sotho where suffixes may be used to express sex gender, although to a very limited extent. The suffixes used for this purpose are the diminutive suffix *-ana* and the augmentative/feminine suffix *-gadi*, discussed in paragraphs 3.6.1 and 3.6.3 respectively. Mother tongue speakers state that augmentation in Northern Sotho is mostly expressed by means of adjectives. Poulos' (1994: 68) opinion that it seems as if the augmentative suffix *-gadi* has lost its augmentative significance and is only used presently to express feminine gender, is supported by the use of adjectives in Northern Sotho to express bigness. Consider the following example of the use of the suffix *-gadi* in the expression of gender:

(63)

Noun	Interpretation	Suffix		Gender noun
morutiši	'teacher' +	-gadi	>	morutišigadi 'female teacher'
kgôši	'chief' +	-gadi	>	kgôšigadi 'female chief'

(Poulos 1994: 69)

3.7 Summary

The Zulu noun classes consist of 18 classes, and the Northern Sotho noun classes consist of 17 classes.

The Zulu and Northern Sotho noun class prefixes do not convey any emotive significance.

The emotive significance in both Zulu and Northern Sotho is expressed through the suffixal strategy.

The diminutive suffix *-ana* express smallness, youth and small quantity out of context.

The context within which diminutive nouns and augmentative nouns occur plays a pivotal role in expressing amelioration and/or derogation, in both Zulu and Northern Sotho. In the case of Zulu the use of the diminutive suffix *-ana* with any noun that signifies importance, is derogatory in any context.

In both Zulu and Northern Sotho, double diminution, in most cases conveys a more intense form of diminution with pejorative significance, especially when used with human nouns, although there are instances where amelioration is conveyed.

In the *PZC* it is found that a number of augmentative nouns convey a positive construal of size and shape in context. Another factor is that the part that the said augmentative

noun plays in a certain community contributes to its ameliorative and/or pejorative perception.

CHAPTER 4

The use of a combination of prefixes and suffixes in the expression of variations in size and shape, amelioration and derogation in Bantu

4.1 Introduction

The variations in size and shape, diminution and augmentation, are mostly expressed in Bantu by means of the prefixal strategy, as discussed in chapter 2 of this study. Whilst most African languages employ either the prefixal strategy as discussed in chapters 2, or the suffixal strategy of the South-Eastern Bantu languages discussed in chapter 3, in order to convey these variations in size and shape, there are some Bantu languages that employ, often in addition to these strategies, a combination of both the prefixal and the suffixal strategies. In chapters 2 and 3 of this study we have dealt with the prefixal and the suffixal strategies respectively, together with languages that employ these strategies. In this chapter the focus will be on two of the Bantu languages that, in addition to the prefixal and suffixal strategies, make use of a combination of both the prefixal and the suffixal strategy, to convey size and shape deviations. These languages are Venda and Shona. Poulos (1985: 19-20) noted that in Venda, the variation in size can be expressed in three different ways, namely, by prefix only, by prefix together with suffix, and by suffix only. A similar situation is found in Shona. We will also look at the semantic implications of the simultaneous use of these strategies in one language. This chapter will then be concluded by establishing whether the use of the prefixal and/or suffixal strategy brings about the same or different attributive significance from the one expressed by the simultaneous use of the prefixes together with the suffixes in these languages.

As the use of prefixes in the expression of size and shape deviations in Venda and Shona have been dealt with in chapter 2, this issue will not be discussed here. This chapter will

focus on firstly the use of suffixes in these languages to express size and shape deviations and secondly on the use of a combination of prefixes and suffixes for this purpose.

4.2 The expression of variations in size and shape by means of suffixes in Shona and Venda

Shona and Venda are, according to Wilkes (1990: 36) and Poulos (1985: 19-20) respectively, examples of Bantu languages in which the suffixal strategy is in use. Both these languages use the diminutive suffix *-ana*. The so-called augmentative suffix *-kadzi* in both Venda and Shona is solely used as a feminine suffix and will therefore not be discussed any further here. In the following paragraphs we will deal first with the diminutive suffix in Venda and in Shona, and secondly with the general significance thereof.

4.2.1 The diminutive suffix in Venda

According to Poulos (1990: 83), diminutives in Venda are formed by adding the diminutive suffix *-ana* to the noun. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(64)

Noun	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
thavha +	-ana	thavhana	'small mountain'
nndu +	-ana	nndwana	'small hut'

(Poulos 1990: 83)

In most cases, according to Poulos (1990: 84), the diminutive suffix *-ana* is used to indicate the young of a certain referent. Compare the following example:

(65)

Noun	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
nngu +	-ana	nngwana	'lamb'
khuhu +	-ana	khukhwana	'chicken'

(Poulos 1990: 84)

Apart from the suffix *-ana*, there is another diminutive suffix in Venda, *-nyana*, that is used with certain nouns to convey the idea of a small quantity. Such significance is expressed clearly in context. For instance, in the context of scarcity, the diminutive suffix *-nyana* can be used to indicate the number of what is being referred to as being few. Compare:

(66)

Munyanyani wa Vele ho vha hu tshi tou vha na vhathunyana.

'There were few people at Vele's feast.'

Vho fhiwa phulu na mbudzinyana.

'He was given cattle and a few goats.'

(Poulos 1990: 85)

The diminutive suffix *-nyana* may also be used with certain deverbative nouns, to express the idea of a small amount of, or the idea of shortness. Consider the following example in this regard:

(67)

Verb root	Interpretation	Deverbative	Dim. noun	Meaning
-shum-	'work'	mushumo >	moshumonyana	'a small amount of work'
-imb-	'sing'	luimbo >	luimbonyana	'a short song'

(Poulos 1990: 85)

4.2.2 The diminutive suffix in Shona

Shona is another Bantu language that expresses diminutive ideas, not only by noun class prefixes, but also by means of the diminutive suffixes *-ana* and *-anana*. Consider the following example in this regard:

(68)

Noun	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation	Derived from
mbudzi +	-ana	mbudzana	'kid'	mbudzi 'goat' cl. 9
imbga +	-anana	imbganana	'puppy'	imbga 'dog' cl. 9

(Fortune 1955: 120)

The diminutive suffixes *-ana* and *-anana* indicate the young of, with animate nouns, as indicated in example (68) above, and when used with inanimate nouns they indicate smallness. Compare the following example:

(69)

Noun	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation	Derived from
ndiro +	-ana	ndirwana	'small plate'	ndiro 'plate' cl. 9
mbeu +	-ana	mbewana	'small seed'	mbeu 'seed' cl. 9

(Fortune 1955: 120-121)

4.2.3 The semantic implications of the diminutive suffix in Venda and Shona

The diminutive suffix in Venda is only used with a selected number of nouns. In instances where the diminutive suffix *-ana* or *-nyana* is used with nouns, it indicates:

- smallness - with inanimate nouns

- young of - with animate nouns
- small amount of - with certain deverbative nouns. Consider the examples in (64) to (67) in this regard.

In Shona the use of the diminutive suffix *-ana* or *-anana* brings about the idea of:

- young, not full grown - with animate nouns
- smallness - with inanimate nouns. Consider examples (68) and (69) in this regard.

As far as the expression of amelioration by diminutive suffixes is concerned, Wilkes (1990: 36) is of the opinion that the diminutive suffix *-ana* of the Shona language may express affection in the context of endearment. Compare the following example:

(70)

Noun	Dim. suffix	Dim noun	Interpretation
mbudzi +	-ana	mbudzana	'poor / little goat'

(Wilkes 1990: 36)

According to Wilkes (1990: 36) the significance of endearment expressed by the first interpretation in example (70) is determined by the context within which the diminutive noun is used in Shona. It is unfortunate that Wilkes (1990: 36) does not give the context in which the noun in example (70) can be found and/or used. Compare, however, the following example from O'Neil (1941: 18-25) in which the context of endearment is clear:

(71)

Nyoka i-uraya *mbudzana* yangu ndi-i-da
'The snake is killing the (poor) little goat I love.'

Even though it may be the case that the diminutive suffix has an ameliorative significance, Fortune (1955) does not say whether the diminutive suffixes in Shona convey any form of amelioration. Wilkes' (1990: 36) and O'Neil's (1941: 18-25) examples are the only written references to this phenomenon that I have found so far.

Concerning the expression of derogation by diminutive suffixes in Venda and Shona, Poulos (1990) and Fortune (1955) do not mention such significance when dealing with the diminutive suffixes in these languages.

4.3 The expression of variations in size and shape by means of a combination of prefixes and suffixes in Venda and Shona

Apart from the use of the prefixal and the suffixal strategy in expressing the deviations in size and shape, Venda and Shona also use an additional strategy, that is, the combination of the prefixal and suffixal strategy. These languages use the diminutive prefixes together with the diminutive suffixes to convey deviations in size and shape. This section of the study will first look at such combinations in both Venda and Shona, followed by the semantic significance of these combinations.

4.3.1 The combination of the prefixes and the suffixes in Venda

Poulos (1990: 86) states the following regarding the combination of prefixes and suffixes in Venda:

*"The formation of diminutives and their specific significances in different contexts is further complicated by the fact that in some instances a prefix of one or other of the [...] classes may be used **together with** a diminutive suffix."*

The prefixes that are used together with the diminutive suffix in Venda are the diminutive prefixes *tshi-*, *lu-*, and *ku-* of classes 7, 11, and 20 respectively. Poulos (1990: 87) also states that when the diminutive prefixes of classes 7 and 20, *tshi-* and *ku-* respectively, are used together with the diminutive suffix *-ana*, they can express a derogatory significance.

According to Poulos (1990: 87) such significance is mainly determined by the context within which such a combination is used. Consider the following examples in this regard, (given out of context here):

(72)

Class prefix	Noun stem	Suffix	Dim.noun	Interpretation	Derived from
7	tshi- + -khali +	-ana	<i>tshikalana</i>	'very small clay pot'	khali 'clay pot'
20	ku- + -mbudzi +	-ana	<i>kumbudzana</i>	'very small young goat'	mbudzi 'goat'

(Poulos 1990: 87)

Mother-tongue speakers of Venda state that in the context of love the combination of the prefix *ku-* and the suffix *-ana* may express the significance of affection. Consider the following example in this regard:

(73)

Ndi funa hoku **kumangana** kwanga.

'I love this little kitten of mine.'

In the context of disgust, however, the prefix *ku-* and the suffix *-ana* may convey a derogatory significance. Compare the following example:

(74)

A thi tsha kufuna hoku **kumangana** ngauro kola nama yothe.

'I no longer love this (filthy) little kitten because it ate all the meat.'

With regards to the class 11 prefix, Poulos (1990: 87) is of the opinion that any noun stem that takes the class 11 prefix *lu-* and the suffix *-ana*, usually has a derogatory significance in any context. Compare:

(75)

Class prefix	Stem	Suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
11 lu- +	mbudzi	+ -ana	lubudzana	'very small thin young goat' (usually derogatory)

(Poulos 1990: 87)

Also compare the following example:

(75a)

Ndo wana mapfene a tshi khou ula *lubudzana* lwa mudzulatsini wanga thavhani.

'I found the baboons eating the sickly and thin young goat of my neighbour on the mountain.'

4.3.2 The combination of the prefixes and suffixes in Shona

According to Wilkes (1990: 36) the diminutive class prefix *ka-* of class 12 in Shona, is used together with the diminutive suffix *-ana* to convey variations in size and shape. Compare the following example:

(76)

Class Prefix	Noun	Dim. suffix	Diminutive noun	Interpretation
12 ka-	mbudzi	-ana	ka-mbudz-ana	1. 'very little goat'

2. 'inferior goat'

(Wilkes 1990: 36)

According to the interpretation given by Wilkes (1990: 36) the diminutive noun *kambudzana* 'very little goat' indicates that the diminutive prefix *ka-* together with the diminutive suffix *-ana* convey different degrees of smallness. Consider the example in (76) in this regard. Wilkes' (1990: 36) second interpretation of the noun *kambudzana* 'inferior goat' indicates that a combination of the diminutive prefix and suffix in Shona may express derogation. The derogatory significance expressed by the second interpretation of the noun *kambudzana* is, according to Wilkes (1990: 36), determined by the context within which such a noun occurs. In order to support Wilkes' (1990: 36) opinion on the second interpretation of the diminutive noun *kambudzana*, compare the following example from O'Neil (1941: 24) in which the said noun is used in the context of disgust to convey a derogatory significance:

(77)

Mbada i-ri ku-uruya *kambudzana*; u-no-i-ona.

'The leopard (it) is killing the inferior goat; you see it.'

(O'Neil 1941: 24)

It might happen that the owner of the goat in example (77) above has been annoyed by the continuous unacceptable behaviour of his goat, so s/he feels happy that it is killed by the leopard.

4.3.3 The semantic implications of the combination of both the prefix and the suffix in Venda and in Shona

According to Poulos (1990: 86-87), it appears in Venda as though different degrees of diminution may be achieved by employing a combination of prefixes and suffixes, for example:

(78)

tshikali 'small clay pot (somewhat broadish)'

tshikalana 'very small clay pot.'

(Poulos 1990: 87)

As indicated earlier, Poulos (1990: 87) states that a form that takes the prefix *lu-* together with the diminutive suffix *-ana* is usually derogatory in any context. Consider example (75) in this regard.

In Shona the simultaneous use of the diminutive prefix *ka-* and the diminutive suffix *-ana* intensifies the diminutive significance. Compare the following example:

(79)

Noun	Interpretation
mbudzi	'goat'
kambudzi/mbudzana	'little goat'
kambudzana	'very little goat'

(Wilkes 1990: 36)

O'Neil (1941: 19) is of the opinion that the prefix *ka-* and the suffix *-ana* are the diminishing prefix and suffix respectively. This statement can be interpreted as saying that the use of the prefix *ka-* together with the suffix *-ana* lead to the diminishing significance of the referent. Consider the example given in O'Neil (1941: 19) in this regard:

(80)

Diminishing	Interpretation	Diminutive	Derived from
Noun			
kambgana	'a little puppy'	imbgana 'a puppy'	imbga 'a dog'
kahwaiana	'a little lamb'	hwaiana 'a lamb'	hwai 'a sheep'

Fortune (1955) does not indicate any combination of the prefix and the suffix in Shona that may lead to an ameliorative or derogatory significance when dealing with the formation of diminutives.

Wilkes (1990: 37) is of the opinion that in languages where the suffixal strategy had developed, the prefixal strategy gradually disappeared. This means that the suffixal strategy had completely replaced the prefixal one. Wilkes' (1990: 37) sentiments, concerning the issue of the replacement of the prefixal strategy by the suffixal strategy, are echoed by Bosch (1997: 2) when she say:

"The fact that Zulu today forms diminutives by means of a suffix -ana instead of a class prefix, could precisely be the reason for the disappearance of class 12/13. In other words, the diminutive suffix gradually displaced the class 12/13 prefix and caused them to become redundant."

The question arising from Wilkes' (1990: 37) and Bosch's (1997: 2) statements will then be whether the suffixal strategy, that is said to have led to the demise of the prefixal one, carries the same semantic significance as its prefixal counterparts. The investigation of the possible semantic overlap between the prefixal and suffixal strategies, in expressing amelioration and derogation in Bantu, will constitute the content of the concluding chapter 6.

4.4 Summary

Most Bantu languages express variation in size and shape, amelioration and derogation by means of the noun class prefixes, whilst other Bantu languages such as the South Eastern Bantu languages, utilize suffixes for this purpose.

In some Bantu languages where suffixes are used, the diminutive suffixes indicate the smallness of an object, or its youth in the case of animate nouns, without any pejorative implications.

The diminutive suffix *-ana* in Venda combines with the diminutive prefixes to express different degrees of diminution. Consider the examples in (72) in this regard.

When the diminutive prefixes of classes 7 and 20, in Venda, are used together with the diminutive suffix *-ana*, they indicate the intensity of the diminution. Such intensity of diminution is usually associated with derogation and/or amelioration, depending on the context within which the diminutive noun is found. Compare again the examples in (73) and (74).

Forms that take the class 11 prefix *lu-* together with the diminutive suffix *-ana* in Venda, have a derogatory significance in any context. Consider again the examples in (75).

A combination of a diminutive prefix and a diminutive suffix in Shona intensifies the diminutive significance. Consider again the example in (79).

CHAPTER 5

The relationship between augmentative and diminutive suffixes and the notion [+feminine]

5.1 Introduction

According to Poulos (1994: 68) sex gender does not play a role in the classification of nouns in the Bantu languages, especially of the South-Eastern zone. The lack of noun class prefixes to signify male or female does not mean that such a distinction is not made in these languages. From the literatures studied, it became evident that these languages use the augmentative and/or the diminutive suffixes, to a certain extent, to express the feminine gender. This study will investigate the relationship between augmentative and diminutive suffixes, and the notion [+feminine], from the position in Zulu, then in Northern Sotho. The occurrence of the Zulu feminine suffix *-azana/-azane*, apparently a combination of the augmentative and diminutive suffixes, will also form part of this study.

5.2 The relationship between the augmentative suffix and the notion [+feminine] in Zulu

Van Eeden (1956: 727) is of the opinion that in Zulu the augmentative suffix *-kazi* is used, to a limited extent, with nouns indicating persons or animals to indicate the feminine gender. This suffix, according to Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 144), is generally suffixed to the generic terms to form the feminine gender in animals. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(81)

Generic term	Meaning	Suffix	Female noun	Interpretation
imvu	'a sheep'	-kazi >	imvukazi	'an ewe'
inkukhu	'a fowl'	-kazi >	isikhukhukazi	'a hen'

(Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 144)

When the feminine nouns are formed from the generic terms denoting persons, using the augmentative suffix *-kazi*, such nouns gain an elevated status and the referent is held in high esteem. Compare:

(82)

Generic term	Meaning	Suffix	Female noun	Interpretation
inkosi	chief'	-kazi	Inkosikazi	'principal wife of a chief or headman'
"	"	"	"	'a married woman'
"	"	"	"	'lady'

In the Zulu culture, it is assumed that a woman married to a chief has to carry herself in a respectful manner expected of all who are married to the chiefs. It is due to this reason that these women are called *amakhosikazi* 'chief's wives'. The noun *inkosikazi* is also used to refer to a married woman. This noun, *inkosikazi* 'a married woman', can be used in the context of courtesy to refer to a woman of high stature. In this regard the noun *inkosikazi* carries the meaning of 'a lady'. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1995: 659) defines the noun 'lady' as follows:

"**lady**' [...] *1 a woman*

2 a woman with dignity and good manners

3 a woman of good family and social position [...]"

Such an elevated status is not just given to any married woman but only to those women, married, single or divorced, who carry themselves and/or live according to the accepted norms of their societies. In this way, the augmentative suffix has been used to elevate the status of the referent from being just a married woman to a woman, married or not, regarded as a woman of high values.

The augmentative *-kazi* can positively increase the status of a noun in such a way that the said noun ends up being used with an added value it did not have originally. An example to illustrate this statement is the noun *utho (into)* 'a thing', which occurs frequently in the *Pretoria Zulu corpus (PZC)*, an electronic (machine-readable) corpus of 5.0 million running Zulu words (tokens) built at the University of Pretoria by G-M. de Schryver, M.J. Dlomo and D.J. Prinsloo, organised chronologically and consisting of a number of sub-corpora stratified according to genre. As the definition of this noun shows, *utho/into* is just a thing which might or might not have any value. When this noun is used with the augmentative suffix *-kazi*, its whole meaning is transferred from being just a thing to something (female) of high value. This can be well illustrated in the following example:

(83)

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Female noun	Interpretation
utho/into	'a thing'	-kazi	intokazi	'a fine girl/woman'

The adjective 'fine' from the interpretation of the noun *intokazi* 'a fine girl/woman' is defined in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995: 52) as follows:

"...of a very high quality or standard"

In the PZC, the noun *umlanda* 'brother-in-law/sister-in law' is found to be used with the augmentative suffix *-kazi*, to indicate the feminine gender. This noun is explained in the *English-Zulu, Zulu-English Dictionary* (1990: 448) as follows:

"a term used by a man for any collateral member of his wife's family"

When this noun is used with *-kazi*, it refers, not to **any** collateral member of the man's wife's family, but **only** to the female collateral members of the man's wife's family. Consider the following example in this regard:

(84)

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Female noun	Interpretation
umlanda	'brother/sister in law'	-kazi	umlandakazi	'female collateral member of the man's wife's family.'

There is an interesting fact about this augmentative suffix *-kazi*. When used with personal nouns already feminine in form, this suffix conveys a rather derogatory and insulting significance, for example:

(85)

Noun	Suffix	Augmentative noun	Interpretation
umfazi +	-kazi	umfazikazi	'a great hulk of a woman'

(Doke 1968: 73)

This section can thus be concluded by saying that, the augmentative suffix *-kazi* is used to form feminine nouns from generic terms denoting both animals and persons. With the generic nouns denoting persons, the value of the formed feminine noun is increased in a positive manner. In other rare instances, a feminine noun with high value is formed by

suffixing *-kazi* to a general term that is [-human]. Consider in this regard the feminine noun *intokazi* 'a fine girl/woman' in example (83). The augmentative suffix *-kazi* is also used to express a negative significance when suffixed to nouns that are already feminine in form.

5.3 The occurrence of the Zulu feminine suffix *-azana/-azane*, and *-kazana/e*, apparently a combination of the augmentative and the diminutive suffixes

Poulos et al.. (1998: 108) state that the suffix *azana/azane* is usually suffixed to noun stems in order to indicate both female and youth. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(86)

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Female	Interpretation
inkosi	'a chief'	-azana/e	inkosazana	'chief's daughter/young lady'
imbuzi	'a goat'	-azana/e	isibhuzazana	'young female goat not yet kidded'

(Taljaard & Bosch 1993: 142, & Doke 1968: 77)

As can be deduced from the examples in (86), the feminine nouns formed by suffixing the diminutive suffix *-azana/e* to the generic noun term denoting both persons and animals, have a significance of youth. To cite another example, *ilunga* is a noun referring to a black/red beast with white stripes whilst *ilungakazi* refers to a black/red cow with white stripes. The female young thereof is called *ilungazana*. Compare the following example:

(87)

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Female	Interpretation
ilunga	'black/red beast with white stripes'	-azana/e	ilungazana/e	'black/red (heifer) with white stripes'

(Poulos et al.. 1998: 108)

The feminine noun *inkosazana*, in example (86), is defined in the *English-Zulu Zulu-English Dictionary* (1990: 404) as follows:

"-khosazana (inkosazana [...])

1. *Eldest daughter of the chief house in a family; daughter of chief.*
2. *Term of respect for any unmarried lady. [...]"*

From the above definition of the noun *inkosazana*, one can deduce that apart from the expression of [+female] and [+youth], the suffix *-azana/e* conveys respect to certain [+human] terms, depending on the social status of the referent.

In addition to the diminutive suffix *-azana*, there is also another form of the diminutive suffix, that is *-kazana*, which has nothing to do with the feminine gender. This suffix, according to Doke (1968: 78), implies poverty. The suffix *-kazana* brings about an insulting significance and/or the implication of insignificance, when used in the context of disgust, for example:

(88)

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Dim. noun	Interpretation
umuntu	'person'	-kazana	umuntukazana	'poor person/ insignificant'

(Doke 1968: 78)

Ungaqali ungilethele *umuntukazana* nje uthi uzongilobolela.

'Never bring an insignificant (nobody) to pay lobola.'

Noun	Meaning	Suffix	Dim. noun	Interpretation
abafo	'men'	-kazana	abafokazana	'poor men'

(Doke 1968: 78)

Abafokazana abamenyiwe kulo mcimbi. Wena-ke ungene kanjani?

'Poor men are not invited to this party. How did you gain entrance?'

What is interesting with this form of the suffix, *-kazana*, is that it is a clear combination of the feminine suffix *-kazi* and the diminutive suffix *-ana*. When used with nouns that already refer to feminine gender, those nouns then gain the ameliorative significance of being loveable, especially when used in the context of endearment. Consider the following example in this regard:

(89)

UNkosikazana wami uyagulagula kulezi zinsuku.

'My precious wife is a little bit ill these days.'

UMlobokazana kadadewethu ukhuthela kabi.

'My sister's good hearted daughter-in-law is a workaholic.'

It seems as if the suffix *-kazana* in examples (88) and (89) above is a combination of the augmentative suffix *-kazi* and the diminutive suffix *-ana*. This can be further illustrated by the following example, where both the augmentative and diminutive suffixes are added to a generic noun *inkosi* 'king/paramount chief', to bring about the ameliorative significance. Compare:

(90)

Noun	Aug. suffix	Feminine noun	Dim. suffix	Interpretation
<i>inkosi</i>	+ <i>-kazi</i>	<i>inkosikazi</i>	+ <i>-ana</i>	<i>inkosikazana</i> 'a dear wife'

It is therefore clear that the implication conveyed in example (82) is not the only significance expressed by this suffix, as can be seen from examples (83) and (84), where the suffix *-kazana* brings about an ameliorative significance.

5.4 The relationship between the augmentative suffix and the notion [+feminine] in Northern Sotho

It is found in the PSC that the Northern Sotho suffix *-gadi* expresses **gender**, bigness and largeness, as discussed in paragraph 3.6.3 of this study. On the other hand Poulos (1994: 68) states very clearly that *-gadi* expresses, not any gender, but 'female' gender. Poulos (1994: 68) also says that even if *-gadi* is found to express female gender, such an occurrence has become very rare in this language. This is what Poulos (1994: 68) has to say about the feminine suffix *-gadi*:

"Presently the suffix -gadi is only used to express femininity."

Shortly after this statement Poulos (1994: 68-69) comments as follows about the same suffix *-gadi*:

"When used to express female gender, this suffix is found with a limited number of stems only; and for this reason it is difficult to give general rules regarding its distribution."

We can then conclude by saying that not only did the suffix *-gadi* lose its augmentative significance, as discussed in 3.6.3, but it is also on the verge of losing its significance in expressing femininity in Northern Sotho. This opinion is supported in Poulos' (1994: 69), where adjectives which denote colour are used together with the diminutive suffixes *-ana* to express feminine gender. This will be illustrated with examples in the following paragraph.

5.5 The relationship between the diminutive suffix and the notion [+feminine] in Northern Sotho

Poulos (1994: 68) is of the opinion that in Northern Sotho the diminutive suffix *-ana* denotes female gender with regard to animals when used with adjective stems which express colour. Compare the following example in this regard:

(91)

Adj. stem	Meaning	Masculine gender	Suffix	Female Interpretation
-so	'black'	ntsho 'black ox/bull'	-ana >	swana 'black cow'
-khunôu	'red'	khunôu 'red ox/bull'	-ana >	khunwana 'red cow / heifer'

(Poulos 1994 : 69)

Poulos (1994) further says that another alternative in expressing femininity with regard to animals is through the possessive construction as in the following examples:

(92)

kgômo ya tshadi 'female cow'

mpša ya tshadi 'female dog'
Poulos (1994: 69)

5.6 Summary

The augmentative and diminutive suffixes are used to a certain extent, in both Zulu and Northern Sotho, to express the feminine gender. This is because these languages use not only these suffixes, but also other ways in forming the feminine gender. For example, when the feminine gender is indicated with personal nouns in Zulu, these nouns are followed by the descriptive possessive *isifazana/isifazane* 'female person'. Compare:

(93)

umfundisi **wesifazane** 'a lady teacher'
(Doke 1968: 71)

According to Taljaard & Bosch (1993: 145), it is more common to use the relative construction with the possessives to indicate gender. Consider the following example in this regard:

(94)

Ngifundisa **abesifazane** bodwa. 'I teach females only.'

The nouns that take the Zulu diminutive suffix *-azana/azane* in the formation of the feminine gender seem to be considered with more affection than the feminine gender nouns formed by the augmentative suffix. Consider again example (89) in this regard.

The suffix *-kazana/-kazane* in Zulu brings about the feminine gender usually with endearing implications. This suffix is assumed to be a combination of the augmentative suffix *-kazi* and the diminutive suffix *-ana*. Context determines the derogatory or the ameliorative significances expressed by this suffix.

The augmentative suffix *-kazi* elevates the status of certain feminine nouns giving them attributes they did not have originally. Consider again the examples in (82) and (83) in this regard.

In Northern Sotho the feminine gender is conveyed by means of other forms in addition to (a) the use of the augmentative suffix *-gadi*, and (b) the use of the diminutive suffix *-ana* with adjectives that signify the colours of cattle, as has been illustrated in example (91). A possessive construction is often used with generic terms to indicate the feminine form, for example:

(95)

Motho wa mosadi .	'A female person.'
Mpša ya tshadi	'A female dog.'
Mopresidente wa mosadi	'The female president.'

It can then be concluded that in Northern Sotho the suffix *-gadi* is losing or has lost its significance of augmentation and that of expressing the female gender.

CHAPTER 6

The possible semantic overlap between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes, and/or between the meanings expressed by attributive class prefixes and so-called "attributive suffixes"

6.1 Introduction

There is a tendency in Bantu to express any variations in size and shape by means of the prefixal strategy, as discussed in chapter 2 of this study. In such cases, the prefixes involved are primarily attributive in significance. This means that amongst others, the attributive prefixes convey diminutive, augmentative, ameliorative and pejorative meanings. From the content of the third and the fourth chapters of this study, it has become evident that the prefixal strategy is not the only strategy employed in Bantu to express attribution. There is a general pattern that emerges amongst the languages in the Bantu family, which involves the suffixal strategy in conveying these attributes. For the purpose of this study, such suffixes, when used to express amelioration and/or derogation, will be referred to as "attributive suffixes". These attributive suffixes have been discussed in chapter 3 of this study.

As if the two strategies mentioned above were not enough, a third pattern of expressing attribution also emerges, in which both the attributive prefixes and the attributive suffixes are used simultaneously. This third strategy has been discussed in chapter 4 of this study. An interesting fact about this third pattern or strategy is that it occurs in languages, which already have a strategy of conveying the significances of the variations in size and shape. In Shona, for example, the variations in size and shape are expressed by means of the attributive prefixes of classes 12/13, by means of the attributive suffix *-ana*, and by means of the combination of both the prefixal and the suffixal strategies, that is *ka-...-ana*. This study is going to investigate further whether there is a possible semantic

overlap between meanings expressed by attributive prefixes, the so-called attributive suffixes, and the combination of both the prefixal and the suffixal strategies.

6.2 The possible semantic overlap between the meanings expressed by the attributive class prefixes, the attributive suffixes, and/or between the meanings expressed by the attributive class prefixes and so-called attributive suffixes

Wilkes (1990: 37) has noticed that in languages where the suffixal strategy had developed, it usually led to the 'death' and/or disappearance of the prefixal strategy. From what Wilkes' (1990) observation mean that the semantic implications that were conveyed by the attributive prefixes would automatically be transferred to the attributive suffixes, especially in languages where the demise of the prefixal strategy occurred. If this is a norm, what happens then to languages like Shona, to name but one, that actively employs all three strategies in this regard? This study will now focus on the semantic implications conveyed by each of the three strategies, in the languages where such strategies are employed.

6.3 The semantic implications expressed by the attributive prefixes

In order to indicate the variety of semantic implications expressed by the attributive prefixes, the significances of the attributive class prefixes of Shona, Venda and Ganda will be discussed here as representative examples of this phenomenon. In example (25), a list of Bantu languages and their attributive prefixes has been given. In this study the semantic implications of each of the classes listed in example (25) will be discussed, starting with that of the diminutive prefixes, and continuing to the semantic implications of the augmentative prefixes in Shona, Venda and Ganda.

6.3.1 The semantic implications of the diminutive prefixes

In Shona, the diminutive prefixes of classes 12/13, and 19, *ka-*, *tu-* and *si-* respectively, signify small things usually regarded in a favourable light, as pleasing to the eye. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(96)

Class	Diminutive noun	Interpretation	Derived from
12	kana	'small offspring'	mnana 'child' cl 1
13	twana	plural of 12	
19	sana	'small child'	same as above

(Fortune 1955: 94 & 103)

According to Fortune (1955: 94) the effect of these diminutives may sometimes be derogatory, especially when these prefixes are used with stems which indicate something large or important. The noun *munhu* 'person' in Shona refers to a human being/person, which is an important entity. When used with the diminutive prefix *ka-* it becomes *kamunhu* 'small person', which is derogatory in significance, meaning either a good-for-nothing person or someone of a low status.

In the case of Venda, diminution is expressed by the class 11 and 20 prefixes. Poulos (1990: 87) is of the opinion that the class 11 prefix *lu-* has a derogatory significance in any context. Compare:

(97)

Class prefix	Noun	Dim noun	Interpretation	Derived from
11	lu- mbudzi	lubudzi	'small thin goat' (usually derogatory)	mbudzi 'goat' cl 9

(Poulos 1990: 87)

A normal significance of variations in size and shape is conveyed in Venda by the use of the class 20 prefix *ku-*, consider the following example in this regard:

(98)

Class prefix	Noun	Dim. noun	Interpretation	Derived from
20	ku- mulenzhe	kudenzhe	'short leg'	mulenzhe 'leg' cl 3

(Poulos 1990: 82)

In the above example, that is (98), there is nothing unusual about the shortness of the leg. One should bear in mind though that a derogatory significance, expressing a low opinion of the referent, might be determined by the context within which the diminutive prefix *ku-* is used. Consider the following in this regard:

(99)

Kusadzi uku ku na vhuyada.

'This short woman is always dirty.'

(Poulos 1990: 83)

In the context of disapproval *kusadzi* 'short woman' conveys a derogatory significance. The very same diminutive noun, *kusadzi* 'short woman', may be used in a favourable context to express endearment. Compare:

(100)

Kusadzi uku a si u naka.

'This small woman is very beautiful.'

(Poulos 1990: 83)

A diminutive significance is expressed in Ganda by using class 12 and 13 prefixes, for example:

(101)

Class prefix	Dim. noun	Interpretation	Derived from
12 ka-	kalenzi	'little boy'	mulenzi 'boy' cl. 1

(Cole 1967: 44)

The class 12 prefix *ka-* has a diminutive connotation in Ganda. Depending on the context within which such diminutive forms are used, they may have a pejorative implication.

6.3.2 The semantic implications of augmentative prefixes

The idea of bigness and greatness is expressed in Shona by using the class 21 prefix *zi-*. All nouns of class 21 are augmentatives indicating great size. Consider the following example in this regard:

(102)

Class prefix	Aug. noun	Interpretation	Derived from
21 zi-	buka	'large animal'	mhuka 'animal' cl 9

(Fortune 1955: 104)

Besides having the purpose of describing great size, the augmentative class prefix *zi-* in Shona may be used to express greatness. Compare the following example:

(103)

Cienda iwe *zījaya*.

'Go on now, you great big man.'

(Fortune 1955: 105)

Augmentatives in Venda are formed by the class 21 prefix *di-*. Nouns that are used in an augmentative sense may be associated with some or other form of ameliorative and/or derogative significance. As indicated in chapter 2 of this study, the conveyance of such an ameliorative and/or derogatory significance is dependent on the context within which the noun is used. Consider the following examples in this regard:

(104)

Class prefix	Noun stem	Aug. noun	Interpretation	Derived from
21	di- thoho	ditoho	'a big (useless) head'	thoho 'head' cl 9

(Poulos 1990: 88)

Augmentatives in Ganda are formed by the class 20 and 22 prefixes, *gu-* and *ga-* respectively. According to Cole (1967: 51) the augmentative class 20, is a relatively small class with all its nouns being augmentative in significance, often with a pejorative implication of sinisterness.

6.4 The semantic implications of the attributive suffixes

There are a few Shona nouns, according to Fortune (1955: 120), with which the diminutive suffix *-ana* is used. In such cases *-ana* will have a meaning of 'young; not full-grown', with animate nouns, whilst conveying the idea of smallness with inanimate nouns. Consider examples (68) and (69) in this regard.

The Venda diminutive suffix *-ana* conveys the significance of 'smallness, shortness and the young of' some or other noun. Consider again example (64) and (65) in this regard. The choice of significance will depend on the nature of the noun that has been used. Apart from the significances listed above, various attitudes can be expressed by a speaker when he uses diminutive forms in Venda, and these attitudes are dependent on the context within which a diminutive is used.

In Northern Sotho the diminutive suffixes are *-ana* and *-nyana*. They express the idea of smallness and/or the young of certain nouns. The augmentative/feminine suffix *-gadi* expresses gender and/or bigness or largeness. Refer to paragraph 3.6.3 in this regard.

Like Northern Sotho, Zulu employs the services of the diminutive suffixes *-ana* and *-nyana*, whilst augmentation is expressed by the augmentative suffix *-kazi*. These suffixes, that is the diminutive and augmentative suffix, express smallness, youth, and bigness and monstrosity, respectively. Such suffixes may also be used in context to express amelioration and/or derogation. Consider paragraph 3.3 in this regard.

6.5 Summary

The variations in size and shape, as well as the emotive perceptions that accompany such variations, are commonly expressed in Bantu by means of the attributive class prefixes. There are some Bantu languages though, that employ the attributive suffixes and/or the combination of both the prefixes and the suffixes to express these significances, as discussed in chapters 2 and 4 of this study.

In Bantu languages such as Venda and Shona, where more than one attribution strategy is found, the different strategies show the different degrees of diminution and/or augmentation, as well as the emotive perceptions of these attributes. Paragraph 4.3 is to be considered in this regard. In this way, the prefixal strategy does not replace the suffixal strategy but instead both these strategies are used to intensify the various significances.

The South-Eastern Bantu languages, represented in this study by Zulu and Northern Sotho, employ the attributive suffixes to express variations in size and shape, as well as the emotive perceptions that accompany such variations, as discussed in chapter 3 of this study.

In the instances where relics of the attributive prefix are found in the South-Eastern Bantu languages, such relics signify endearment and/or derogation, depending on the context within which such nouns are used. Consider examples (35) and (36) in this regard.

In Zulu and Northern Sotho, where the attributive prefix is said to have disappeared, the expression of the emotive perceptions of the variations in size and shape has been taken over by the attributive suffixes. This implies that, if it is the function of the attributive noun class prefixes to express amelioration and/or derogation in the Bantu languages represented by Venda, Shona, and Ganda in this study, then such a function is performed by the use of the so-called attributive suffixes in the South-Eastern Bantu languages.

According to Appleyard (1850: 106), diminutive nouns in Zulu are formed by affixing the diminutive suffixes *-ana* and *-azana* or *-anyana*, depending on the different kinds or degrees of diminution intended to be expressed. This study has shown that there is indeed a semantic overlap between the Bantu prefixal strategy and the suffixal strategy employed by the South-Eastern Bantu languages, in the expression of variations in size and shape, amelioration and/or derogation.

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