

## CHAPTER 5

### MORPHOLOGICAL DEFFERENCES BETWEEN SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN NDEBELE

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the focus falls on the morphological features that distinguish these two speech forms from one another. According to Crystal (1997:249), morphology is a branch of grammar, which studies the structure of words, primarily through the use of the morpheme construct. The morpheme is described by Lyons (1968:181) as a minimal unit of grammatical analysis – the unit of ‘lowest’ rank out of which words, the units of next ‘highest’ rank are composed.

Morphemes are normally analysed in terms of the two basic features that constitute a morpheme, that is, their form and their meaning. Many morphemes of a language may appear in different forms, depending on the context in which they appear. In such instances, it is convenient to select the variant with the most common occurrence as the norm or basic variant of the morpheme. Such a form is used to represent all the other variant forms of the morpheme and is also the one that is used when referring to such a morpheme. For instance, the subject concord of Class 1 and 1a in Southern Ndebele appears in several variants, i.e. **u-**, **w-**, **a-**, **ka-**, and so on. Instead of having to repeat all these variants when referring to this concord, only the basic or norm variant **u-** is used. (See Wilkes, 1971:13 for more details in this regard.)

Unlike their formal features, the semantic features of morphemes are more complicated in the sense that in many languages, notably the African languages, morphemes may exhibit two kinds of meanings – a lexical meaning or dictionary meaning and what some linguists regard as a grammatical meaning (Louwrens, 1994:114). A morpheme is considered to have a grammatical meaning when it does not exhibit any semantic features

but fulfils a certain grammatical function. In the African languages all verbal roots, for instance, have lexical meaning, while most verbal affixes, such as concordial morphemes, have grammatical meaning.

Linguists sometimes distinguish between “free” and “bound” morphemes (Langacker, 1967:75). Free morphemes are those that can stand alone as independent words and are always monomorphemic in structure. Examples of free morphemes in Southern Ndebele are words such as:

- |     |       |           |        |                       |
|-----|-------|-----------|--------|-----------------------|
| (1) | godu  | ‘again’   | du     | ‘of quietness’        |
|     | na    | ‘if’      | mbondo | ‘of speaking briefly’ |
|     | kanti | ‘in fact’ | bhe    | ‘of hotness’          |

Words such as the ones above are free morphemes in Southern Ndebele, because they are monomorphemic in structure and as a result cannot be broken up into smaller linguistic units, that is, into bound morphemes.

Bound morphemes, on the other hand, can never function on their own as they always form part of a larger entity, that is, a word. They can, in fact, be regarded as the building blocks of words as they are the units by means of which complex or polymorphemic words are constructed. Most words in the African languages are polymorphemic, that is, they are constructed by means of two or more bound morphemes as, for instance, in the case of Southern Ndebele verb: **bakhambile** which consists of a subject concord **ba-**, a verbal root **-khamb-** and a perfect ending **-ile**.

In this and the following chapters where the morphological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele are analysed and discussed, only the bound morphemes have been taken into account. Differences between these two languages with regard to free morphemes, or monomorphemic words, are not considered here as they form part of the lexical differences that occur between these languages. In this chapter, the morphological

differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele are discussed with reference to the following word categories in which these differences occur –

- nouns
- pronouns

However, before this is done, it is necessary to first qualify what is meant in this thesis by the term ‘morphological differences’. For the purpose of this investigation morphological differences are regarded as either (a) a difference in the morphological structure of comparable words or constructions or (b) a difference in the phonological form of the same morpheme. An example of (a), for instance, is the difference in the formation of the direct relative. In Northern Ndebele, on the one hand, a Sotho-type of construction that consists of a demonstrative pronoun followed by verbal or non-verbal complement in the situative mood is used for this purpose. In Southern Ndebele, on the other hand, the direct relative is formed by means of a relative concord that is attached to a verbal or non-verbal complement. Compare the following examples in this regard.

**Southern Ndebele**

**Northern Ndebele**

(2) Umuntu **okhulumako** nguwe.

Munru **lo** asumayelako guwe.

‘The person who speaks is you.’

Izinja **ezilwako** ngezakho

Tinja **leti tilwako** ntakho

‘The dogs that are fighting are yours.’

Baphi abantu **abadala** ?

Baphi banru **laba badala** ?

‘Where are the old people?’

An example of (b) is the difference in the form of the class prefix of Class 1a. In Southern Ndebele this prefix is **u-** throughout, whereas in Northern Ndebele it is

sometimes an **i-** or a syllabic nasal **n** or **m** (and sometimes a zero prefix). Compare the following examples in this regard.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
(3)	<b>uyihlo</b>		<b>iyihlo</b>	‘your father’
	<b>uyise</b>		<b>iyise</b>	‘his/her father’
	<b>unina</b>		<b>nnina</b>	‘his/her mother’
	<b>unyoko</b>		<b>nnyoko</b>	‘your mother’
	<b>ubaba</b>		<b>bhabha</b>	‘father’
	<b>umalume</b>		<b>malume</b>	‘uncle’

### **5.2 Morphological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele in the noun class system**

Meinhof (1932:39-40) identifies 21 noun classes in Ur-Bantu. In most of the South-Eastern Bantu languages such as the Nguni and Sotho languages, some of the noun classes postulated by Meinhof do not occur while others have been reduced to a single noun class. Ur-Bantu noun classes that do not occur in the Nguni languages are Classes 12, 13, 19 and 20 while the content of Classes 16 and 18 in these languages have been channelled to Class 17. Poulos (1985:16) refers to the latter process as noun class reduction. Southern and Northern Ndebele both have experienced a further noun class reduction process with the disappearance of Class 11 in these languages. This has resulted in the transfer of the nouns that originally belonged to this class to Class 5 (Wilkes, 1997:78 and Skhosana, 1998:71-73). Compare the following examples in this regard.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	<b>Zulu</b>	
	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Class 11</b>	
(4)	<b>ilwandle</b>	<b>liwandle</b>	<b>ulwandle</b>	‘sea’
	<b>iphondo</b>	<b>libondo</b>	<b>uphondo</b>	‘horn’

ikhuni	likhuni	ukhuni	‘wood’
inwabu	liwobu	unwabu	‘chameleon’

### 5.2.1 Morphological differences in the noun class prefixes of Southern and Northern Ndebele

In Southern Ndebele, as in most other Nguni languages such as isiZulu and isiXhosa, all noun class prefixes comprise two formatives. They are the so-called *pre-prefix*, that is, initial vowel of the class prefix and the *real or basic* class prefix that makes up the remainder of the class prefix and that follows on the pre-prefix. In Northern Ndebele, by contrast, the structure of the noun class prefix is the same as that of the noun class prefixes in the other Tekela languages such as siSwati. In other words, it only consists of the basic class prefix, which is the class prefix without a pre-prefix (initial vowel). Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele noun class prefixes in this regard.

Southern Ndebele			Northern Ndebele		
(5) Cl. 1:	<b>u-m(u)</b>	> umntwana ‘child’	<b>mu-</b>	>	munswana
Cl. 2:	<b>a-ba</b>	> abantu ‘people’	<b>ba-</b>	>	banru
Cl. 2a	<b>a-bo</b>	> abobamkhulu ‘grandfathers’	<b>bo-</b>	>	bonkhulu
		> aboyihlo ‘your fathers’		>	boyihlo
Cl. 3:	<b>u-mu</b>	> umuzi ‘home/kraal’	<b>mu-</b>	>	muti
Cl. 4:	<b>i-mi</b>	> imizi ‘homes/kraals’	<b>mi-</b>	>	miti

#### 5.2.1.1 The noun Class prefix of Class 1a in Southern and Northern Ndebele

A remarkable difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the system of noun class prefixes is concerned is the form and occurrence of the class prefix of Class 1a. Apart from the fact that this prefix is not consistently used with nouns in Class 1a in Northern Ndebele, it is also unique in that it has two forms, both of which are different from the form that this prefix displays in all the other Nguni languages. These forms are the vowel **i** and a syllabic nasal [N] that assimilate to the following sound. Compare the following examples in Northern and Southern Ndebele in this regard.



	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
(6)	<b>uyihlo</b>	<b>iyihlo</b>	‘your father’
	<b>uyise</b>	<b>iyise</b>	‘his father’
	<b>unina</b>	<b>nnina</b>	‘his mother’
	<b>unyoko</b>	<b>nnyoko</b>	‘your mother’
	<b>umma</b>	<b>mma</b>	‘mother’
	<b>umkhulu</b>	<b>nkhulu</b>	‘grandfather’

No evidence could be found as to what caused the traditional Nguni Class 1a pre-prefix **u-** to change to **i-** and **[N]** in Northern Ndebele. It is uncertain whether this change in form is the result of any outside influence or whether it is the result of some internal change. There is no evidence in either of the two neighbouring Sotho languages or in Tshivenda, for that matter, which could clarify the unique form of this prefix.

The difference in form is not the only difference between the Class 1a noun class prefix in Northern Ndebele and its counterpart in Southern Ndebele. There is also a difference in usage of this prefix in these two Ndebele languages. Where in Southern Ndebele this prefix occurs with all Class 1a nouns, it does not do so in Northern Ndebele. In this regard, Northern Ndebele follows the same pattern that is found in siSwati where only a limited number of nouns in this class have a class prefix. Compare the following examples of Class 1a nouns in Northern Ndebele with their counterparts in siSwati and Southern Ndebele in this regard.

(7a) **Class 1a with class prefix**

<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	<b>siSwati</b>	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>
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iyihlo	uyihlo	uyihlo	‘your father’
iyise	uyise	uyise	‘his father’
nnina	unina	unina	‘his mother’

(7b) **Class 1a without class prefix**

Northern Ndebele	siSwati	Southern Ndebele	
↓bhabha	↓babe	ubaba	‘father’
↓malume	↓malume	umalume	‘uncle’
↓gugu	↓gogo	ugogo	‘grandmother’

**5.2.1.2 Variant forms of the noun class prefixes of Classes 1 and 3**

The basic form of the class prefixes of Class 1 and 3 is **umu-** in Southern Ndebele and **mu-** in Northern Ndebele, respectively (cf. par. 5.2.1.2). In Southern Ndebele, the class prefix **umu-** occurs before monosyllabic stems and **um-** before polysyllabic nominal stems. The variant forms of the prefixes of Class 1 and 3 in Northern Ndebele are **mu-** in all instances and **m** before stems that begin on the bilabial fricative **b[≡]**. Compare the following examples in (8a) and (8b) in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
	<b>Class 1 umu-/m-</b>		<b>mu-/m</b>
(8a) (i)	<b>umuntu</b>	‘person’	<b>munru</b>
	<b>umufi</b>	‘the deceased’	<b>mufi</b>
	<b>umsana</b>	‘boy’	<b>mutlhankana</b>
	<b>umfazi</b>	‘woman’	<b>mufati</b>
(8a)(ii)	<b>umboni</b>	‘seer’	<b>mmoni</b>
	<b>umbazi</b>	‘carpenter’	<b>mmati</b>
	<b>umbani</b>	‘flash of lightning’	<b>mmani</b>



**umbali** 'counter' **mmali**

**Class 3 umu-/m-**

**mu-/m**

(8b) (i)	<b>umukhwa</b>	'knife'	<b>mukhwa</b>
	<b>umsebenzi</b>	'work'	<b>musebenti</b>
	<b>umlandu</b>	'case'	<b>mulandu</b>
(8b)(ii)	<b>umbala</b>	'colour'	<b>mmala</b>
	<b>umbono</b>	'idea'	<b>mmono</b>
	<b>umoya</b>	'wind'	<b>mmoya</b>

[Note: The double **mm-** in the examples in (8a) (ii)) and (8b) (ii)) of Northern Ndebele is the result of the assimilation of the bilabial fricative **b**[β] with the preceding bilabial nasal **/m/** ]

**5.2.1.3 Variant forms of the noun class prefix of Class 5**

The variant forms of the Southern Ndebele noun class prefix of Class 5 differ from the Northern Ndebele in that whilst Southern Ndebele has three variant forms for Class 5, i.e., **i(li)/il-** and **ilu**, Northern Ndebele has only two for this class, i.e., **li-/l-**. In Southern Ndebele, the noun class prefix of Class 5 before polysyllabic nominal stems is **i-**, before monosyllabic **ili** or **ilu** and before vowel verb stems **il-**, respectively, while in Northern Ndebele the form of this prefix is **li-** in all instances except before stems that commence on the consonant **l-** or on the vowels **i**, **e** or **u-** (cf. par. 5.2.1.3). Compare the following examples in (9a-d) in this regard.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
Class 5:	<b>i(li)-/il-/ilu</b>		<b>li-/l-</b>
(9a)	<b>iqanda</b>	'egg'	<b>likxanda</b>
	<b>izinyo</b>	'tooth'	<b>litinyo</b>



	<b>ivila</b>	‘lazy person’	<b>livila</b>	
(9b)	<b>ilembe</b>	‘hoe’	<b>llembe</b>	
	<b>ilanga</b>	‘day’	<b>llanga</b>	
	<b>ilahle</b>	‘coal’	<b>llahle</b>	
(9c)	<b>ilizwi</b>	‘voice/word’	<b>livi</b>	
	<b>ilitje</b>	‘stone’	<b>liye</b>	
	<b>ilihlo</b>	‘eye’	<b>liso</b>	
(9d)	<b>ilutjha</b>	‘youth’	<b>liwandle</b>	‘sea’
	<b>iluju</b>	‘honey’	<b>liwati</b>	‘knowledge’
	<b>ilus</b>	‘type of meat eaten during lobola’	<b>lisokana</b>	‘initiate’

[Note: The double **ll** in examples (9b) in Northern Ndebele above is the result of the obligatory vowel elision that occurs in Northern Ndebele.] (Also cf. par. 4.6.2)

The form **-lu-** in the Southern Ndebele examples in (9d) is a relic attesting to the erstwhile existence of a Class 11 in Southern Ndebele. It is important to note that the Class 5 nouns like those given in examples (9d) above may be used with either the prefix **ilu-** or with the prefix **ili-** in Southern Ndebele. In other words, a speaker can, for instance, either say **iluju** or **iliju**, **ilutjha** or **ilitjha**, **ilus** or **ilisu**. (See Skhosana, 1998:71-73.)

#### 5.2.1.4 Variant forms of the noun class prefix of Class 6

Southern Ndebele noun class prefixes for Class 6 is **ama-** and **ame-**, respectively, while in Northern Ndebele this class only has **ma-** as the noun class prefix. Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele	
<b>Class 6:</b>	<b>ama-/ame-</b>		<b>ma-</b>	
(10a)	<b>amanzi</b>		<b>manti</b>	‘water’
	<b>amazembe</b>		<b>mahloka</b>	‘axes’
(10b)	<b>amezwi</b>		<b>mavi</b>	‘voices/words’
	<b>amehlo</b>		<b>mahlo</b>	‘eyes’

#### 5.2.1.5 Variant forms of the noun class prefix of Class 8

Southern Ndebele is the only Nguni language where the prefix of Class 8 nouns with polysyllabic stems is commonly used with a nasal in their class prefix. This feature does not occur in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele	
	<b>Before polysyllabic stems</b>			
(11a)	<b>iindlhayela</b>		<b>tidlayela</b>	‘fools’
	<b>iintjhaba</b>		<b>titjhaba</b>	‘tribes, nations’
	<b>iinthende</b>		<b>tithende</b>	‘heels’
(11b)	<b>iimphofu</b>		<b>tiphofu</b>	‘blind people’
	<b>iimphande</b>		<b>tiphande</b>	‘ways’
	<b>iimfiso</b>		<b>tifiso</b>	‘wishes’

Where the nasal in the prefix of some of the Class 8 nouns in Southern Ndebele originated from is unclear. Meinhof (1932:39-40), for instance, does not distinguish a Class 8 prefix in Ur-Bantu that contains a nasal. Van Eeden tries to shed some light on

this phenomenon when he explains the presence of a nasal in the adjective prefix of Class 8 nouns that often occurs in the speech of (some) isiZulu speakers. Van Eeden (1956:152) remarks as follows in this regard –

‘Besondere aandag verdien die verskynsel dat die konkord van klas 4 plur, teen die algemene rêël in, ‘n nasaal insluit. Hierdie konkord is dus ook net soos die van klas 5 plur, **ezin-**, ens., by **izinkwa ezindala ezimbili** (twee ou brode). Die nasal in hierdie konkord het klaarblyklik bygekome na analogie van die vorm van klas 5 plur (i.e., Class 10), se konkord.’ (*my own insertion*).

[Note: Van Eeden’s Class 4 and Class 5 are, in terms of Meinhof’s numbering, Class 8 and 10, respectively.]

Applied to the prefix of Class 8 in Southern Ndebele, Van Eeden’s assumption implies that because of the near similarity in the basic form of the prefix of Classes 8 and 10 nouns, i.e., **izi-** as opposed to **izin-**, the prefix **izi-** has acquired a nasal in order to bring its form in accordance with that of its Class 10 counterpart. It is, however, very doubtful that this could have been the case, especially as it fails to explain why only the prefix of Class 8 nouns in Southern Ndebele with polysyllabic stems acquired a nasal (cf. examples 11(a) and 11(b)) but not the prefix of Class 8 nouns with monosyllabic stems. However, it is clear that most Southern Ndebele Class 8 polysyllabic noun stems (except polysyllabic noun stems beginning with vowels, nasals, semi-vowels and the voiceless velar fricative phoneme /**rh**/) have moved from Class 8 to Class 10.

The occurrence of a homorganic nasal in the class prefix of Class 8 nouns with polysyllabic stems in Southern Ndebele, such as those in the examples given in (11a) and (11b) above, is not a dialectic feature. Neither may this prefix be substituted with a Class 8 prefix without a nasal. The nasal in this prefix occurs in all instances except before monosyllabic stems and stems beginning with a nasal, a semi-vowel or the voiceless velar

fricative phoneme **-rh**. Compare the following examples of Class 8 nouns, where the nasal does not occur in the noun class prefix.

### Southern Ndebele

#### Before monosyllabic stems

- (12a) **izifo** 'diseases'  
**izitha** 'enemies'  
**izidlo** 'types of food'

#### Before stems beginning with a semi-vowel

- (12b) **iiyalo** 'water springs'  
**iiyekethe** 'small amounts of African beer in calabashes'  
**iiwabandla** 'talkative people'  
**iiwewe** 'young male goats'

#### Before stems beginning with the voiceless velar fricative rh[x]

- (12c) **iirhwerhwe** 'frogs'  
**iirhurhula** 'floods'  
**iirhunyezo** 'abbreviations'  
**iirhole** 'cripples'

#### Before stems beginning with a nasal

- (12d) **iinanazelo** 'clan praises'  
**iinini** 'relatives'  
**iimanga** 'surprises'  
**iimemo** 'invitations'

It is, of course, possible that the prefix of Class 8 nouns beginning with a nasal, such as the ones in (12c) above, may include a nasal, but that nasal has coalesced with the initial

nasal of the stem. In other words, the morphological structure may manifest in nouns such as those in (12d) is **iiN + stem** and not **ii-+stem**.

It should also be noted that some Southern Ndebele speakers tend to render nouns such as those in (12c) above with a velar nasal **n[ŋ]** in their prefix, i.e. as **\*iinrhwerhwe [iinxwɛxwɛ]**, **\*iinrhurhula [iinxuxula]** and **\*iinrhole [iinxɔɔɛ]**. What is important to note is that this nasal is heterorganic as well as syllabic and, therefore, differs from the nasal that occurs in the other variant forms of this prefix as illustrated in the examples given in (11a and 11b) above. The true origin of this peculiar variant form is as yet unknown. However, it is clear that it could not have originated from the neighbouring Sotho languages as none of these languages has a Class 8 prefix that is reminiscent of this form. Compare the following examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

- (13) **\*iinghrhatjhi [iinghatjhi]**: ‘media’ (cf. [iingɔma] ‘songs’)  
**\*iinghrhurhula [iinghurhula]** ‘floods’ (cf. [iingubɔ] ‘blankets’)  
**\*iinghrhole [iinghɔɔɛ]**: ‘cripples’ (cf. [ŋganɛɔ] ‘on this side’)

What is arguable is the fact that there is no combination of a velar nasal sound **/ngh/** (that occurs outside nasal compounds) and the voiceless velar fricative **/rh/** in Southern Ndebele as is shown in examples (13) above.

The morphological differences in the noun class system between Southern and Northern Ndebele as discussed above can be summarized and illustrated in tabular form as follows –

**Table 5.1: Southern and Northern Ndebele noun class prefixes**



Class	Class Southern Ndebele Prefix:		Class Northern Ndebele Prefix:
1	<b>u-m(u)</b> : umntwana	‘child’	<b>mu-</b> : munrwana
1a	<b>u-</b> : ubamkhulu : uyihlo : unyoko	‘grandfather’ ‘your father’ ‘your mother’	<b>∅-i-/ [N]</b> : ∅nkhulu : iyihlo : nnyoko
2	<b>aba-</b> : abantu	‘people’	<b>ba-</b> : banru
2a	<b>abo-</b> : abobamkhulu	‘grandfather’	<b>bo-</b> : bonkhulu
3	<b>um(u)</b> : umuzi	‘home/kraal’	<b>mu-</b> : muti
4	<b>imi-</b> : imizi	‘homes/kraals’	<b>mi-</b> : miti
5	<b>i(li)-/il-/ilu-</b> : ilitje	‘stone’	<b>li-/l-</b> : liye
6	<b>ama-/ame-</b> : amazwi	‘words’	<b>ma-</b> : mavi
7	<b>is(i)-</b> : isithende	‘heel’	<b>s(i)-</b> : sithende
8	<b>iz(i)-/iiN-/ii-</b> : izono /iintofu	‘sins/stoves’	<b>ti-</b> : tono/sitofu
9	<b>i([N])-</b> : ikosi	‘chief’	<b>[N]-</b> : nkxosi
10	<b>izi-/iiN-/ii-</b> : iinkomo	‘beasts’	<b>tiN-/ti-</b> : tikxomo
14	<b>ub(u)-</b> : ubufazi	‘womanhood’	<b>b(u)-</b> : bufati
15	<b>uk(u)-</b> : ukufa	‘death’	<b>ku-</b> : kufa
16	<b>pha-/phe-</b> : phambili	‘forward’	<b>pha-/phe-</b> : phambili

### 5.3 Morphological differences in the system of pronouns

There are four kinds of pronouns that are normally distinguished in the various Nguni languages. They are the so-called absolute pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, quantitative and qualificative pronouns (Doke, 1927:88). In the following paragraphs, the morphological differences that occur between these two languages in respect of each of these categories of pronouns are analysed and discussed.

#### 5.3.1 Absolute pronouns

Of the names for the different kinds of pronoun found in the African languages and in the Nguni languages, in particular, the name “absolute pronoun” is the most non-transparent one as it is not entirely clear what exactly the word “absolute” implies in this instance.

Although the term “absolute pronoun” has a long history as a grammatical term in African linguistics in this country, one looks in vain in most grammar books of the locally spoken African languages to find a clear definition of this term. (During the earlier years other terms for the absolute pronouns were used by South African scholars, as for example, “Emphatic Pronouns” (Bryant, 1905), “Substantive Pronouns”(McLaren & Welsh, 1936), and “Independent Pronouns” (Bennie,1939). C.M. Doke (1927) was one of the first, if not the first South African scholar to use the term “absolute pronoun” consistently in his publications on the African languages. The fact that Doke’s work had such a comprehensive impact on the African linguistics scene in this country, was no doubt the reason why all the other South African scholars of these languages eventually adopted the term “absolute pronoun” when referring to these words.

As far as could be ascertained, Van Eeden (1956) is the only scholar who gives some indication of what is meant by the word “absolute” in this instance when he refers to these words as ‘absolute of alleenstande (**unattached**)... pronomina’(Van Eeden,1956:121). With this concept Van Eeden implies that the absolute pronoun is not a formative but a complete and autonomous word (*my insertion*)

Although scholars of the African languages and, in particular, those of the Nguni languages, are all in agreement as far as the word autonomy of the absolute pronouns is concerned they are, however, less so when it comes to how they view the morphological structure of these words and also what they consider to be the main function or syntactical feature of the absolute pronouns. In the following paragraphs the focus falls on the morphological structure of the absolute pronouns in the Nguni languages, with special reference to the formal features of these words in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

### **5.3.1.1 Different views concerning the morphological structure of the absolute pronouns**

There are three views on the formation of the absolute pronouns that prevail in Nguni language circles. One is by Ziervogel (1985) who claims that the morphological structure

of the absolute pronouns consists of a root (derived from the corresponding class prefix combined with **-o**) and a suffixal **-na** (or **-ne**) (Ziervogel. 1959:47 and 1985:44). In terms of this view, except the absolute pronoun of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular **yena** of which the rule does not apply, the morphological structure of the absolute pronouns in (14) below must be analysed as follows –

- (14) Class 2: ba-o-na > **bo-na** ‘they’ (e.g. Baphi bona ‘Where are they?’)  
 3: u – 0- na > **wo-na** ‘it’ (e.g. Sifuna wona umsebenzi ‘We want the very same work.’)  
 7: si-o-na > **so-na**, ‘it’ (e.g. Lesi sona siyabulala isifo. ‘This is a fatal disease.’)  
 8: zi-o-na > **zo-na** ‘they’ (e.g. Lezo zona ngezakho. ‘Those ones are yours.’)

The second view is that of Van Eeden (1956:124) who differs from Ziervogel in that he regards the final **-na** of the absolute pronoun as the stem (or root) of these words. In terms of this view, the morphological structure of the absolute pronouns in (15) below must therefore be analysed as follows (The stem is given in bold) –

- (15) Class 1: ye-**na** (umsana) ‘he (a boy)’  
 2: bo-**na** (abesana) ‘they (the boys)’  
 5: lo-**na** (ilizwi) ‘it (the voice)’  
 8: zo-**na** (izitha) ‘they (the enemies)’  
 9: yo-**na** (induna) ‘he (the headman)’

The view that is currently supported by most South African scholars of the Nguni languages is that the morphological structure of all the absolute pronouns in these languages except the absolute pronoun for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and plural as well as the one of Class 1 and 1a consists of “an agreement morpheme” (that resembles the form of the subject concord of the class concerned) followed by a “pronominal” **-o**



and the “suffixal morpheme” –**na**, as for instance in the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(16) Class 2:	b(a)-o-na = bona	‘they’	b(a)-o-na = bona
3:	u-o-na = wona	‘it’	u-o-na = wona
4:	i-o-na = yona	‘they’	i-o-na = yona
6:	a-o-na = wona	‘they’	a-o-na = yona
8:	zi-o-na = zona	‘they’	a-o-na = ona

As will be noticed in the examples given in (16) above when the agreement morpheme has a /CV/ structure, it discards its vowel before the pronominal –**o**-, but when it consists of a vowel only, the vowel becomes a semi-vowel before the pronominal –**o**; i.e., **u**- becomes **w**, **i**- becomes **y** and **a** becomes **w** in Southern Ndebele, but falls away in Northern Ndebele. The latter is no doubt the result of the influence of Northern Sotho and Setswana where the absolute pronoun for Class 6 has the form **ona**.

### 5.3.1.2 The function of the suffixal –**na** in the absolute pronoun

Although most scholars are in agreement as to how the absolute pronouns are constructed, they differ in their view on what the function of the suffixal –**na** in these pronouns entails.

Doke (1927:88) refers to this suffix as ‘*the ultimate –na*’ without explaining what he means by this term. Van Eeden (1956) contradicts himself by first regarding this formative as an “uitgangselement” (ending) of the pronoun (Van Eeden, 1956:122) and then soon afterwards changing his mind by regarding it as the stem of the pronoun (Van Eeden, op. cit.: 124). Ziervogel (1959: 44) is another scholar who expresses an opinion on this suffix when he refers to it as ‘*the stabilizing -na*’, without giving any indication what exactly this –**na** is supposed to stabilize.

It is clear that neither of the above scholars is convinced what exactly the function of this formative is. According to Wilkes (personal communication), the formative **-na** is not merely a stabilizer or “ultimate suffix” that acts as a sort of “word builder” (as some scholars assume) but is, in fact, a formative with a definite semantic function which he defines as that of ‘*emphasis*’ and ‘*contrast*’. It is, he notes, on account of this suffix that the absolute pronouns act as an ‘*emphatic*’ or as a ‘*contrastive*’ determiner of nouns (Wilkes, 1976:76). He considers this function to be ‘the one and only function’ the absolute pronouns (at least in the Nguni languages) have. He is also the first linguist who has convincingly refuted the traditional and widely held view among Nguni language scholars that the absolute pronouns are words that can replace nouns in sentences just as the pronouns in languages such as English and Afrikaans normally do (Wilkes, op. cit.:76). His investigation shows that the basic function of these words is twofold, that is, to emphasize nouns (when they appear in a pre-nominal position) and to contrast nouns with one another (when they appear in a post nominal position) (Wilkes, op. cit.:76). Compare the following isiZulu examples in (17a) and (17b) in this regard.

### **IsiZulu**

#### (17a) **Emphasis**

**Yena** ubaba uthanda ukuthethisa umama.

‘My father (and nobody else) likes to scold my mother.’

**Zona** izingane azithandi ukhulukunyezwa.

‘The children (in particular) don’t like to be abused.’

**Sona** isikole sabo asinamthetho.

‘Their very same school (and not any other) has no discipline.’

#### (17b) **Contrast**

Umama uyasebenza kodwana ubaba **yena** uhlezi.

‘My mother is working, but my father (by contrast) is seated.’

Noma mina ngimthanda kodwana uNobuhle **yena** uyangizonda.

‘Even if I love her, Nobuhle (by contrast) hates me.’

Thina sidle inyama, obaba **bona** bafuna ubisi.

‘We ate meat, our fathers (by contrast) preferred milk.’

Wilkes (personal communication) asserts that had all the earlier scholars recognized the true function of the suffixal **-na** in absolute pronouns, they would probably not have called these words “absolute” pronouns and would not have compared them (subjectively) to the pronouns in English and other (European) languages. It was on account of the latter that scholars regarded these words as the African languages’ equivalent of the pronouns in the European languages.

### 5.3.1.3 The morphology of the absolute pronouns of Class 1, 1a and of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular

In all Nguni languages as well as in other African languages spoken in the Republic of South Africa, the absolute pronouns of Class 1, 1a and that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular have similar structural form, but one that differs from that of the absolute pronouns of the other noun classes. In the case of Class 1 and 1a, the form of this pronoun is **yena** while, in the case of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, the form of this pronoun is **wena**.

The morphological structure of both these pronouns is uncertain except for the terminal **-na**, which is the same formative as the one that is found in the absolute pronouns of the other noun classes. This is confirmed by the fact that both these pronouns have the same emphatic/contrastive function that the other absolute pronouns have.

Van Eeden (1956:123) attempts to explain the form of these words (albeit unconvincingly) by saying that the **-e-** in these words is an alternative form of the pronominal **-o-**, that the **w-** in **wena** is derived from the subject concord **u-** of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and that the **y** in **yena** is the same as the formative **y** found in the quantitative pronoun **yedwa** of Class 1 and 1a that occurs in all the Nguni languages

except in Northern Ndebele. According to Van Eeden (op. cit.:124 footnote 7), this **y** is the isiZulu equivalent of a Class 1 formative that occurs in the pronouns of many African (Bantu) languages.

### 5.3.1.4 The morphological differences between the absolute pronouns of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural in Southern and Northern Ndebele

The morphological structure of the absolute pronouns of the other personal classes is equally non-transparent. In Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele, these pronouns occur as follows –

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(18)	1 <sup>st</sup> Person singular:	mina	‘I’ mina/nna
	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural:	thina	‘we’ thina
	2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural:	nina	‘you’ lina

The only thing that is certain about the morphological structure of these pronouns is that they all contain the emphatic/contrastive suffix **-na** that is also found in the absolute pronouns of all the other noun classes. The problem is to explain what the initial part of these pronouns consists of. Van Eeden (1956:124) claims that the initial **ni-** in the absolute pronoun of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural **nina** is in all probability copied from the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural subject concord **ni-**. Van Eeden’s view is confirmed by the fact that the initial syllable of the absolute pronoun of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural **lina** in Northern Ndebele has exactly the same form as the subject concord of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural in this language. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### **Northern Ndebele**

- (19) **Lifuna** bani gendluni.      ‘Whom do you want inside the house?’  
Gibonile **likhambe** naye.      ‘I have seen you have left with him.’

Mfuna **lina** likhulume naye. 'I want you to talk to him.'

The agreement morpheme **li-** of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural also occurs in isiNala, a Manala dialect of Southern Ndebele (Skhosana, 1998:29) and is also found in Zimbabwean Ndebele. This explains why the form of the absolute pronoun of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural is **lina** in both these languages. Compare the following examples in this regard.

<b>IsiNala</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	<b>Zimbabwean Ndebele</b>	
(20) Ngifuna <b>lina</b> .	Mfuna <b>lina</b> .	Ngifuna <b>lina</b> .	'I want you.'
<b>Lina linemali</b> .	<b>Lina linemali</b> .	<b>Lina linemali</b> .	'You have money.'
<b>Lizakufa loke lina</b> .	<b>Litafa lokxe lina</b> .	<b>Lizakufa lonke lina</b> .	'You will all die.'

It is possible that both isiNala and Northern Ndebele have acquired the subject agreement morpheme **li-** from the neighbouring Sotho languages, i.e., Northern Sotho and Tswana, respectively, where this concord has the form **le [le]**.

[Note: The Sotho [e] usually corresponds to Nguni [i].] Compare the following examples in this regard.

<b>Northern Sotho</b>		<b>Setswana</b>
(21) <b>Lena le</b> rata nama.	'You like meat.'	<b>Lona lo</b> rata nama.
Morago go latela <b>lena</b> .	'Thereafter, you follow.'	Morago go latela <b>lona</b> .
Bare <b>lena le</b> batla bana.	'They say you want children.'	Gatwe <b>lona lo</b> batla bana.
<b>Le</b> kae ?	'How are you?'	<b>Lo</b> kae?

Zimbabwean Ndebele, too, has in all probability acquired its 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural concord **li-** from these two Sotho languages. This must have happened during the sojourn of Mzilikazi and his followers in the former Transvaal where they came into contact with these two Sotho speaking ethnic groups. They were eventually compelled in 1838 by the

migrant Boers to cross the Limpopo River after which they moved to their present abode in Zimbabwe (Van Warmelo, 1930:7).

The ‘alternative’ absolute pronoun of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular in Northern Ndebele, i.e., **нна**, has no doubt also been borrowed from Northern Sotho and Setswana as this is the only form this pronoun has in these two languages (See Poulos and Louwrens, 1994:75). Compare the following Northern Sotho and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Northern Sotho

#### Northern Ndebele

(22) **Nna** ke bala puku.

**Nna** ndibala mbhugu ‘I read a book’

Ba re **нна** ke na le molato.

Bari **нна** ndinemulandu ‘They say I’m guilty.’

Ba nyaka **нна**.

Bafuna **нна** ‘They want me.’

Not much can be said about the initial elements **mi-** and **thi-** that occur in the absolute pronouns of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and plural in Southern and Northern Ndebele. According to Van Eeden (1956:124), these two forms may also have the subject concords **ngi-** (1<sup>st</sup> person singular) and **si-** (1<sup>st</sup> person plural), respectively, as their source of origin. He is, however, uncertain as to how this development could have taken place.

#### 5.3.1.5 Absolute pronoun of Class 6

The absolute pronoun of Class 6 in both Southern and Northern Ndebele is **wona**. Ziervogel (1959:64), however, also recognizes a form **ona** for this pronoun in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

#### Northern Ndebele

(23) **Wona** amanzi ayabila

**Wona/ona** manti ayabila ‘The very water, is boiling.’

Bakhuluma **wona** amanga

Bakhuluma **wona/ona** manga ‘They talk absolute lies.’

Ngitlola **wona** amazwi. Ngwala **wona/ona** mavi. ‘I write the very words.’

The alternative form **ona** in Northern Ndebele, which according to this investigation has shown to be no longer popular with speakers, clearly demonstrates that it results from Northern Sotho influence. In the construction of the absolute pronouns in Northern Sotho for Class 6, the agreement morpheme **a** becomes **∅** (i.e., falls away) (Poulos & Louwrens, 1994:75). Compare the following Northern Sotho and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Northern Sotho	Northern Ndebele
(24) Ke rata <b>ona</b> mantsu o a bolelago.	Nthanda <b>ona</b> mavi owakhulumako ‘I like <u>the very</u> words you speak.’
Ba nyaka <b>ona</b> meetse a belago.	Bafuna <b>ona</b> manti abilako ‘They want <u>the very</u> boiling water.’
<b>Ona</b> makhura ga a jege.	<b>Ona</b> mafutha akadlheki ‘The <u>very fats</u> are not edible.’

After having outlined the morphological differences between the absolute pronoun of Southern and Northern Ndebele, these pronouns can be now summarized as follows in a tabular form.

**Table 5.2: The absolute pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele**

Noun Class	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
1 <sup>st</sup> p/s	mina	‘me’	mina/nna
1 <sup>st</sup> p/p	thina	‘we’	thina
2 <sup>nd</sup> p/s	wena	‘you’	wena
2 <sup>nd</sup> p/p	nina	‘you’	lina



3 <sup>rd</sup> p/s.Class.1	yena	‘(s)he’	yena
2	bona	‘they’	bona
3	wona	‘it’	wona
4	yona	‘they’	yona
5	lona	‘it’	lona
6	wona	‘they’	wona/ona
7	sona	‘it’	sona
8	zona	‘they’	tona
9	yona	‘it’	yona
10	zona	‘they’	tona
14	bona	‘it’	bona
15	khona	‘it’	khona
16	khona	‘it’	khona
17	khona	‘it’	khona

### 5.3.2 Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstratives or demonstrative pronouns, as these words are traditionally known, have two basic functions, a deictic function and an anaphoric function. According to Poulos and Msimang (1998:115), the term “deictic” is derived from a Greek noun “deixis”, which means ‘pointing’ or ‘indicating’. In terms of their deictic function the demonstrative pronouns are used to indicate the actual position which some or other referent occupies in relation to the speaker. Consider the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

(25) Lesisalukazi sinomona.

‘**This** old woman is full of jealousy.’



Izolo amapholisa abophe umsana **loyo**. ‘The police arrested **that** boy yesterday.’  
Uthenge ikoloyi **leya** ungasitjeli. ‘You bought **that car** without having  
informed us.’

In terms of their anaphoric function, demonstratives may be used to refer back to the same or other antecedents that have been mentioned earlier in the discourse as, for instance, in the following Southern Ndebele examples.

### Southern Ndebele

(26a) UMsongelwa wabethelwa into angakayenzi. **Lokho** kwamphatha kumbi uyise.  
‘Msongelwa was punished for something he did not do. **That** really upset his  
Father.’

(26b) USuhla uthenge enye ikoloyi ekudlwana. Uthi **leyo** ingcono khulu ngombana  
ikhamba ngedizela.’  
‘Suhla has bought another bigger car. He says **that one** is much better because  
it uses diesel.’

The demonstrative pronoun **lokho** ‘that’ in (26a) refers to Msongelwa having been punished for something he had not done, while the demonstrative pronoun **leyo** ‘that’ in (26b) refers to the other car that Suhla has bought. The initial sentence in both these examples acts as the antecedent of the demonstrative pronouns **lokho** and **leyo**, respectively. Demonstratives in the Nguni languages are normally classified into four different positions depending on the demonstrative suffix that is used. Each position indicates a different position that a person or object occupies in relation to the speaker. These positions can be roughly translated into English as follows –

**Position 1:** this/these (here)

**Position 2:** that (one) /those (there)

**Position 3:** that (one)/those (over there)

**Position 4:** is similar in significance to position 3 and refers to the referent beyond position 3.

The demonstrative pronouns may, however, also be used to refer to distance in time as opposed to physical distance, that is, distance from the speaker. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### **Southern Ndebele**

- (27) **Loya** nyaka kwakunezulu.                    ‘**That** year we had enough rain.’  
Minengi imisebenzi **lonyaka**.                    ‘There is a lot of work **this** year.’  
Iveke **le** ngiyakhamba.                    ‘**This** week I’m leaving.’

### **5.3.2.1 Formation of the demonstrative pronouns in the Nguni languages**

The demonstrative pronouns of the different noun classes do not all exhibit the same form and structure in the different Nguni languages. Furthermore, there are important differences of opinion, especially among isiZulu scholars, as to how some of these pronouns are supposedly constructed, particularly that of the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun. In the following paragraphs, these views are briefly summarized, after which attention is paid to the construction of the pronouns of the other demonstrative positions. Finally, the differences in form and structure between the demonstrative pronouns of Southern and Northern Ndebele are elucidated.

#### **5.3.2.1.1 Formation of the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives**

Although most Nguni grammarians are in agreement as far as the function of the demonstrative pronouns is concerned, they are less so when it comes to the formation of these pronouns. No fewer than three different views prevail, mainly among isiZulu grammarians, on how the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives are supposedly constructed. These views are summarized in the following paragraphs.

(i) Views on the formation of the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives in isiZulu

• **Demonstrative formative plus an agreement morpheme**

Van Eeden (1956:129-130) maintains that the first position demonstrative pronoun comprises the *demonstrative formative* **la** + *an agreement morpheme*, which resembles the subject concord and which (in the case of the nasal classes) coalesces with the /a/ of **la**. Consider the following examples in this regard.

**IsiZulu**

(28) Cl. 1:	<b>lo</b>	(< la + u )
2:	<b>laba</b>	(< la + ba)
4:	<b>le</b>	(< la + i)
5:	<b>leli</b>	(< la + li)
6:	<b>la or lawa</b>	(< la + a)

• **Demonstrative formative l- plus a relative concord**

According to Doke (1997:92), the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun is constructed by means of a **demonstrative formative l** + **a relative concord**. Consider the following examples in this regard.

**IsiZulu**

(29) Cl. 1:	<b>lo</b>	(<l + o)
2:	<b>laba</b>	(<l + aba)
4:	<b>le</b>	(<l + e)
5:	<b>leli</b>	( <l + eli)

• **Demonstrative formative la plus a noun class prefix**

IsiZulu scholars such as Nyembezi (1963:52) and Poulos and Msimang (1998:130) maintain that the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun is formed by means of a demonstrative formative **la + a noun class prefix**. In the case of the nasal classes, the nasal with its succeeding vowel is discarded whilst the class prefix of the non-nasal classes remains unchanged. Consider the following examples in this regard.

**IsiZulu**

- (30) Cl. 1: la + umu > lo(*mu*) > **lo**  
 2: la + aba > **laba**  
 4: la + imi- > le(*mi*) > **le**  
 5: la + ili > **leli**  
 6: la + ama > la(*ma*) > **la**

**(ii) Evaluation of the different views concerning the construction of the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives in isiZulu.**

Of the three views discussed above, Van Eeden's view seems to be the most convincing one in that it is able to account for all instances where agreement occurs in isiZulu and the other Nguni languages while the other two views cannot. The formation of the possessive concords, for instance, cannot be explained in terms of either Doke or Nyembezi's views, but it can in terms of Van Eeden's view.

In terms of Van Eeden's view, one can say that the possessive concord is formed by means of a concordial or agreement morpheme plus an element **-a**, which is commonly referred to as the possessive particle or possessive **-a**. A type of merging takes place between these two elements as can be seen in the following possessive concords.

**IsiZulu**

- (31) Cl.1: u + a > **wa-**  
 4: i + a > **ya-**  
 5: li + a > **la-**  
 7: si + a > **sa-**

15: ku + a > kwa-

It is obvious that the formation of these concords cannot be explained in terms of either a relative concord (Doke) or a noun class prefix (Nyembezi) as the following examples clearly indicate.

<b>In terms of Doke's view</b>	<b>In terms of Nyembezi's view</b>
(32) Cl.1: u + a > owa*	Cl.1: umu + a > ?
4: e + a > eya *	4: imi + a > ?
5: eli + a > ela *	5: ili + a > ?
7: esi + a > esa*	7: isi + a > ?
15: oku + a > okwa*	15: uku- + a > ?

While neither Doke (1984:115) nor Nyembezi (1963:52) overtly states how these concords are formed, it is clear from their discussion of the formation of the possessive concords that neither of them regards these formatives as being formed by means of a relative concord or a noun class prefix.

### (iii) Alternative forms of the monosyllabic 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives

In isiZulu and siSwati all the monosyllabic 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives have two forms, a basic form consisting of a demonstrative **la** + **agreement morpheme** and an alternative form that is formed by suffixing a formative **-na** or **-yi** to the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative of Classes 1, 1a, 3, 6 and 9. IsiZulu only uses the suffix **-na** while siSwati uses both forms except in the case of Class 6. Compare the following examples in this regard.

	<b>IsiZulu</b>	<b>SiSwati</b>
(33)	Cl. 1/3: lona	lona/loyi
	6: lana	lana
	4/9: lena	lena/leyi

According to Van Eeden (1956:135), the demonstratives with these alternative forms occur mainly in the final position in a sentence and are usually unaccompanied by their antecedent noun as, for instance, in the following example.

### IsiZulu

- (34) Uyawathanda amantombazana (umfana) **lona**. ‘**This** one (boy) likes girls.’  
Ngeyami (inkabi) **lena**. ‘**This** one (an ox) is mine’.

Van Eeden (1959:130) also recognizes an alternative form **lawa** for Class 6 in isiZulu but does not explain what triggered the semi-vowel **-w-** in this word. (See examples in (28) above.) Whether or not the formatives **-yi** and **-na** fulfil a definite grammatical function is uncertain. Ziervogel (1985:47) considers them to be stabilizers but refrains from explaining why these demonstratives need to be stabilized while the polysyllabic ones do not. According to Wilkes (1992:29-30, Honours lecture notes) the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun with the suffix **-na** has a more emphatic significance than demonstratives without this suffix. This, Wilkes (ibid.) explains, suggests that this suffix is probably the same suffix **-na** that is found in absolute pronouns where it also serves as an emphazier. (See earlier discussions of the absolute pronouns in par 6.3.1 above.) This also confirms Van Eeden’s view that this **-na** is the same **-na** that is found in the absolute pronouns (Van Eeden.op. cit.:131).

As far as the suffix **-yi** is concerned, it is uncertain what its true function is. Ziervogel’s (1959: 47) view that it is a stabilizer is not convincing, as (i) it does not explain why it is only the demonstratives of the nasal classes that need to have a stabilizer and (ii) why there are two stabilizers (i.e., **-na** and **-yi**) that perform the same function. With the exception of Ziervogel, no other siSwati author has investigated what the true function of the demonstrative suffix **-yi** in this language is precisely. As the answer to this uncertainty falls outside the scope of this study, it has not been further investigated. Suffice it to say that a relic of this formative occurs in the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives of Classes 1, 3, 4 and 9, and 2<sup>nd</sup> position of Classes 1 and 3 in siSwati.

**(iv) 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronouns in isiXhosa**

It is important to note that the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronouns have the same form and structure in all the Nguni languages except in isiXhosa where the initial **I** of all the non-nasal classes of demonstrative pronouns is omitted. (It is also omitted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative pronouns in this language.) Compare the following examples in this regard.

**IsiXhosa**

(35) **Oku** kutya kwakho akumandanga nakancinci. ‘**This** food of yours is not delicious at all.’

Ndibiza **abo** bantu abathetha nawe. ‘I’m calling **those** people talking to you.’

**Ezi** zinja zingamluma ngenene umntu. ‘**These** dogs can seriously bite a person.’

Bathi **esa** sikolo asifundisi nyani. ‘They say **that that** school does not teach at all.’

**5.3.2.1.2 The construction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives in the Nguni languages**

**(i) In isiZulu and siSwati**

In all the Nguni languages, the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives are formed by adding the formative ending **∠o** to the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives. In the case of the monosyllabic forms, this **–o** is separated from the foregoing vowel by a semi-vowel **–w-** (i.e. in the case of Classes 1, 1a, 3 and 6) or **–y-** (i.e., in the case of Classes 4 and 9). In the case of the disyllabic forms, this **–o-** replaces the final vowel of the first position form. Consider the following examples in this regard.

	<b>IsiZulu</b>				<b>SiSwati</b>		
(36) Cl. 1	lo + o	>	lowo	‘that’	lo + o	>	loyo/loyi



Cl. 2:	laba + o	>	labo	‘those’	laba + o	>	labo
Cl. 4:	le + o	>	leyo	‘that’	le + o	>	leyo/leyi
Cl. 5:	leli + o	>	lelo	‘that’	leli + o	>	lelo
Cl. 6:	la + o	>	lawo	‘that’	la + o	>	lawo
Cl. 8:	lezi + o	>	lezo	‘those’	lezi + o	>	lezo
Cl. 9:	le + o	>	leyo	‘that’	le + o	>	leyo/leyi

### (ii) In isiXhosa

A unique and puzzling feature of the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstrative pronouns of the nasal classes (i.e. weak classes) in isiXhosa is that they have a full form, that normally occurs post nominally, and a contracted form. The latter normally occurs when the demonstrative pronoun comes before the noun (Bennie, 1939:79 and Du Plessis & Visser, 1992:287). Consider, for instance, the following examples taken from Einhorn and Siyengo (1990:26) in this regard.

#### IsiXhosa

(37) Cl. 1:	umlimi	<b>lowo</b>	but	<b>loo</b>	mlimi	‘That farmer’.
Cl. 4:	imizi	<b>leyo</b>	but	<b>loo</b>	mzi	‘Those homesteads’
Cl. 6:	amazwe	<b>lawo</b>	but	<b>loo</b>	mazwe	‘Those countries’
Cl. 9	indlu	<b>leyo</b>	but	<b>loo</b>	ndlu	‘That house’

It is unclear how the ‘double o’ in the contracted forms of the demonstratives of Classes 4, 6 and 9 came about. It obviously cannot be the result of the dropping of the semi-vowels **w** and **y** as there is no rule in any of the Nguni languages in terms of which **e + o** or **a + o** > **oo**. As far as could be ascertained, no isiXhosa grammarian has thus far offered any explanation of where this ‘double o’ originated from.

### (iii) In Southern Ndebele



Southern Ndebele has an alternative 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstrative form for its Classes 1, 1a, 3 and 6 demonstratives. These demonstratives are formed by means of the suffix /yo that is added to the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives as for instance in the following examples.

	1 <sup>st</sup> position	2 <sup>nd</sup> position
(38) Cl. 1:	lo	loyo
3:	lo	loyo
6:	la	layo

The reason why the form of this suffix is regarded as –yo instead of –o is because it cannot be explained in terms of the phonological rule discussed in (i) above.

#### (iv) In Northern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele is the only other Nguni language where the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives also have a contracted form albeit that this feature is only limited to the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives of Classes 1 and 3. In this instance, the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstrative **lowo** of these two classes has an alternative form **loo**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

- (39) Cl. 1: munru **loo** (< lowo) ‘That person’  
Cl. 3: mulambo **loo** (< lowo) ‘That river’

#### (v) Comments on the semi-vowels in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives

The occurrence of the semi-vowel –y- in the demonstratives of Classes 4 and 9 in the examples given in (37) and (38) above is explicable in terms of the well known phonological rule in the Nguni languages whereby a semi-vowel –y- is triggered whenever the vowels –e- and –o- occur in juxtaposition as, for instance, in the following isiZulu examples.

- (40) Ukuthenga inkomo (e-ondile >) eyondile akubizi kakhulu.  
‘To buy a lean beast is not expensive.’

Imbewu ayiqhumi enhlabathini (**e-omile** >) **eyomile**

‘A seed does not germinate in dry soil.’

Le ngane (**e-onakele**) **eyonakele** ayisayi nasesikoleni.

‘This spoiled child no longer even goes to school.’

There may also be a natural explanation for the occurrence of the semi-vowel **-y-** in this instance in that it is automatically produced whenever the vowels **-e-** and **-o-** (in this order) are pronounced in quick succession without a glottal stop between them.

The occurrence of the semi-vowel **-w-** in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstratives of Classes 1, 1a and 3 is, however, more difficult to account for as there is no rule in these languages according to which a semi-vowel **-w-** is created when two **o**’s are juxtaposed in the same word as happens in the case of these demonstratives. None of the scholars referred to above has tried to explain the presence of this semi-vowel in these demonstratives, except to say that it is a bridging sound (Van Eeden. 1956: 133). This investigation has found no overt or covert phonological reason why a semi-vowel **-w-** needs to be inserted between two **o** vowels when occurring in juxtaposition. Moreover, there does not seem to be any natural explanation for the occurrence of this bridging sound between the two juxtaposed **o** vowels as is also the case with the semi-vowel **-y-** when the vowels **e** and **o** are juxtaposed. When two **o** vowels do occur in juxtaposition, one of them (usually the first one) is normally omitted as, for instance, happens in the following isiZulu example.

### **IsiZulu**

(41) Nangu umama (**o-onga** >) **onga** imali eningi.

‘Here is a woman that saves a lot of money.’

Umuntu (**o-opha** >) **opha** kakhulu ufakwa amanzi uma efika esibhedlela.

‘A drip is administered to a person who bleeds excessively when (s)he is admitted to hospital’.

### 5.3.2.1.3 Construction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative pronouns in the Nguni languages

Of the different demonstrative pronouns, the construction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position differs by far the most in the various Nguni languages. A comparison of these languages in this regard suggests that the form of these demonstratives in isiZulu most probably represents the full or basic form of these words while in all the other Nguni languages, derived or abbreviated forms of these pronouns are found. In the following paragraphs the focus falls on the way the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative pronoun is constructed in the different Nguni languages starting with the structure of these words in isiZulu.

#### (i) The formation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative pronouns in isiZulu

In isiZulu, the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative pronouns are formed by means of the formatives **-waya** and **-ya**, respectively, that are suffixed to the first position forms. The final vowel **-a** of both these suffixes carries a high tone and is pronounced with length (Van Eeden, 1956:133). For example, Cl.1: **lowaya** [lɔwájá:] ‘that yonder’, Cl.2: **labaya** [laɓájá:] ‘those yonder’ etc. The suffix **-ya** is added to the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives of all the non-nasal classes and the suffix **-aya** is added to the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstratives of all the nasal classes, with the exception of Classes 4, 6 and 9, which are formed by way of the addition of the suffix **-ya**. In the case of Class 6, this suffix is added to the alternative form of the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative of this class, (Van Eeden. op. cit.: 133). Compare the following isiZulu examples in this regard.

#### IsiZulu

##### Nasal Classes

(42) Cl. 1: lowaya

##### Non-nasal Classes

Cl. 2: labaya

Cl. 4: leyaya  
Cl.6: lawaya  
Cl.9: leyaya

Cl.5: leliya  
Cl. 8: leziya  
Cl. 10: leziya

Van Eeden (op. cit.:133) believes that the true form of the suffix **-waya** is **-aya** and that the semi-vowel **-w-** is a sort of a bridging sound that occurs when this suffix combines with the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun **-lo** (of Classes 1, 1a and 3), i.e. **lo-aya** > **lowaya**. The occurrence of the semi-vowel **-w-** in **lowaya** can be accounted for in terms of a well known phonological rule that occurs in nearly all the Nguni languages whereby a semi-vowel is triggered whenever the vowel **-o-** precedes the vowel **-a** in the same word as, for instance, happens when the relative concord **-o-** of Class 1 and 3 appears before vowel verb stems commencing on **-a**, like in **Nangu umuntu (o-alile >) owalile** ‘Here is a person who refused.’

**(ii) The formation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstratives in the other Nguni languages**

The reason for grouping the other Nguni languages together for this purpose is because they have two sets of 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstratives. The composition of the one set is exactly the same as that of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative in isiZulu, while that of the other set is different. In the case of the latter set, these demonstratives are formed by replacing the final vowel of the 2<sup>nd</sup> position demonstrative by an **a** vowel that is long in length and that carries a high tone. In Northern Ndebele, this is the only form that these demonstratives have. Compare the following examples of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstratives as they occur, for instance, in siSwati, Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele.

[Note: In isiXhosa these demonstratives have the same form, except that the /l/ phoneme is omitted in the case of the demonstratives of all the non-nasal classes]. Compare the following examples. (Note that the isiXhosa forms are not given below.)



	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Position</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Position</b>
(43) Cl. 1:	(loyo >)	loya: (lowa in isiXhosa)
2:	(labo >)	laba:
4:	(leyo >)	leya:
10:	(letu >)	leta: (Northern Ndebele and siSwati)
15	(lokho >)	lokha: (Southern Ndebele)
		lokhwa (Northern Ndebele)
	(loko)	lokhwa (isiSwati)

#### 5.3.2.1.4 Formation of the 4<sup>th</sup> position demonstrative pronouns in Nguni languages

Some Nguni scholars such as, for instance, Poulos and Msimang (1998:132), distinguish a 4<sup>th</sup> demonstrative position, which they call position 3(b) and which according to them is further away from the speaker than the position signified by the (basic) 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstratives. These demonstratives have a different form from that of their basic 3<sup>rd</sup> position counterparts in that they include the additional suffix **-na** as for instance in the following isiZulu examples.

#### IsiZulu

<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Position</b>		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Position</b>
(44) labaya	>	labayana
leliya	>	leliyana
lobuya	>	lobuyana

Van Eeden (1956:134) also recognizes this demonstrative form but unlike Poulos and Msimang, does not consider it to be semantically different from the basic 3<sup>rd</sup> position

demonstratives. He, therefore, regards it as an alternative 3<sup>rd</sup> position form and refers to it as position 3(b). The fact that these demonstratives have a different form and signify a different demonstrative position is, in this study, regarded as sufficient reason to regard these demonstratives as the 4<sup>th</sup> position demonstratives rather than alternative forms of position 3.

According to Ziervogel (1985:48), siSwati also has a demonstrative position 4. Ziervogel gives no indication whether this is a position that is further away from the speaker than position 3 or whether it is simply an alternative form of position 3. Position 4 has a basic form **-ana** and two phonologically definable variants **-wana** and **-yana**. The suffix **-ana** is added to all polysyllabic demonstratives of position 1, that is, all the position 1 demonstratives of the non-nasal classes, while the two variants are added to the position 1 demonstrative of all the nasal classes. Compare the following siSwati examples in this regard.

### SiSwati

	1 <sup>st</sup> Position 1	4 <sup>th</sup> Position
(45)	Cl. 1: lo	loyana
	Cl. 2: laba	labana
	Cl. 3: lo	lowana
	Cl. 4: le	leyana
	Cl. 5: leli	leliyana
	Cl. 6: la	lawana
	Cl. 7: lesi	lesana

An investigation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstrative in Southern Ndebele confirms Poulos and Msimang's view that there is an additional demonstrative position that is relatively further away from the speaker than the one indicated by the basic 3<sup>rd</sup> position demonstratives. These demonstratives are formed by means of the suffix **-ya** as can be seen in the following Southern Ndebele examples.



### Southern Ndebele

	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Position</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Position</b>
(46)	Cl. 1: lo:ya/wa	lo:yaya/waya
	Cl. 2: la:ba	la:baya
	Cl. 4: le:ya	le:yaya
	Cl. 5: le:la	le:laya
	Cl. 6: la:ya/wa	la:yaya/waya

In the 4<sup>th</sup> position the vowel of the first syllable carries a high tone and is pronounced with length in Southern Ndebele, e.g., [lɔːjaja], [laːbaja], leːsaja].

[Note: It is worth pointing out that no alternative form of the 3<sup>rd</sup> position or of 4<sup>th</sup> position demonstrative pronouns exists in isiXhosa or in Northern Ndebele.]

#### 5.3.2.1.5 Summary of the distinctive morphological features of the various demonstrative positions.

Based on the analysis given in the previous paragraphs of the structural features of the various demonstrative positions in the Nguni languages these features can now be summarized as follows –

(47)	Position 1	=	<b>∅ (unmarked)</b>
	Position 2	=	<b>-(w)o/-(y)o</b>
	Position 3(a) (i)	=	<b>-(w)aya/-ya</b>
	(ii)	=	<b>-a</b>
	Position 4	=	<b>-(a)na/-ya/</b>

[Note:

- Position 1 can be regarded as the unmarked position as it contains no morpheme with a deictic significance.
- Position 1 and 2 are found in all the Nguni languages.

- Position 3(a)(i) occurs in all the Nguni languages, except in Northern Ndebele.
- Position 3(a)(ii) occurs in all the Nguni languages, except in isiZulu.
- Position 4 occurs in all Nguni languages except in isiXhosa and Northern Ndebele.]

### 5.3.2.1.6 Differences in the morphological structure of the demonstrative pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele

From the investigation of the demonstrative pronouns as outlined above the following morphological differences and similarities between the demonstrative pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele emerged.

- **Position 1:** They are morphologically the same, e.g.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(48) Cl. 1:	lo	‘this’	lo
2:	laba	‘these’	laba
4:	le	‘these’	le
5:	leli	‘this’	leli
6:	la	‘these’	la

- **Position 2:** They are morphologically the same except that there is an alternative demonstrative form in Classes 1, 1a, 3 and 6 in Southern Ndebele that is formed by means of the suffix **–yo** (See 5.3.2.1.2 (iii) above) that does not occur in Northern Ndebele. In Northern Ndebele, this position is derived from the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative by means of the suffix **–wo**.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(49) Cl. 1:	loyo	‘that’	lowo



3:	loyo	‘that’	lowo
6:	layo	‘those’	lawo

- **Position 3:** Both these languages have the position 3(a) form as set out in paragraph 5.3.2.1.3 (ii) above, while Southern Ndebele has an additional position 4 that does not occur in Northern Ndebele, e.g.

		<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(50)	Cl. 1:	lo:ya	‘that yonder’	lowa
	2:	la:ba	‘those yonder’	laba
	4:	le:ya	‘those yonder’	leya
	5:	le:la	‘that yonder’	lela
	6:	la:ya/lawa	‘those yonder’	lawa

- **Position 4:** This form occurs in Southern Ndebele and not in Northern Ndebele, e.g.

		<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(51)	Cl. 1:	lo:ya(ya)	‘that yonder’	lowa
	2:	la:ba(ya)	‘those yonder’	laba
	4:	le:ya(ya)	‘those yonder’	leya
	5:	le:la(ya)	‘that yonder’	lela
	6:	la:ya(ya)/lawa(ya)	‘those yonder’	lawa

The differences and similarities between Southern and Northern Ndebele, as discussed above, can be illustrated as follows in tabular form.

**Table 5.3: The demonstrative pronouns of Southern and Northern Ndebele**

1<sup>st</sup> Position      2<sup>nd</sup> Position      3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Position



Cl. 1: <b>S.Nde:</b>	lo	'this'	loyo/lowo	'that'	lo:ya(ya)	that yonder'
<b>N.Nde</b>	lo		loo/lowo		lowa	
2: <b>S.Nde:</b>	laba	'these'	labo	'those'	la:ba(ya)	'those yonder'
<b>N.Nde</b>	laba		labo		laba	
3: <b>S.Nde:</b>	lo	'this'	loyo/lowo	'that'	lo:ya(ya)	'that yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	lo,		loo/lowo		lowa	
4: <b>S.Nde:</b>	le	'these'	leyo	'those'	le:ya(ya)	'those yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	le		leyo		leya	
5: <b>S.Nde:</b>	leli	'this'	lelo	'that'	le:la(ya)	'that yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	leli		lelo		lela	
6: <b>S.Nde:</b>	la	'these'	layo/lawo	'those'	la:ya(ya)/lawo(ya)	'those yonder'
<b>N.Nde</b>	la		lawo		lawo	
7: <b>S.Nde:</b>	lesi	'this'	leso	'that'	le:sa(ya)	'that yonder'
<b>N.Nde</b>	lesi		leso		lesa	
8: <b>S.Nde:</b>	lezi	'these'	lezo	'those'	le:za(ya)	'those yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	leti		leto		leta	
9: <b>S.Nde:</b>	le	'this'	leya	'that'	le:ya(ya)	'that yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	le		leyo		leya	
10: <b>S.Nde:</b>	lezi	'these'	lezo	'those'	le:za(ya)	'those yonder'
<b>N.Nde:</b>	leti		leto		leta	



14: <b>S.Nde:</b> lobu ‘this’	lobo ‘that’	lo:ba(ya) ‘that yonder’
<b>N.Nde</b> lobu	lobo	loba
15: <b>S.Nde:</b> lokhu ‘this’	lokho ‘that’	lo:kha/lokhuya ‘that yonder’
<b>N.Nde</b> lokhu	lokho	lokhwa
16: <b>S.Nde:</b> lapha ‘here’	lapho ‘there’	la:pha(ya) ‘there yonder’
<b>N.Nde:</b> lapha	lapho	lapha
17: <b>S.Nde:</b> lokhu ‘this’	lokho ‘that’	lo:kha(lokhuya) ‘that yonder’
<b>N.Nde:</b> lokhu	lokho	lokhwa

### 5.3.3 The quantitative pronouns

Quantitative pronouns are pronouns that denote number and quantity. There are two kinds of quantitative pronoun that occur in the Nguni languages. They are the so-called “inclusive” and “exclusive” quantitative pronouns. (See Poulos & Msimang, 1998:124.) In the following paragraphs these pronouns are analysed and discussed in terms of (a) their form and meaning and (b) their formal manifestation in the different Nguni languages. Attention is also paid to some of the more salient syntactic features of these words.

#### 5.3.3.1 Form and meaning of the quantitative pronouns in the Nguni languages

##### 5.3.3.1.1 The inclusive quantitative pronouns

###### (i) Significance

###### (a) The concept of ‘all/the whole of/ entirely’

The inclusive quantitative pronouns signify ‘all’ when referring to a plural noun and ‘the whole of’, ‘the entire’, ‘each’ and ‘every one’ when referring to a singular noun. Compare the following isiZulu examples in (52a) and (52b) in this regard.



### IsiZulu

(52a) **The concept “All”**

Abafana bakwaMthembu baboshwe **bonke**.

‘**All** the boys of Mthembu have been arrested.’

**Zonke** izingane zami zingena ezikoleni zabamhlophe.

‘**All** my children attend schools for whites.’

Amazwi akhe **onke** ayezwakala

‘**All** his words are factual.’

(52b) **The concept “the whole of / the entire”**

**Yonke** inyama ehlatshwe izolo seyonakele.

‘**All** the meat slaughtered yesterday is spoiled.’

Umuzi kaCele ushe **wonke** waba wumlotha

‘**The entire** homestead of Mr Cele has burnt to ashes.’

Umzimba wakhe **wonke** ubuhlungu.

‘His **entire** body is painful.’

**(b) The concept “each/every one”**

The inclusive quantitative pronoun suffix **-nke**, in addition, also signifies ‘each/every one’ when referring to both plural and singular nouns. Compare the following isiZulu examples in (52c) in this regard.

### IsiZulu

(52)(c) **Wonke** umuntu ufanele abe nomazisi

‘**Each/Every** person should have an identity book.’

Simbona **zonke** izinsuku eya emsebenzini.

‘We see him **each/every** day going to work.’

## (ii) Formation

The quantitative pronouns are constructed by means of an agreement morpheme (that resembles the subject concord of the noun class concerned) plus the so-called pronominal root **-o-** (Van Eeden, 1956:140) plus a (basic) suffix **-nke** (which has a slightly different form in some of the Nguni languages). Compare the following examples of these pronouns as they occur in isiZulu.

### isiZulu

**s/c + o + nke**

- (53) Cl. 1: u + o + nke > wonke  
 2: b(a) + o + nke > bonke  
 3: u + o + nke > wonke  
 4: i + o + nke > yonke  
 5: l(i) + o + nke > lonke  
 6: (a) + o + nke > onke  
 7: s(i) + o + nke > sonke  
 8: zi + o + nke > zonke  
 9: i + o + nke > yonke  
 10: zi + o + nke > zonke

As can be noted in the examples above, consonantalization takes place when the agreement morpheme consists of a vowel only (i.e., Classes 1, 1a, 3, 4 and 9), while vowel omission occurs in the case of agreement morphemes that consist of a consonant and a vowel. In the case of Class 6, the agreement morpheme **a-** is omitted in all Nguni languages except in Southern Ndebele. In Southern Ndebele, the agreement morpheme **a-** of Class 6 is discarded and replaced by a semi-vowel **w-** in the construction of the

inclusive quantitative pronouns. Compare the following Southern Ndebele example in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

(54) Cl.6: (a) + o + -ke > **woke** e.g.

Ngibizele **woke** amadoda emhlanganweni.

‘I have called all the men to a meeting.’

The reason for the occurrence of the semi-vowel **w** in this pronoun is currently still inexplicable since Southern Ndebele does not have a phonological rule in terms of which the combination of **a + o** gives rise the semi-vowel **w**.

As far as the morphological status of **-nke** is concerned, it is of importance to note that some Nguni grammarians such as Doke (1927:93-94), Van Eeden (1956:140) and Poulos and Msimang (1998:124) consider **-nke** to be the stem or root of these pronouns. Wilkes (1992:31), however, proposes that the quantitative pronouns have the same kind of morphological structure as their absolute counterparts, which implies that if the formative **-na** in absolute pronouns is a suffix and not a stem (as some isiZulu grammarians assume that it is) then the formative **∠nke** must also be recognized as one. This is also the view that is supported in this study.

### (iii) Form of the suffix -nke in the various Nguni languages

The inclusive quantitative pronoun suffix **-nke** [ŋkʰɛ] that occurs in isiZulu and isiXhosa manifests itself in different forms in some of the other Nguni languages. In siSwati, the ejective [kʰ] in this suffix occurs as a semi-voiced [ḡ]. When this sound occurs in combination with the nasal **n[ŋ]**, it is written in siSwati as **-kh**. (See Ziervogel, 1985:60.) This is also the reason why this suffix is written as **-nkh** in the normal siSwati orthography. In Southern Ndebele, on the other hand, the inclusive quantitative pronoun suffix occurs as **-ke** while in Northern Ndebele it has two forms, namely **-kxe** (which is

the most frequently used form) and **-hle**, respectively (Ziervogel. 1959:74). Compare the following siSwati, Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(55) **SiSwati:** Basebenti **bonkhe** bafundiswa ngemtsetfo.  
'All the workers are taught about legal matters.'

Mifula **yonkhe** yomile kulo nyaka.

'All the rivers are dry this year.'

**Southern Ndebele:** Abasebenzi **boke** bafundiswa ngomthetho.

'All the workers are taught about legal matters.'

Imilambo **yoke** yomile nonyaka.

'All the rivers are dry this year.'

**Northern Ndebele:** Basebenti **bokxe/bohle** babala gemulawu.

'All the workers are taught about legal matters.'

Milambho **yokxe/yohle** yomile munyaka lo.

'All the rivers are dry this year.'

In both Southern and Northern Ndebele the inclusive quantitative pronoun suffixes are without a nasal. The reason for the absence of the nasal **-n** in these suffixes is most probably the result of the influence of the neighboring Sepedi language. These two Ndebele languages have, for a long time, been in close contact with Sepedi. In Sepedi, the inclusive quantitative suffix is **-hlê**, which is also one of the forms that this suffix has in Northern Ndebele (Poulos & Louwrens, 1994:79). Compare the following examples in this regard.

**Sepedi**

**Northern Ndebele**



(56) Cl.2: bôhlê	bohle
4: yôhlê	yohle
6: ôhlê	ohle
8: tšôhlê	tohle

The occurrence of the ejective affricate **kx** [**kx'**] in the alternative suffix of the inclusive quantitative pronoun in Northern Ndebele is more difficult to account for. However, an investigation into the distribution of this sound in Northern Ndebele reveals that apart from its occurrence in the inclusive quantitative pronouns and the locative copulative demonstratives of Class 1, 3, 4 and 6, the only other environment in which this sound is normally found in Northern Ndebele is in the secondary nasal compound of **B./nk/** in Class 9 nouns. This compound which is derived from Ur-Bantu **/ni + k/** occurs in Northern Ndebele as the nasal compound **nkx** [[**ŋkx'**]] in Class 9 nouns, where the nasal represents the noun class prefix of this class. (It is important to note that the influence of the nasal in the nasal compound of **B. /ni/** is responsible for the phonetic change in the following consonant, (i.e., **B. /ni+k/ > [ŋk] > [ŋkx']**, **B./ni + t] > [nt] > [nt']**). In Class 10 nouns in this language, the nasal is dropped from the Class 10, prefix **li-ni** (after it has changed the phonetic character of the following consonant) thus causing the prefix of this class to be non-nasal. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

Class 9		Class 10	
(57) nkxabi	'ox'	tikxabi	'oxen'
nkxomo	'beast'	tikxomo	'beasts'
nkxosi	'chief'	tikxosi	'chiefs'

Compare also the nasal compound in the following locative copulative demonstratives in this regard.



(58)	Cl. 1: nankxu	nankxo	nankxuya
	Cl. 3: nankxu	nankxo	nankxuya
	Cl. 6: nankxu	nankxo	nankxuwa

If the above assumption concerning the origin of the nasal compound **nkx** in Northern Ndebele is correct, then it implies that the nasal compound **nkx** that is found in the inclusive quantitative pronouns as well as in the locative copulative demonstrative of some of the nasal classes in this language must also have originated from the Ur-Bantu nasal compound with **ni-**. In the case of the inclusive quantitative pronouns, it means that the Ur-Bantu form of the inclusive quantitative pronouns of, for instance, Class 2 and Class 10 must have been something like the following –

(59)	Cl. 2: bokxe	(< B. [β-o –ni-k- ε])
	Cl. 10: tokxe	(<B. [l-o-ni-k-ε])

#### (iv) The inclusive quantitative form ‘gemuga’ in Northern Ndebele

During this investigation, it was found that a gradual shift seems to be taking place among Northern Ndebele speakers whereby the alternative inclusive quantitative pronouns with the suffix **-kxe** and **hle** are gradually being replaced by a third inclusive quantitative form **gemuga** that has the same semantic features and by and large also the same syntactic features that the inclusive quantitative pronouns have, that is, it has an inclusive quantitative meaning and, as with the quantitative pronouns, serves to quantify the noun it semantically relates to. Compare the following examples in this regard.

#### Northern Ndebele

- (60) Banru **gemuga** basebenta eTshwane.  
Banru **bokxe/bohle** basebenta eTshwane  
‘All people work in Tshwane.’

Malume ukhubele mutimba **gemuga**.

Malume ukhubele mutimba **okxe/ohle**

‘My uncle’s **entire** body is injured’.

Tinkxomo taLidwaba tife **gemuga**.

Tinkxomo taLidwaba tife **tokxe/tohle**

‘Lidwaba’s beasts have **all** died.’

Titjhaba tabo **gemuga** taya eSwazini.

Titjhaba tabo **tokxe/tohle** taya eSwazini.

‘**All** their tribes went to Swaziland.’

The only syntactic difference between this alternative inclusive quantitative pronoun and its pronominal counterparts with the suffixes **-kxe** and **-hle**, respectively, is that **gemuga** does not normally precede the noun it relates to as other inclusive quantitative pronouns sometimes do. Compare the following examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

(61) Ufuna **tokxe/tohle** tikxomo leti tinonile. : \* Ufuna **gemuga** tikxomo leti tinonile.

‘He wants all these fat cattle.’

Bhesi ikhubete **bokxe/bohle** batlhankana. : \*Bhesi ikhubete **gemuga** batlhankana.

‘The bus has injured all the boys.’

Bafati basebenta **okxe/ohle** masimu. : \*Bafati basebenta **gemuga** masimu.

‘Women work all the fields.’

It is worth pointing out that the form **gemuga** does not occur in any of the other Nguni languages and that it, in all probability, originated from Sepedi where the form **ka moka** performs the same function as **gemuga** does in Northern Ndebele. What is unique about this quantitative form **gemuga** (and by implication also its counterpart **ka moka** in

Sepedi), is that although it has the same semantic and (most of the) syntactic features of the inclusive quantitative pronouns, it has no morphological relationship with these pronouns. (The same applies to **ka moka** in Sepedi.) In fact, it has the same morphological structure as many of the adverbial forms in Northern Ndebele have, that is, it consists of an adverbial formative **ga-** (= **ka-** in Sepedi) plus a Class 3 noun **muga** ‘all’ (= **moka** in Sepedi). In such instances, the ‘substitution of e rule’ normally applies in Northern Ndebele causing **ga + muga > gemuga**. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

- (62) **ga - mufati** > **gemufati**. ‘by / with a woman’  
**ga - mulomo** > **gemulomo**. ‘by / with a mouth’  
**ga - musebenti** > **gemusebenti**. ‘by / with a work’

What the above discussion implies, is that the form **gemuga** (and **ka moka** in Sepedi) must be judged to be a classless inclusive quantitative ‘pronoun’ as it shows no grammatical agreement with the noun it qualifies and, as a result retains the same form regardless of the class to which the noun it qualifies belongs.

### (v) Differences in the usage of the inclusive quantitative pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele

According to Ziervogel (1959:74), only nouns that are in the so-called plural classes have inclusive quantitative pronouns in Northern Ndebele. This is not the case in Southern Ndebele where the inclusive quantitative pronouns are found in all the noun classes. Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(63)	1 <sup>st</sup> p.s. <b>mina woke</b>		‘The whole of me’
	1 <sup>st</sup> p.p. <b>thina soke</b>		‘All of us’
			<b>thina sokxe/sohle</b>



2 <sup>nd</sup> p.s.	wena <b>woke</b>	‘You as a whole’	
2 <sup>nd</sup> p.p.	nina <b>noke</b>	‘You all’	lina <b>lokxe/lohle</b>
Cl. 1:	umuntu <b>woke</b>	‘The whole person’	
2.	abantu <b>boke</b>	‘All the people’	banru <b>bokxe/bohle</b>
5:	ilizwe <b>loke</b>	‘The whole country’	
6.	amagama <b>woke</b>	‘All the words’	mavi <b>okxe/ohle</b>
7:	isandla <b>soke</b>	‘The whole hand’	

Although Ziervogel (op. cit.:74) maintains that Northern Ndebele does not have inclusive quantitative pronouns expressing singular forms, Northern Ndebele informants consulted (during 1999-2000) in this regard maintain that the quantitative suffixes **-kxe** and **-hle** are also used in combination with singular nouns in this language. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(64) 2 <sup>nd</sup> p.s.	wena <b>wokxe/wohle</b>	‘You as a whole’
Cl.1:	munru <b>wokxe/wohle</b>	‘The whole person’
5:	live <b>lokxe/lohle</b>	‘The whole country’
7:	sandla <b>sokxe/sohle</b>	‘The whole hand’
9:	mbuti <b>yokxe/yohle</b>	‘The whole goat’

#### (vi) Other differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele

A further difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the inclusive quantitative pronoun is concerned is the form of this pronoun in Class 6. In Southern Ndebele, the agreement morpheme of this class changes from **a-** > **w** while in Northern Ndebele, as is the case in other Nguni languages, this agreement morpheme is dropped. Compare the following examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

#### Northern Ndebele

(65) Cl.6: Amazwakho azwakala **woke**.                      Mavi akho avakala **okxe/ohle**.

‘Your words are **all** understandable.’

In the following table the formal differences between the inclusive quantitative pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele are summarised.

**Table 5.4: Southern and Northern Ndebele inclusive quantitative pronouns**

<b>Inclusive quantitative pronouns</b>		
	<b>S. Ndebele</b>	<b>N. Ndebele</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> p./s.	woke	.....
1 <sup>st</sup> p/p	soke	sokxe/sohle
2 <sup>nd</sup> p/s:	woke	.....
2 <sup>nd</sup> p/p	noke	lokxe/lohle
Cl. 1:	woke	wokxe/wohle
Cl. 2	boke	bokxe/bohle
Cl. 3:	woke	wokxe/wohle
Cl. 4:	yoke	yokxe/yohle
Cl. 5:	loke	lokxe/lohle
Cl. 6:	woke	okxe/ohle
Cl. 7:	soke	sokxe/sohle
Cl. 8:	zoke	tokxe/tohle
Cl. 9:	yoke	yokxe/yohle
Cl. 10:	zoke	tokxe/tohle
Cl. 14:	boke	bokxe/bohle
Cl. 15:	koke	kokxe/kohle
Cl. 16:	koke	kokxe/kohle
Cl. 17:	koke	kokxe/kohle

### 5.3.3.1.2 The exclusive quantitative pronoun

#### (i) Significance

The significance of the exclusive quantitative pronoun suffix **-dwa** in Nguni languages is ‘only/alone/only one’. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

(66) Bakhambe **bodwa** emtjhadweni kadadwethu  
‘They went alone to my sister’s wedding.’

Bantazana **bodwa** abafuneka kilomsebenzi.  
‘It is only girls (who) are needed for this job.’

Ubabakhe nguye **yedwa** otjhayela lomtjhini.  
‘His father is the only one who drives this machine.’

Ngileli **lodwa** igwayi engilithenge izolo.  
‘This tobacco is the only one I bought yesterday.’

The exclusive quantitative pronouns are found in all the Nguni languages except in Northern Ndebele (See par. (v) below.)

### (ii) Formation

Basically these pronouns are formed in the same way as their inclusive counterparts. They consist of an agreement morpheme (that resembles the subject concord of the class concerned) plus a pronominal **-o-** that acts as the stem or base of the pronoun plus an exclusive quantitative suffix **-dwa** (which has a slightly different form **-dvwa** in siSwati). Consider the construction of the following exclusive quantitative pronouns in Southern Ndebele in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

(67) Cl.2: **b(a) + o + -dwa > bodwa**

Abantwabakhe besana **bodwa**.

‘His children are boys only.’

Cl.3: **u + o + -dwa > wodwa**

Wena uthanda umsebenzi wokwakha **wodwa**.

‘You like building work only.’

Cl.4: **i + o + -dwa > yodwa**

Misebenzi emihle **yodwa** edingekako.

‘It is only good works (that) are needed.’

### (iii) The equivalents of the exclusive quantitative pronouns in Northern Ndebele

Ziervogel (1959:77), in a footnote remarks that Northern Ndebele does not have exclusive quantitative pronouns. Instead, it uses a noun **nedwa** ‘alone/only’ for this purpose. (See (v) below.) The origin of the word **nedwa** in Northern Ndebele is unknown. What is certain, however, is that it did not originate from Sepedi, otherwise Poulos and Louwrens and other Northern Sotho grammarians would have treated it in their grammars of Northern Sotho. (See, for instance, Poulos and Louwrens, 1994:79 in this regard.) Northern Sotho uses the word **feela** to express the concept ‘only’ as, for instance, in the following examples.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| (68) | Ke nyaka mosomo <b>feela</b> .          | ‘I’m <b>only</b> looking for a job.’          |
|      | Mpho o ja nama <b>feela</b> ge a lwala. | ‘Mpho <b>only</b> eats meat when she is ill.’ |
|      | Go bitswa basadi <b>feela</b> .         | ‘ <b>Only</b> women are called.’              |

### (iv) Usage of the exclusive quantitative pronouns

The usage of the exclusive quantitative pronouns in Nguni languages is almost the same, except in Northern Ndebele. In Southern Ndebele, the exclusive quantitative pronouns can be used in (a) apposition to nouns (b) as adverbs and (c) as pronouns. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.



## Southern Ndebele

### (69a) In apposition

- Sihlala noNtuli **yedwa** kilendawo. 'We stay with Ntuli alone at this place.'  
Utjhiye abantwana **bodwa** ngendlini. 'You left children alone in the house.'  
Inyama **yodwa** imnandi nawurhamulako. 'Meat alone is delicious when you are drinking.'

### (69b) As an adverb

- Abahlala kamnandi **bodwa** bobaba. 'Those seated alone nicely are our fathers.'  
Lomfazi osebenza **yedwa** ngowami. 'This woman working alone is mine.'  
Isithunzi esonakele **sodwa** ngesakhe. 'An image that has been tarnished alone is his.'

### (69c) As pronoun

- Wodwa** (amalahle) akavuthi. 'Alone (the coal), they do not burn.'  
Bakhamba **bodwa** (abantu) namhlanje. 'They go **alone** (the people) today.'  
Izolo beyiduma **yodwa** (imitjhini). 'Yesterday, they were idling **alone** (the machines).'

In Northern Ndebele, in contrast, the noun **nedwa** referred to above (See par. (iii).) can only be used as part of a copulative construction that occurs in the situative mood. Consider the following examples in this regard.

## Northern Ndebele

- (70) Sisebenta **sinedwa** nemunhla. 'We work alone today.'  
Tami tidla **tinedwa** tikxomo. 'My beasts eat alone.'  
Mbabethe **ndinedwa/nnedwa**. 'I beat them alone.'  
Bukxosi abusebenti **bunedwa**. 'Chieftainship alone does not work.'  
Bakhambe **banedwa**. 'They left alone.'



**(v) Problematic forms of the exclusive quantitative pronouns**

In all the Nguni languages which have exclusive quantitative pronouns, an irregular strategy is followed in the formation of some of these pronouns, notably those of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and Classes 1 and 1a. In these pronouns, the pronominal **-o-** is replaced by an **-e-** (Van Eeden. 1956:142). Compare the following examples in isiZulu for instance.

**IsiZulu**

(71) 1<sup>st</sup> p.s: ng(i) + **e** + dwa > ngedwa. ‘alone’, e.g:

Cha ngizohamba **ngedwa** esikoleni. ‘No I will go **alone** at school’.

2<sup>nd</sup> p.s: u + **e** + dwa > wedwa , e.g:

Sipho kungani ukhuluma **wedwa** ? ‘Why do you speak **alone** Sipho?’

Cl.1: u + **e** + dwa > yedwa, e.g:

Ngumma **yedwa** ohlala edolobheni. ‘It’s the mother **alone** who stays in town.’

Cl. 1a: u + **e** + dwa > yedwa, e.g:

UNtombifuthi uy**edwa** la ekhaya. ‘Ntombifuthi is **alone** here at home.’

IsiXhosa, too, differs with regard to the form of the exclusive quantitative pronoun of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural. In these two classes, the basic pronominal root **-o-** is replaced by **-e-**, which is a different strategy from that employed in the other Nguni languages. Compare the following isiXhosa examples as given by Pahl, et al. (1978:43) in this regard.

**IsiXhosa**

(72) 1st p.p: Sihleli sedwa apha sicinga ngoMandla.

(cf. IsiZulu: Sihlezi **sodwa** lapha sicabanga ngoMandla)

‘We are seated **alone** here thinking about Mandla.’

2<sup>nd</sup> p.p: Ubawo uzonibetha nedwa Sipho.

(cf. IsiZulu: Ubaba uzonishaya nodwa Sipho)

‘The father is going to beat you **alone** Sipho.’

According to Pahl, et al.(1978:43), some isiXhosa speakers prefer to use the ‘regular’ Nguni forms **sodwa** and **nodwa**, instead of **sedwa** and **nedwa**.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the morphological features that distinguish Southern and Northern Ndebele from each other have been discussed. The discussion has fallen on the noun and pronoun of the two Ndebele languages. In this chapter it has been shown that the two Ndebele languages differ in regard to noun structure and pronoun forms. While Southern Ndebele noun structure, for instance, comprises the noun class pre-prefix + basic prefix + noun stem, as is the case with the other Nguni languages, Northern Ndebele like other Tekela Nguni languages and Sotho languages does not have the noun class pre-prefix. This means that the Northern Ndebele noun class prefix comprises the basic prefix and noun stem.

The two Ndebele languages have further demonstrated that they differ in regard to pronouns. The differences between the two Ndebele languages regarding the pronouns are on the absolute pronouns of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, the absolute pronoun of Class 6, demonstrative and quantitative pronouns. The differences found have shown that they result from the influences from the other languages where the two Ndebele languages are used, especially Sepedi. In the next chapter, the morphological aspects that distinguish the two Ndebele languages continue.

## CHAPTER 6

### MORPHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN NDEBELE (*continued*)

#### 6.1 Introduction

The morphological differences discussed in Chapter Six are not the only ones which distinguish Southern and Northern Ndebele. There are other morphological features besides the quantitatives discussed in Chapter Five that distinguish these two Ndebele speech forms and that have not yet been discussed. This chapter is, therefore, a continuation of Chapter Five and it focuses on the morphological differences in the qualificatives between Southern and Northern Ndebele.

The traditional and modern grammarians of the Bantu languages, especially of the Nguni languages, have always had different opinions in regard to the identification, classification and description of the grammatical term “qualificative”. Some Nguni grammarians such as Ungerer (1975) and Ziervogel (1985), for instance, regard the term ‘qualificative’ as referring to three descriptive words namely “adjective”, “relative” and “possessive”. The term “qualificative” is, in fact, a broader term, which embraces the different types of qualifying, or descriptive words that can be sub-divided as follows –

- (i) adjective
- (ii) relative
- (iii) enumerative
- (iv) possessive

Scholars, such as Doke (1927) Van Eeden (1956), Ziervogel (1959) and Poulos and Msimang (1994), are in agreement that the term “qualificative” refers to those categories of words, the main function of which is to qualify a substantive as, for instance, in the following Southern Ndebele examples where the qualificatives **ekulu** and **egulako**, respectively, qualify the noun **indoda** in (a) **indoda ekulu** ‘A “big” man’ and (b) **indoda**

*egulako* ‘A “sick” man’. In the Nguni languages in particular, the term “qualificative” (or “descriptive” as some scholars prefer to call it) refers to a grammatical category that comprises four sub-categories, that is, “adjective”, “relative”, “possessive” and “enumerative”. In terms of Doke’s grammar (1927:97), the category “qualificative” is regarded as a fundamental part of speech and its sub-categories as constituting “the real parts of speech”. With minor differences (that will be alluded to as the discussion progresses) most Nguni grammarians have adopted the same sub-divisions for the category “qualificative” as Doke has done. (See Van Eeden, 1956; Ziervogel, 1985; Poulos & Msimang, 1998.) The reason why it has become a tradition in the Nguni languages to subdivide the category ‘qualificative’ in this way does not accrue from any semantic considerations (the different sub-categories of the qualificative all perform the same semantic function) but on account of the morphological differences that distinguish these sub-categories from one another and which mainly pertain to the differences in the morphological structure of their respective concordial morphemes. Van Eeden (1956:148), for instance, remarks as follows in this regard –

‘Betreffende die vorm van die ... kwalifikatiwe, verskil hulle in hoofsaak van mekaar ten aansien van die bepaalde konkord wat kenmerkend van elkeen is, en waarmee hulle in die konkordiale ooreenstemming met die gekwalifiseerde substantief gebring word.’

In the paragraphs that follow, the various qualificatives in Southern Ndebele are compared with their counterparts in Northern Ndebele and all the differences that occur between these languages in this regard are analysed and discussed. The first category that is focused on is the category “adjective”.

## **6.2 The adjective**

Words that are recognized as adjectives in the grammar of the Nguni languages form part of a word class that consists of only a limited number of (adjective) stems. The word category “adjective” as it is constituted today was, according to Gauton (1990), first introduced in Nguni grammar in 1926 by C. M. Doke in his pioneering work, *The*

*phonetics of the Zulu language*. Doke was also the first grammarian to distinguish between “adjectives” and “relatives” in isiZulu – a distinction that was later also implemented in the grammar of all the other Nguni languages.

From Doke’s definition of these two word classes, it is clear that this distinction is not based on any semantic or syntactic grounds but on the difference in the morphological structure of the agreement morphemes that the words of these two word categories employ. Where the adjectives agree with their antecedent noun by means of an adjective concord, the relatives do so by means of a relative concord. (See the discussion of these concords in par. 6.5 below.)

There is a very small difference between the various Nguni languages as far as the content of the class “adjective” is concerned. With the exception of a very small number of stems, all the Nguni languages use the same stems as adjective stems. The following is a list of the stems that constitute the category “adjective”, in isiZulu.

(1)	-bi	‘evil/bad’	-hle	‘nice, good, beautiful’
	-bili	‘two’	-khulu	‘big, great’
	-dala	‘old’	-ncane	‘small’
	-de	‘long, tall’	-nci	‘very small’
	-fuphi	‘short’	-ncinyane	‘small’
	-fushane	‘short’	-ne	‘four’
	-hlanu	‘five’	-ngaki	‘how many’
	-ningi	‘much, many’	-sha	‘new’
	-nye	‘other, some’	-thathu	‘three’

The relationship that some isiZulu scholars, such as Van Eeden (1956), Ziervogel (1959) and Von Staden (1973), proclaim exists between the adjective and the verb in this language has never found much favour among many isiZulu grammarians. The view that the adjective in isiZulu is basically a noun, however, did receive some attention from certain isiZulu grammarians, notably from scholars such as Von Staden (1973) and

Taljaard and Bosch (1988), respectively. Von Staden (1973:20) subscribes to this relationship when he proclaims:

‘Vormlik het die adjektief soos die naamwoord ‘n klasprefiks voor die stam. it blyk daaruit dat die adjektiefstam telkens voorafgegaan word deur ‘n morfeem wat identities is aan die ‘eintlike’ prefiks (d.w.s. klasprefiks sonder beginvokaal) van die antesedent.’

Compare the following example he gives in this regard.

- (2) **Umuntu mubi.** ‘The person is ugly’  
**Isikole sidala.** ‘The school is old.’

Taljaard and Bosch (1998) also recognize the nominal character of the adjectives in isiZulu by calling them adnominals (a term derived from the conjugation of adjective + nominal) with variable basic prefix (Taljaard & Bosch, op. cit.:98). Despite its different name, this category or construction, as Taljaard and Bosch (op. cit.:98) prefer to call it, consists of exactly the same adjectival stems as the ones that Doke has included in his category “adjective”.

### **6.3 The morphological structure of the adjective concord**

There is basically no difference amongst Nguni grammarians in regard to the morphological structure of the adjective concord. Most of them concur on what the morphology of the adjective concord in these languages entails. The most prominent views (that attention is paid to here) concerning the morphological structure of the adjective concord in isiZulu are those of Doke (1927), Van Eeden (1956) and Nyembezi (1963).

Doke (1927: 101) and Nyembezi (1963: 97) share the same opinion regarding the morphological construction of the adjective concord. According to these scholars, the adjectival concord is formed by means of a qualificative formative **a-** plus the full form

of the noun class prefix that result in vowel coalescence taking place between the “qualificative” *a* and the initial vowel of the noun class prefix (e.g., **a + a > a**, **a + i > e**, **a + u > o**).

Van Eeden (1956:149) holds a similar view to Doke and Nyembezi, except that he uses the term “relative” ‘**a**’ for Doke and Nyembezi’s “qualificative” ‘**a**’ and that he regards the second formative in the adjective concord as a “concordial element” (that resembles the basic prefix of the noun class), while Doke and Nyembezi regard it to be the full form of the noun prefix. In terms of Doke and Nyembezi’s view, the formative ‘**a**’ coalesces with the initial vowel of the NCP (Noun Class Prefix) while, in terms of Van Eeden’s view, this ‘**a**’ assimilates to the vowel of the basic NCP according to the same phonological rules that apply in the case of Doke and Nyembezi’s view. The views of these scholars can be summarized as follows.

(3) Cl. 1: **a + (u)m(u) > om(u)-**, e.g.

Umfana **om(u)**ncane uboshelwe ukubhema insangu.

‘A small boy has been arrested for smoking dagga.’

Cl.3: **Umuzi omubi** yilowo ongenabazali.

‘A bad home is a one that lacks parents.’

Cl. 5: **a + (i)li > eli-**, e.g.

Yiqanda **elikhulu** ngelenciliba.

‘A big egg is that of an ostrich.’

Cl. 7: **a + (i)si > esi-**, e.g.

Yisenzo **esibi** sokubulala izingane zakho uma usezinkingeni

‘It’s a bad action to kill your children when you are having problems.’

It should be noted that the adjective concord exhibits the same morphological structure in all the Nguni languages except in Northern Ndebele. (See par. 6.5.2 below) Van Eeden

(1956:151) postulates that this relative ‘a’ originated from the 1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative element **la** that (in the course of time) has dropped the consonant **l** before the adjectival concords. The fact that the relative formative is **la** in siSwati (See Taljaard & Bosch. 1998:108) clearly confirms Van Eeden’s view. According to Van Eeden, the morphological structure of the adjective concord in these (Nguni) languages should have originally been comprised of the “1<sup>st</sup> position demonstrative pronoun” plus the “basic noun class prefix” plus the “adjective stem” (e.g., Cl.1: **lo + m(u) + -hle > (l)omuhle > omuhle etc**). Van Eeden (op. cit.:150) further claims that this (relative) ‘a’ has approximately the same semantic function as the relative pronoun ‘*wat*’ in Afrikaans. The literal meaning of examples such as **Umfana omude**, **Abafana abade** and **Amanzi amahle** must, therefore, be something like *Seun wat hy (is) lank* ‘A boy who (is) tall’, *Seuns wat hulle (is) lank* ‘Boys who (are) tall’ and *Water wat dit (is) mooi* ‘Water that it (is) pretty’, although these translations are not acceptable in Standard English.

With the outline given above of the most important views concerning the adjective in isiZulu (and by implication also the other main Nguni languages) as background, the main feature of this category as it occurs in Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele can now be analysed and discussed.

#### **6.4 The adjective in Southern and Northern Ndebele**

As is the case with the adjective in other Nguni languages, the morphological structure of the adjective in Southern and Northern Ndebele also consists of an adjective concord plus an adjective stem. There are four main differences that occur between the adjectives in Southern Ndebele and their counterparts in Northern Ndebele. They are:

- (i) concordial differences, that is, differences in the kind of concord that occur with these stems,
- (ii) differences in the form of these stems,
- (iii) stems that occur in one but not both of these languages, and finally,
- (iv) differences in the phonological structure of the adjective concord.



In the following paragraphs each of these four kinds of differences is investigated and described.

#### 6.4.1 Concordial differences between the adjective stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

Concordial differences here mean differences in the kind of concord that occurs with some of these stems and that results in their classification in different grammatical categories. One of the main differences in the adjective stems between Southern and Northern Ndebele is the fact that in Northern Ndebele the stems of the numerals 2 to 5 as well as the stem **-ngai** 'how many' (**-ngaki** in Southern Ndebele) may be used as either adjective stems or as enumerative stems, that is, they may either be used with an adjective concord or with an enumerative concord (Ziervogel. 1959:71). Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples where these stems are used as adjectives in (4a) and as enumeratives in (4b).

##### (4a) Used as adjectives

Nthenge tihlahla telikhuwa <b>tetimbhili</b> .	'I bought two wild fig trees.'
Mmone bafati <b>babathathu</b> benkxosi.	'I saw three wives of a chief.'
Usebenta busuku malanga <b>amane</b> evikini.	'He works at night for four days a week.'
<b>Tetihlanu</b> timbhuti ntami.	'Five goats are mine.'
Likhambe malanga <b>amangai</b> ?	'How many days have you (been) gone?'

##### (4b) Used as enumeratives

Banru <b>bambhili</b> bafuna mutiro.	'Two people are looking for a job.'
Miti <b>mithathu</b> gekaNgidlingidlana.	'Three homes belong to Ngidingidlana.'
Ndisebenta malanga <b>mane</b> evikini.	'I work four days a week.'
Malume uthenge tikxomo <b>tihlanu</b> .	'Uncle bought five beasts.'
Ukhambhe malanga <b>mangai</b> ?	'How many days were you gone?'

In none of the other Nguni languages can the numerals 2 to 5 be used with an enumerative concord as they do in Northern Ndebele, (cf. examples in (4a) above). These numerals are always used in these (Nguni) languages as adjectives, that is, they employ a concord that is formed by means of a “relative” *a*’ plus “a class prefix” as explained earlier. The Southern Ndebele equivalents of the Northern Ndebele examples in (4a) are therefore as follows –

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| (5) | Abantu <i>ababili</i> bafuna umsebenzi.     | ‘Two people are looking for job.’           |
|     | Imizi <i>emithathu</i> ngekaNgidlingidlana. | ‘Three homes are of<br>Ngidlingidlana.      |
|     | Malanga <i>amane</i> engiwasebenza evekeni. | ‘It is four days that I work in a<br>week.’ |
|     | Umlomo uthenge iinkomo <i>ezihlanu</i> .    | ‘Mlomo has bought five beasts.’             |
|     | Ukhambe amalanga <i>amangaki</i> ?          | ‘How many days were you gone?’              |

The reason for the dual grammatical character of the stem *-ngai* ‘how many?’ and the stems of the numerals 2 - 5 in Northern Ndebele is not clear. What is clear is that it could not have emerged as a result of the influence of the two Sotho languages, Sepedi and Setswana, respectively, as none of these stems function as an enumerative stem.

#### 6.4.2 Differences in the form of the adjective stems between Southern and Northern Ndebele

Formal differences between the adjective stems of the Southern and Northern Ndebele imply here a difference in the form (or phonemes) of otherwise phonetically identical stems. Compare the following Southern and Northern examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(6)	-ncani	‘small’	-nghane
	-tjha	‘new, young’	-sha
	-hle	‘nice, beautiful’	-(n)hle

-nengi	‘many, much’	-nyenti
-(m)bi	‘bad, ugly’	-mbhi
-(n)dala	‘old’	-ndala
-ngaki	‘how many’	-ngai
-khulu	‘big’	-kxulu
-(n)de	‘long, tall’	-nde

As will be noticed in the examples given in (6) above, some adjective stems in Southern Ndebele may occur with or without a nasal while, according to Ziervogel (1959:70) it is only the stem **-(n)hle** in Northern Ndebele that can do so. Wilkes (personal communication), however, could not find any examples of **-nhle** in his research of Northern Ndebele). Compare the following examples in (7) in this regard.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
	<b>(-nasal)</b>	<b>(-nasal)</b>	
(7)	Cl.1: Umfazi omuh <b>hle</b> .	Mufati omuh <b>hle</b> .	‘A beautiful woman’
	Cl.2: Abantu abah <b>hle</b> .	Banru babah <b>hle</b> .	‘Good people’
	Cl.8: Izandla ezih <b>hle</b> .	Tandla tetih <b>hle</b> .	‘Beautiful hands’
	Cl.9: Inja eh <b>hle</b> .	Nja eh <b>hle</b> .	‘A beautiful dog’

The adjective stems **-(n)dala** and **-(n)de** in Southern Ndebele may only be used with a nasal when their antecedent noun is a noun in Class 8 or 10. The adjective stem **∠mbi**, may, in contrast, combine with nouns from any of the noun classes in this language. In Northern Ndebele, the adjective stems with nasals do not have this restriction and may combine with any noun irrespective of the noun class it belongs to. Compare the following examples with antecedent nouns from Classes 8, 10 and 14 in (8a) - (8c) in this regard.



**Southern Ndebele**

**Northern Ndebele**

	<b>-(n)de:(+ / - nasal)</b>		<b>(+ nasal)</b>
(8a)	Cl. 8: Izandla ezide/ezinde.	Tandla tetinde.	‘Big hands’
	Cl. 10: Iinkulumo ezide/ezinde.	Tisumayelo tetinde.	‘Long speeches’
	<b>-(n)dala:(+/-nasal)</b>	<b>(+nasal)</b>	
(8b)	Cl. 8: Izipho ezidala/ezindala.	Tipho tetindala.	‘Old gifts’
	Cl. 10: Imbuzi ezidala/ezindala.	Timbhuti tetindala.	‘Old goats’
	<b>-mbi: (+nasal)</b>	<b>-mbhi: (+nasal)</b>	
(8c)	Cl.7: Isizwe esimbi.	Sive sesimbhi.	‘A bad nation’
	Cl. 8: Imfiso ezimbi.	Tifiso tetimbhi.	‘Bad wishes’
	Cl.14: Ukuphikisana okumbi.	Kukhanyeta kokumbhi.	‘Bad argument’

With the exception of Classes 8 and 10, the adjective stems **-(n)dala** and **-(n)de** are never used with a nasal in Southern Ndebele, while in Northern Ndebele they are never used without a nasal. Compare the following examples in (9) below in this regard.

	<b>Southern Ndebele</b>		<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
	<b>(-nasal)</b>		<b>(+nasal)</b>
(9)	Cl.1: Umuntu omdala.	Munru omundala.	‘An old person’
	Cl.2: Abantu abadala.	Banru babandala.	‘Old people’
	Cl.4: Imilambo emide.	Milambho eminde.	‘Long rivers’
	Cl.5: Ilanga elide.	Llanga lelinde.	‘A long day’

It is possible that the nasal **n** that occurs in some of the adjective stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele is a remnant of an erstwhile class prefix (of Class 9), thus confirming

the view of some scholars such as Van Eeden (1956:152-153), Ziervogel (1959:71) and Hagege (1974:128 ) that adjective stems are of nominal origin.

#### 6.4.3 Adjective stems that occur in Northern Ndebele but not in Southern Ndebele.

The only difference that occurs between Southern and Northern Ndebele in this regard is that Northern Ndebele has two adjective stems that do not occur as adjective stems in Southern Ndebele but as relative stems. They are the Northern Ndebele colour stems – **bovu** ‘red’ (also –**bovu** in Southern Ndebele) and –**ntima** ‘black’ (–**nzima** in Southern Ndebele), respectively. Compare the differences in the concords of these stems in the following examples.

	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele	
	(As relative stems)	(As adjective stems)	
(10) Cl. 3:	Umlomo <b>obovu</b> .	Mulomo <b>omubovu</b> .	‘Red mouth.’
Cl. 4:	Imibala <b>enzima</b> .	Mibala <b>emintima</b> .	‘Black colours.’
Cl. 6:	Amehlo <b>anzima</b> .	Mahlo <b>amantima</b> .	‘Black eyes.’

#### 6.4.4 Differences in the form and formation of the adjective concords of Southern and Northern Ndebele

There is very little difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the formation of the adjective concords in these languages is concerned. In both languages these concords are formed by means of a “relative” *a* plus the “class prefix” of the noun concerned. (See the discussion in 6.3 on the formation of the adjective concord in the Nguni languages). There are, however, several important formal differences between the adjective concords of these languages. These differences are discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### 6.4.4.1 Repetition of the consonant in the adjective concord of nouns belonging to the non-nasal classes in Northern Ndebele

In the Lidwaba dialect of Northern Ndebele (which unofficially also represents the standard form of this language), the consonant in the adjective concord of nouns belonging to the non-nasal classes is repeated and occurs as an initial consonant in the concord. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(11) Cl. 2: **b + aba-** > **baba-**

Banrwana **babanghane** badlaluka gemulidini.

‘Small children are playing in a hole.’

Cl. 5: **l + eli-** > **leli-**

Likxuni **lelinde** libesa mullo lofuthumeleko.

‘A long piece of wood makes a warm fire.’

Cl. 7: **s + esi-** > **sesi-**

Mmuso wakhe sikolo **sesitjha** eMuledlhane.

‘The government has built a new school at Muledlhane.’

Cl.10: **t + eti-** > **teti-**

Nkxomo **tetindala** atibiti ntjhelete kxulu.

‘Old beasts are not very expensive.’

Cl. 14: **b + obu-** > **bobu-**

Buyalwa **bobundala** abudakani.

‘An old beer does not make you drunk.’

Cl.15: **k + oku-** > **koku-**

Kudla **kokunghane** gekwabanrwana.

‘Little food is for the kids.’

The reason for the repetition of the consonant in the adjective prefix of the non-nasal classes is unclear. (In the Gegana dialect of Northern Ndebele, which is predominantly spoken in and around the area of Zebediela, no repetition of the consonant in the adjective concords is found). Compare the following examples in this regard.

	<b>Gegana</b>	<b>Lidwaba</b>	
(12)	Cl.2 Banru <b>abadala</b> .	Banru <b>babadala</b>	‘Old people’
	Cl.5: Liye <b>elikxulu</b> .	Liye <b>lelikxulu</b>	‘A big stone’
	Cl.7: Sisu <b>esinghane</b> .	Sisu <b>sesinghane</b>	‘Small stomach’
	Cl.8: Tikxabula <b>etindala</b> .	Tikxabula <b>tetindala</b>	‘Old shoes’

It is possible that this repetition of the consonant in the adjective prefix in the Lidwaba dialect is the result of the influence of Northern Sotho. The adjective concord in this language is compound in nature in that the first part (known as an adjective particle) resembles the basic demonstrative pronoun of the 1<sup>st</sup> position that agrees with the noun to which it refers (cf. Poulos & Louwrens, 1994:91). Compare the following Northern Sotho examples with those given in (12) above in this regard.

### Northern Sotho

(13)	Cl. 2: Bašemane <b>ba banyane</b>	‘Small boys’
	Cl. 5: Legêtle <b>le legolo</b>	‘A big shoulder’
	Cl. 7: Seatla <b>sê senyane</b>	‘A small hand’
	Cl. 14 Bjang <b>bo botêlêlê</b>	‘Tall grass’

The form of the “adjective concord”<sup>2</sup> in the case of the nasal classes is the same as that of these concords in the other Nguni languages with the exception of the adjective concord

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<sup>2</sup> This investigation also encountered the forms **beba-** and **ema-** in Northern Ndebele for adjective concord of Cl.2 and 6, respectively.

of Class 9, which does not include a nasal. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(14)	Cl. 1: <b>a + mu &gt; omu-</b>	e.g. Munru <b>omunde</b>	‘A tall person’
	Cl. 4: <b>a + mi &gt; emi-</b>	e.g. Miti <b>emihle</b>	‘Beautiful kraals’
	Cl. 6: <b>a + ma-&gt; ama</b>	e.g. Malembhe <b>amandala</b>	‘Old hoes’
	Cl. 9: <b>a + i &gt; e-</b>	e.g. Nkxomo <b>ekxulu</b>	‘A big cow’

#### 6.4.4.2 The use of the full adjective concord versus the use of the abbreviated concord

The adjective concord **omu-** of Classes 1, 1(a) and 3 in Northern Ndebele retains this form throughout whether the adjective stem is mono- or multi-syllabic. In Southern Ndebele this form only occurs with monosyllabic adjective stems while with multi-syllabic adjective stems it occurs in its abbreviated form. Compare the following examples in (15a) and (15b) in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele      Northern Ndebele

##### Before monosyllabic stems

	(Full form)	(Full form)	
(15a) Cl.1:	Umntwana <b>omuhle</b>	Munswana <b>omunhle</b>	‘A beautiful child’
	Umbazi <b>omutjha</b>	Mmeti <b>omutjha</b>	‘A new carpenter’
Cl.1(a)	Umma <b>omuhle</b> .	Mma <b>omuhle</b>	‘A beautiful mother’
	Usorhulu <b>omutjha</b>	Sorhulu <b>omutjha</b>	‘A younger father’

##### Before multi-syllabic stems

	(Short form)	(Full form)	
(15b) Cl.1:	Umfazi <b>omkhulu</b>	Mufati <b>omukxulu</b>	‘A senior wife’





Umuntu **omncani**      Munru **omunghane**      ‘A young person’

Cl.1(a) Ngumalume **omncani**      Gumalume **omunghane**      ‘It is my young uncle.’

Ugogo **omdala**.      Gugu **omundala**      ‘Old grandmother’

#### 6.4.5 Negation of the adjective in Southern and Northern Ndebele

The negation of an adjective in Southern and Northern Ndebele does not demonstrate remarkable morphological differences between the two languages, except that the Southern Ndebele adjective negative formative **-ngasi** is without a nasal (that is, **-gasi**) in Northern Ndebele. In the two Ndebele languages, the negation of an adjective is formed by means of the “relative concord” plus the “negative formative” **-ngasi** (in Southern Ndebele) or **-gasi** (in Northern Ndebele) plus the “agreement morpheme” plus the “adjective stem”. Compare the following examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

#### Northern Ndebele

(16) Cl.1: Umuntu **ongasimncani**.      Munru **ogasimunghane**.  
‘A person that is not young.’

Cl.2: Abesana **abangasibancani**.      Batlhangana **abagasibanghane**.  
‘People who are not young’

Cl.4: Imilambo **engasimikhulu**.      Milambho **egasimikxulu**.  
‘Rivers that are not big’

Cl.5: Ikhuwa **elingasilide**.      Likxuwa **eligasilinde**.  
‘A white person that is not tall’

Cl.6: Amalanga **angasimanengi**.      Malanga **agasimanyenti**.  
‘Days that are not many’

Ziervogel (1959:96) regards the Northern Ndebele **si-** (of **(n)gasi** that also occurs in Southern Ndebele) as a negative form of the verb. However, according to Posthumus (1988:62), the copulative verb stem **si** (of **a...si**) that also occurs in other Nguni languages such as isiZulu is a negative copulative verb stem that negates the postulated positive copulative verb stem **\*li**. Posthumus in Taljard (1999:198), for instance, states that

‘**si** is dus onder alle omstandighede die ekwivalent van die positiewe kopulatiewe werkwoordstam **\*li** wat slegs in negatiewe kopulatiewe optree om die betekenis van ‘**is (nie)**’ teweeg te bring.’

The verb **-si** is diachronically speaking probably a negative verb. Synchronically, however, it can no longer be regarded as a verb but as a formative.

In the following table the adjective concords of Lidwaba (the main dialect) and Gegana (the lesser) of Northern Ndebele as according to Ziervogel (1959:70) are given.

**Table 6.1: Adjective concords of Lidwaba and Gegana**

	<b>Lidwaba (Langa)</b>	<b>Gegana (Mugombhane)</b>
<b>Class</b> 1:	omukxulu	omukxulu
2:	babakxulu	abakxulu
3:	omukxulu	omukxulu
4:	emikxulu	emikxulu
5:	lelikxulu	elikxulu
6:	amakhulu	amakhulu
7:	sesikxulu	esikxulu
8:	tetikxulu	etikxulu
9:	ekxulu	ekxulu
10:	tetikxulu	etikxulu
14:	bobukxulu	ebukxulu



The adjective stems and adjective concords of the two Ndebele languages as discussed above can be illustrated as in Table 6.2 and 6.3 below.

**Table 6.2: Southern and Northern Ndebele adjective stems**

<b>A. Adjective stems that occur in both languages.</b>		
<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
<b>Dimension/Size</b>		
-ncani	-nghane	‘small’
-khulu	-kxulu	‘big’
-(n)de	-nde	‘big/tall/long’
-fitjhani	-fishani	‘short’
<b>Quantity</b>		
-nengi	-nyenti	‘many/much’
	-nye	‘another’
<b>Value</b>		
-hle	-(n)hle	‘beautiful/good’
(m)bi	-mbhi	‘bad/ugly’
<b>Age</b>		
-(n)dala	-ndala	‘old’
-tjha	-sha	‘new’
<b>Interrogative</b>		
-ngaki	-ngai	‘how many?’
<b>(As enumerative)</b>	<b>(As adjective stems)</b>	
-bili	-mbhili	‘two’
-thathu	-thathu	‘three’
		‘four’

-ne -hlanu	-ne -hlanu	'five'
<b>B. Stems that occur as adjective stems in Northern Ndebele but as relative stems in Southern Ndebele</b>		
	-bovu -ntima	'red' 'black'

**Table 6.3: Southern and Northern Ndebele adjective concords**

Class	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
1.	om(u)-	omu-
2.	aba-	baba-
3.	om(u)-	omu-
4.	emi-	emi-
5.	eli-	leli-
6.	ama-	ama-
7.	esi-	sesi-
8	ezi-	teti-
9.	e-	e-
10.	ezi-	teti-
14.	obu-	bobu-
15.	oku-	koku-

### 6.5 The Relative

It has become customary in Nguni grammar to distinguish between adjectives and relatives even though these two word categories are syntactically and semantically closely related. Both these categories serve to describe nouns in terms of some quality or characteristic, much as the adjectives in languages such as English do. Consider, for instance, the following English and Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.



English	Southern Ndebele
(17) <i>An interesting</i> book	Incwadi <b>emnandi</b> .
<i>An old</i> village	Umuzi <b>omdala</b> .
<i>Heavy</i> work	Umsebenzi <b>obudisi</b> .
<i>A beautiful</i> child	Umntwana <b>omuhle</b> .

Both categories can also be used pre- or post-nominally. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Pre-nominally

- (18a) Cl. 1: Uthethe **omncani** *umfazi*. 'He married a young wife.'  
Cl. 2: Sifuna **abatjha** *abafundisi*. 'We want new priests.'

#### Post-nominally

- (18b) Cl. 1: Uthethe *umfazi* **omncani**. 'He married a young wife.'  
Cl. 2: Sifuna *abafundisi* **abatjha**. 'We want new priests.'

The reason for the distinction between adjectives and relatives in the Nguni languages and, in fact, in most of the other Bantu languages, is not attributable to any semantic or syntactic feature that distinguishes these word categories from one another. This distinction is based solely on the morphological differences in the formation of their respective concords, that is, the so-called adjective and relative concord, respectively.

According to Gauton (1990:15), Werner (1919:126) seems to be the first of the early grammarians to distinguish between adjectives and relatives in isiZulu, a distinction she bases entirely on the difference in the form or morphological structure of their respective concords. This difference in form is especially noticeable in the case of the adjective and

relative concords of the so-called nasal classes. Compare, for instance, the difference in the form of these concords in the following Southern Ndebele examples.

		<b>Adjective</b>	<b>Relatives</b>	
(19)	Cl. 1: Umuntu	<b>omncani</b>	<b>otjhili</b>	‘A young/strange person.’
	Cl. 4: Imisebenzi	<b>emitjha</b>	<b>ebudisi.</b>	‘New/difficult jobs.’
	Cl. 6: Amalanga	<b>amanengi</b>	<b>ambalwa.</b>	‘Many/few days.’
	Cl. 9: Inyama	<b>e(n)dala</b>	<b>ebovu</b>	‘Old/red meat.’

As the morphology of the adjective concord has already been dealt with in par. 6.3.4.2 (i) above, it will not be discussed any further here. In the following paragraphs, the focus therefore falls on the construction of the relative concord in the Nguni languages.

### **6.5.1 The morphology of the relative concord in the Nguni languages, with the exception of Northern Ndebele**

Nguni linguists are not unanimous in their view of how the relative concord is constructed in these languages. There are two dominant views that prevail in this regard. The one is that of Doke (1927) and the other that of Van Eeden (1956). Of these two views, Van Eeden’s view is supported by present day Nguni grammarians.

According to Doke (1927:107), the relative concord (in isiZulu) is derived from “the adjective concord” by eliding the nasal consonant and any vowel that follows it. In the case where the adjective concord is without a nasal, the relative concord remains the same. Nyembezi (1963:97) is one of the few Nguni grammarians that support Doke’s view on this matter. Compare the following examples in this regard.

		<b>Relative concord</b>	<	<b>Adjective concord</b>
(20)	Cl. 1:	<b>o(mu)-</b>	<	omu-
	2:	<b>aba-</b>	<	aba-
	4:	<b>e(mi)-</b>	<	emi-



5:	<b>eli-</b>	<	eli-
6:	<b>a(ma)-</b>	<	ama-
7:	<b>esi-</b>	<	esi-
9:	<b>e(n)-</b>	<	en-

In the case of the relative concords of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person, Doke (op. cit.: 108) maintains that either

- (a) the relative concords of Classes 1 and 2 may be used for this purpose, or that
- (b) the relative concords for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons can be used.

The latter concords are formed by prefixing the relative **-a** to the subject concords of these person classes in which case the relative **-a** either coalesces with the subject concord (2<sup>nd</sup> person singular) or assimilates to the vowel of the subject concord (1<sup>st</sup> person singular and plural, 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural) according to the phonological rule of **a + i > e**. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Relative concord in Southern Ndebele

(21) 1<sup>st</sup> p.s: a - ngi > **engi-** e.g: Mina **engithembekileko**. 'I who am honest.'

or

a - u > **o-** e.g: Mina **othembekileko**. 'I who am honest'

1<sup>st</sup> p.p: a - si > **esi-** e.g: Thina **esithembekileko**. 'We who are honest.'

or

a - ba > **aba-** e.g: Thina **abathembekileko**. 'We who are honest.'

2<sup>nd</sup> p.s: a - u > **o-** e.g: Wena **othembekileko**. 'You who is honest.'

2<sup>nd</sup> p.p: a - ni > **eni-** e.g: Nina **enithembekileko**. 'You who are honest.'

or

a - ba > **aba-** e.g. Nina **abathembekileko**. 'You who are honest.'

Van Eeden's view of the formation of the relative concord differs from that of Doke and Nyembezi. According to him, the relative concord is constructed by means of a "relative" **a-** (in siSwati **la-**) plus the "agreement morpheme" (that refers to the noun class concerned). In the case of agreement morphemes that consist of a vowel only, vowel coalescence takes place between the relative **a-** and the subject concord, according to the phonological rules of: **a + a > a**, **a + i > e**, **a + u > o**. Where the subject concord consists of a consonant plus a vowel, the relative **a-** assimilates with the vowel of the subject concord according to the same phonological rules that apply in the case of vowel coalescence. Consider the formation of the relative concord of the following noun classes in Southern Ndebele.

### **Southern Ndebele**

#### **(i) Vowel coalescence**

(22a) Cl. 1: **a – u > o-**

Ngibone umsana **obhunubhunu** (< **a + u-**) adlala ngemanzini.

'I saw a naked boy playing in the water.'

Cl. 4: **a – i > e-**

Imisebenzi **emnandi** (< **a + i-**) njengalo ayisekho.

'Nice jobs like this are no longer available.'

Cl. 6: **a – a > a-**

Thina sisela amanzi **athamana** (< **a + a**) wemthonjeni.

'We are drinking sweet water from a fountain.'

#### **(ii) Vowel assimilation**

(22b) Cl. 5: **a – li > eli-**, e.g:

Kwezomnotho ilizwe **elingcono** (< **a + li-**) yiBotswana.

'Economically Botswana is a better country.'



Cl. 7: **a – si > esi-**, e.g:

Ungakhohlwa bona isitjalo **esihlazutjani** (< **a + si**) sifuna ilanga.

‘Do not forget that a green plant needs sunshine.’

Cl. 15: **a – ku > oku-**, e.g:

Amanye amadoda asebenzela ukudla **okumnandi** (< **a +ku**) kwaphela.

‘Some men work for nice food only.’

In the following paragraphs the differences in the concordial system of the relatives in Southern and Northern Ndebele are discussed.

### **6.5.2 Morphological differences in the relative concords between Southern and Northern Ndebele**

Northern Ndebele differs from all the other Nguni languages in that it has two types of relative concords, namely, one that Ziervogel (1959:72) calls a Nguni type of relative concord and one that he calls a Sotho type of relative concord.

#### **6.5.2.1 The Nguni type of relative concord**

With a single exception (i.e., Class 1) this type of relative concord in Northern Ndebele is formed in exactly the same way as these concords are formed in the other Nguni languages, that is, by means of a “relative” **a-** (**la-** in siSwati) plus an “agreement morpheme” that has the same form as the subject concord and that coalesces or assimilates with the agreement morpheme just as it does in the other Nguni languages such as Southern Ndebele, for instance. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

##### **(i) Vowel coalescence**

(23a) Cl.4: **Southern Ndebele:** Bazibophe imikhono (**a-i**>) elimeleko.

**Northern Ndebele:** Batibophe mikhono (**a-i**>) ekhubele.



‘They have bandaged their injured arms.’

Cl.9: **Southern Ndebele:** Sibone ikghuru (**a-i>**) efileko.

**Northern Ndebele:** Sibonile nkhuu (**a-i>**) efile.

‘We saw a dead tortoise.’

### (ii) Vowel assimilation

(23b) Cl. 5: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngifuna ikhabe (**a - li >**) elimnandi.

**Northern Ndebele:** Mfuna likhabe (**a-li**) elimunandi.

‘I want a sweet watermelon.’

Cl.7: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngigeza isithende sami (**a-si >**) esilimeleko.

**Northern Ndebele:** Nhlambha sithende sami (**a-si>**) esikhubele.

‘I am washing my injured heel.’

### 6.5.2.2 The Sotho type of relative concord

The so-called Sotho type of the relative concord found in Northern Ndebele is, in fact, not a concord but a construction that comprises a “demonstrative pronoun” that precedes a “verb” or a “non-verbal predicate” in the situative mood (Wilkes, 2006:102). Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(24) Cl.1: Mfuna munru **lo** akhambha. ‘I want a person who travels.’

Cl.2: Banru **laba** basebenta banentjhelede ‘People who work have money.’

Cl.4: Mbambhe mingasa mimbhili **le** ekhubele. ‘I caught two hares that were injured.’

Cl. 5: Llanga **leli** litjhisa liyathobalisa. ‘A hot day makes one sleepy.’

Cl.6: Usumayela mavi **la** avakala. ‘He says sensible words.’

Ziervogel (1959:73) claims that the Sotho type of relative concord is slowly replacing the Nguni type in Northern Ndebele. (This is also confirmed by Wilkes in his research of

Northern Ndebele (personal communication.) According to Ziervogel (op. cit.:74), the so-called Sotho type of relative construction in Northern Ndebele is, in essence, similar to the relative construction in Western Sotho (i.e., Setswana) and not Northern Sotho (i.e., Pedi). Ziervogel bases his opinion on the fact that in Setswana the “demonstrative” plus the “subjectival concord” is used with all types of relative stems (as in Northern Ndebele), while in Northern Sotho, they are only used before verbal (relative) stems. Compare the following Setswana and Northern Sotho examples in (25a) and (25b) in this regard.

**Setswana**

**Northern Sotho**

**Before verbal relative stems**

- |       |                                     |                            |                            |
|-------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (25a) | Cl.2: Batho <b>ba ba</b> lwalang.   | Batho <b>ba bal</b> walago | ‘People who are sick.’     |
|       | Cl.4: Melelo (y) <b>e e</b> tukang. | Mello <b>ye et</b> ukago   | ‘Fires which are burning.’ |
|       | Cl.7: Selêpê <b>se se</b> bogale.   | Selepe <b>se se</b> bogale | ‘An axe which is sharp.’   |

**Before non-verbal relative stems**

- |       |                                 |                         |                          |
|-------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| (25b) | Cl.1: Monna <b>yo o</b> matla.  | Monna <b>yo</b> maatla. | ‘A man who is strong.’   |
|       | Cl.3: Mmu <b>o o</b> metsi.     | Mobu <b>wo</b> metse.   | ‘A soil which is wet.’   |
|       | Cl.9: Ntswa <b>e e</b> bothale. | Mpsa <b>ye</b> bohale.  | ‘A dog which is clever.’ |

Cole (1975:172), with regard to the construction of the relative concord in Setswana, says:

‘Although the initial element of the relative concord shows identity of form with the first demonstrative **in Setswana, it must be emphasized that in this type of construction it has completely lost its demonstrative force and its individuality as a separate word.**’ (*own emphasis*).

What Cole emphasizes, is that the demonstrative element in the relative construction in Setswana can no longer be regarded as an independent word as it now forms part of a

construction in which its grammatical status as a word has been lowered to that of a morpheme. According to Ziervogel (1959:74) the demonstrative in the relative construction in Northern Ndebele has clearly not lost its identity as a demonstrative as it can be used to express any demonstrative position if necessary without the need for the first position demonstrative to be present as well. Compare, for instance, the following examples Ziervogel (op. cit.:74) gives.

- (26) Cl. 1: Munru **loo** akhamba.           ‘That person who walks.’  
           Munru **lowa** akhamba.           ‘Yonder person that walks.’  
           (cf. Munru **lo** akhamba.       ‘A person who walks.’)

Poulos and Louwrens (1994:103) point out that the morphological structure of a relative construction in Northern Sotho comprises an element that resembles the “basic demonstrative of the 1<sup>st</sup> position” plus “the relative verb”, which consists of a (*relative*) *concord* and a *verb stem*, except in the non-verbal relative constructions that consist of a concordial element followed by a noun (cf. examples in (25a) and (25b) above).

### 6.5.2.3 Relative concord for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons

There are two types of relative concords for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons in Southern Ndebele. In the first type, the relative concords of Class 1 and Class 2 are used while in the case of the second type the relative concords of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and plural are used. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

##### First Person

- (27a) 1<sup>st</sup> p.s: (Mina) **engikhulumako**.       ‘I who am speaking.’  
                   or  
                   (Mina) **okhulumako**.           ‘I who am speaking.’



1<sup>st</sup> p.p: (Thina) *esikhulumako*. 'We who are speaking.'  
or  
(Thina) *abakhulumako*. 'We who are speaking.'

### Second Person

(27b) 2<sup>nd</sup> p.s: (Wena) *okhulumako* 'You who speaks.'  
2<sup>nd</sup> p.p: (Nina) *enikhulumako* 'You who speak.'  
or  
(Nina) *abakhulumako* 'You who speak.'

Northern Ndebele, in contrast, only has a single (Sotho) relative form for its 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and plural in that it uses the concords for Classes 1 and 2 (in addition to the demonstrative pronoun of these classes) for this purpose. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

#### First person

(28) 1<sup>st</sup> p.s: (Nna/Mina) **lo** *asumayela*. 'I who am speaking.'  
1<sup>st</sup> p.p: (Thina) **laba** *basumayela*. 'We who are speaking.'

#### Second person

2<sup>nd</sup> p.s: (Wena) **lo** *alwa*. 'You who fight.'  
2<sup>nd</sup> p.p: (Lina) **laba** *balwa*. 'You who fight.'

### 6.5.3 Negation of the relative in Southern and Northern Ndebele

Unlike Southern Ndebele, Northern Ndebele has two forms of negating its relative constructions, namely, the so-called Nguni form and the Sotho form.

### 6.5.3.1 The negative of the Nguni relative form

There is no difference between the two Ndebele languages as far as the negation of the Nguni relative form is concerned. Both languages use the formative **-(n)ga-** (that is, **-nga-** in Southern Ndebele and **-ga-** in Northern Ndebele) before verbal stems and the formative **-(n)gasi-** before non-verbal complements (i.e., **-ngasi-** in Southern Ndebele and **-gasi-** in Northern Ndebele). Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in (29a) and (29b) in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

#### Northern Ndebele

#### Before verbal relative stems

(29a) Cl. 1: Umfazi *ongasebenziko*.                      Mufati *lo agasebenti*.  
'A woman that does not work.'

Cl. 2: Abantu *abangavilaphiko*.                      Banru *abagavilaphi*.  
'People that are not lazy.'

Cl. 4: Imilambo *engatjhiko*.                      Milambho *egatjhi*.  
'Rivers that do not run dry.'

Cl. 5: Ilizwi *elingazwakaliko*.                      Livi *eligavakali*.  
'A voice that is not audible.'

#### Before non-verbal relative stems

(29b) Cl.1: Umfazi *ongasingcono*                      Mufati *lo agasigawune*  
'A woman that is not better.'

Cl.2: Abantu *abangasitjhili*.                      Banru *abagasishidi*  
'People that are not strange.'

Cl.4: Imisebenzi *engasimnandi*.                      Misebenti *egasimunandi*

‘Jobs that are not nice.’

Cl.5: Ikhabe *elingasimphako*.                      Likhabe *eligasimuphako*.

‘A watermelon that is not food for the journey.’

Cl.6: Amadoda *angasibhunubhunu*.                      Madoda *agasibhunubhunu*.

‘Men that are not naked.’

### 6.5.3.2 The negative of the Sotho relative form

The negation of the Sotho type of the relative form in Northern Ndebele can be divided into two sections:

- (i) the negation of the none copulative relative stems, and
- (ii) the negation of copulative relative stems.

According to Ziervogel (1959:72) there are additional kinds of words that can act as relative stems in Northern Ndebele, that is, nouns (e.g. **-buhlungu** ‘painful’), locative pronouns (e.g. **lapha** ‘here’), verbs (e.g. **-vilapha** ‘be lazy’) and secondary derivations such as locative nouns, adverbs and quantitative pronouns.

#### 6.5.3.2.1 Negation of the non-copulative relative form in Northern Ndebele

The Sotho-type of relatives in Northern Ndebele with non-copulative relative stems are negated by means of the formative **gasi** that directly precedes the non-copulative relative stem. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Northern Ndebele

(30) Cl.1: Mfuna munru **lo agasilapha**.                      ‘I want a person who *is not* here.’

(cf. Positive: Mfuna munru **lo** alpha. ‘I want a person who is here.’)

Cl.2: Mbita bafati **laba bagasinkhaya**. ‘I’m calling the women who *are not* in the house.’

(cf. Positive: Mbita bafati **laba bankhaya**. ‘I’m calling the women who are in the house.’)

Cl. 5: Nkhuphe litinyo **leli ligasibuhlungu**. ‘I have removed a tooth that *is not* painful.’

(cf. Positive: Nkhuphe litinyo **leli libuhlungu**. ‘I have removed a tooth that is painful.’)

Cl. 6: Mambhili matinyo **la agasibuhlungu**. ‘There are two teeth that *are not* painful.’

(cf. Positive: Mambhili matinyo **la abuhlungu**. ‘There are two teeth that are painful.’)

Cl. 8: Lokhu tidlo **leti tigasimunandi**. ‘This is food that *is not* tasty.’

(cf. Positive: Lokhu tidlo **leti timunandi**. ‘This is food that is tasty.’)

#### 6.5.3.2.2 Negation of the Sotho relative type with a copulative noun as stem in Northern Ndebele

The negative form of this kind of relative construction in Northern Ndebele consists of a “demonstrative pronoun” plus “a prefix” **i-** plus **-gasi-** plus the “copulative noun” (that always appears in the participial mood), (i.e., *dem. pron.* + **i** + **gasi** + *cop. noun*).

Compare the following examples in this regard.

(31) Cl. 1a: Munru **lo igasikubhabha**. ‘A person who *is not* my father.’





- Cl. 2a: Banru **laba igasibobhabha**. ‘The people who *are not* my fathers.’  
Cl. 6: Thina **laba igasimavila**. ‘We who *are not* sluggards.’  
Cl. 9: Ndoda **le igasinkxosi**. ‘A man who *is not* a chief.’

Note that copulative nouns in Class 1a and 2a in Northern Ndebele take the copulative prefix **gu-** (in Class 1a) and **m-** (in Class 2a), respectively, in the positive, (Ziervogel.1959:96). Compare the following examples.

- (32) Cl 1a: Maraba **gumalume**. ‘Maraba is my uncle.’  
Cl.2a: BoMaraba **mbomalume**. ‘The Marabas are my uncles.’  
Cl.1a: Lidwaba **gubhabha**. ‘Lidwaba is my father.’  
Cl.2a: BoLidwaba **mbobhabha**. ‘The Lidwabas are my fathers.’

In the negative the copulative nouns in both classes are negated by the negative formative **asi-** while in the case of nouns in Class 1a the prefix **gu-** is substituted by the prefix **ku-** while in the case of nouns in Class 2a the prefix **m-** is discarded. Compare the following examples in this regard.

- (33) Cl 1a: Maraba **asikumalume**. ‘Maraba *is not* my uncle.’  
Cl.2a: BoMaraba **asibomalume**. ‘The Marabas *are not* my uncles.’  
  
Cl.1a: Lidwaba **asikubhabha**. ‘Lidwaba *is not* my father.’  
Cl.2a: BoLidwaba **asibobhabha**. ‘The Lidwabas *are not* my fathers.’  
  
Cl. 1a: Mabhangula **asikumma**. ‘Mabhangula *is not* my mother.’  
Cl.2a: BoMabhangula **asibomma**. ‘The Mabhangulas *are not* my mothers.’

Ziervogel (op. cit.: 96,134) refers to the prefix **i** as an “invariable” concord, apparently because its form never changes and the fact that it appears in a position normally occupied by a concordial morpheme as, for instance, can be seen in the examples given in (31) above.

The invariable concord **i** is a grammatical feature also found in Southern Ndebele although here its appearance is confined to the auxiliary verb stem **-be** when this stem appears with the so-called identificative copulative as complement. In such instances, it may be used as a substitute of the subject concord of the auxiliary verb stem **-be** (Skhosana, 1998:109-110). Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

- (34) (a) Umnyanya kaMahlangu *ube/ibe* ngonezipho ezinengi khulu.  
'Mahlangu's ceremony has been the one with a lot of gifts.'
- (b) Ngibonile bona *abe/ibe* ngamakhaza amanzi ongiphe wona.  
'I have noticed that the water you gave me has been the cold one.'
- (c) Ukusebenza kwakhe ePitori *kube/ibe* ngokunepumelelo.  
'His working in Pretoria has been a successful one.'
- (d) Ubukhosi bakhe *bube/ibe* ngobunesithunzi.  
'His chieftainship has been a dignified one.'

Northern Ndebele differs from Southern Ndebele in this regard in so far as that when the auxiliary verb stem **be** is followed by a nominal complement both the auxiliary and its complement take the invariable concord **i**. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

- (35) (a) Ke atjhiswa lo Phatlhaphatlha munrwanakhe Maraba webumbhili **ibe**  
**isesemutlhangana**.

‘When Phatlhaphatlha was burnt his child, Maraba II, was still a boy.’

(Ziervogel. 1959:188).

(b) Banrwana laba gabathathu **ibe** ibanrwana bendoda kodwa bagatalwa mufati munye.

‘These three children were of one man but they were not born of one woman.’

(Ziervogel, op. cit.:192).

(c) Kambhe Mukxaeji *ibe iwomuhle* nga ubunjwe gemudaka munrwanebanru.

‘Mukxaeji was beautiful as if she were made of clay, the poor child.’

(Ziervogel, op. cit.:208).

Note that the invariable concord **i** is not a feature of any of the other Nguni languages and probably came about as a result of the influence of Northern Sotho. Referring to Northern Sotho, Louwrens (1991:73) remarks in this regard that

‘The identifying copula is the only one of the copulas which belongs to the invariable type. This implies that the identifying copula always occurs as either an invariable copular particle or an invariable copulative verb.’

Ziervogel (1959:104) surmises that the invariable concord in Northern Ndebele might be reminiscent of Northern Sotho’s formative **e le**, that in this instance occurs in the same syntactic environment as the invariable concord **i** in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following Northern Sotho and Northern Ndebele in this regard.

	<b>Northern Sotho</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
(36)	Yô <b>e</b> lego kgôši	<b>Lo</b> inxosi	‘He who is a chief’
	Ba <b>e</b> lego magôši	<b>Laba</b> imakhosi	‘They who are chiefs’
			(Ziervogel.op. cit.:216).

Ziervogel (op. cit.:104) further postulates that the invariable **i-** is possibly derived from Ur-Bantu **yi-** and that the Northern Ndebele negative formative **-gasi**, most probably originated from the Northern Sotho negative structure **ga se**. Compare the following Northern Sotho examples in this regard.

### Northern Sotho

- (37) **Neg:** Mogweraka **ga se** moruti. 'My friend is not a priest.'  
(cf. *Pos:* Mogweraka **ke** moruti. 'My friend is a priest.')
- Neg:** Bohlale **ga se** go rutega. 'Wisdom is not to be educated.'  
(cf. *Pos:* Bohlale **ke** go rutega. 'Wisdom is to be educated.')
- Neg:** Bosogana **ga se** go šoma. 'To be a young man is not to work.'  
(cf. *Pos:* Bosogana **ke** go šoma. 'To be a young man is to work.')

### 6.5.4 The relative suffix -ko

The verbal relative construction in Southern Ndebele suffixes the relative enclitic **-ko** throughout while, according to Ziervogel (1959:73), in Northern Ndebele this relative suffix **-ko** is no longer heard except amongst the elderly speakers of the Langa and Muledlhane dialects. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

#### Northern Ndebele

- (38) Cl.2: Abantu *abakhambako*. Banru *laba bakhamba*.  
(cf. siMuledlhane: *abakhambako*)  
'People who walk.'

Cl.4: Ngifuna imibala *ephazimako*. Mfuna mibala *le ephatima*.



(cf. siMuledlhane: *ephatimako*)

‘I want colours that are flashy.’

Cl.5: Sifuna iphini *eliqinileko*.

Sifuna liphulukuto *leli likxinile*.

(cf. siMuledlhane: *elikxinileko*)

‘We want a strong ladle.’

### 6.5.5 Direct and indirect relative construction

In Nguni languages, direct and indirect relative constructions concern verbs.

#### 6.5.5.1. Direct relative

In case of the direct relative, the relative concord refers to the antecedent noun, that is, the noun that is being qualified by the relative construction. In Northern Ndebele, this means that the demonstrative and the subject concord refer to the same noun. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(39) **Southern Ndebele:** Indoda ekhamba endleleni.

**Northern Ndebele:** Ndoda **le** ikhamba endleleni

‘A man who walks on the road.’

**Southern Ndebele:** Iinkomo **ezidla** entabeni.

**Northern Ndebele:** Tikxomo **leti tidla** enrabeni.

‘Beasts that graze on a mountain.’

In this case the antecedent noun is also the subject of the relative construction.

#### 6.5.5.2 Indirect relative

In the case of the indirect relative in Northern Ndebele, the demonstrative and the subject concord in the relative construction do not refer to the same noun as, for instance, in the following examples –

- (40) (a) Nnja **le laba**iphe tidlo. ‘The dog they gave food to.’  
(b) Banru **laba** sibalindele. ‘The people we were waiting for...’

In this instance, the antecedent noun is not the underlying subject of the sentence but the underlying object. In (a) **nja** is the object of **–phe (baphe nnja tidlo** ‘They gave the dog food’) and in (b) **banru** is the object of **–lindele (silindele banru** ‘We are waiting for the people’). In other words, in the case of the indirect relative in Northern Ndebele, the demonstrative pronoun refers to the noun that is the underlying object of the relative construction, while the subject concord refers to the noun (or person) that is the underlying subject of the relative construction.

The antecedent noun can also stand in other (underlying) syntactic relationships to the relative construction as, for example, in an adverbial relationship:

- (41) Nraba le sikhwele **kiyo** igebuhlalabanga. ‘The mountain we are climbing is in the east’.  
Nakxa mafutha la ligapheka **gawo**. ‘Here are fats you can cook with.’

The above discussion on the relative concords of Southern and Northern Ndebele can be summarized in a tabular form as in Table 6.4 below.

**Table 6.4: The relative concords of Southern and Northern Ndebele.**

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele	
	Nguni form	Nguni form	Sotho form
1 <sup>st</sup> p.s:	o-/engi-	egi-	lo a-/ legi-
1 <sup>st</sup> p.p:	esi-/aba-	esi-/aba-	lesi si-
2 <sup>nd</sup> p.s:	o-	o-	lo a-
2 <sup>nd</sup> p.p:	eni-/aba-	eli- /aba-	leli li-/laba ba-



Cl.1:	o-	---	lo a-
Cl.2:	aba-	aba-	laba ba-
Cl.3:	o-	---	lo o-
Cl.4:	e-	e-	le e-
Cl.5:	eli-	eli-	leli li-
Cl.6:	a-	a-	la a-
Cl.7:	esi-	esi-	lesi si-
Cl.8:	ezi-	eti-	leti ti-
Cl.9:	e-	e-	le e-
Cl.10:	ezi-	eti-	leti ti-
Cl.14:	obu-	obu-	lobu bu-
Cl.15:	oku-	oku-	loku ku-

[Note: The Sotho form of the relative concord in Northern Ndebele is a standard form. This means Northern Ndebele use the Northern Sotho form of the relative type of the relative concord than that of the Nguni type]

### 6.5.6 The relative stem

Although words from most of the word categories can act as relative stems, that is, that part that of the relative that is preceded by a relative concord, here only genuine relative stems are considered, that is, stems that are either primitive relative stems or relative stems that are not derived from other parts of speech (Poulos & Msimang. 1998:153) and stems that are derived from nouns through the elision of the noun class pre-prefix and to which Doke (1927:107) refers to as nominal relative stems.

The only reason why relative stems derived from nouns are singled out here and not also relative stems derived from other word categories, notably from verbs, copulatives and adverbs, is because they are the only words those of which form (in isiZulu and Southern Ndebele, for instance) and the meaning change when they are used as relative stems. Consider, for instance, the following change in the form and meaning of isiZulu nouns when they are used as relative stems.



### IsiZulu

(42)	amanzi	'water'	>	-manzi	'wet'
	amakhaza	'coldness'	>	-makhaza	'cold'
	ukhuni	'firewood'	>	-lukhuni	'hard, difficult'

According to Poulos and Msimang (1998:153), it is sometimes difficult to say for certain which came first: "the relative" or "the nominal system". Compare the following examples, for instance.

### IsiZulu

(43)	-buthuntu	'blunt'	<>	ubuthuntu	'bluntness'
	-buhlungu	'painful'	<>	ubuhlungu	'pain'
	-lukhuni	'difficult, hard'	<>	ukhuni	'firewood'

Relative stems that are derived from words other than nouns are dealt with under the word categories which they form part of.

#### 6.5.6.1 Basic or primitive relative stems

These are relative stems of which the origin or derivation is not clear. In the Nguni languages, there are very few basic or primitive relative stems as compared to the derived relative stems. Doke (1927:105), for instance, regards the following as basic relative stems in isiZulu.

### IsiZulu

(44)	-banzi	'wide'	-duma	'tasteless'
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-ngcono	‘better’	-qatha	‘strong’	-
qotho	‘honest’			

### 6.5.6.2 Nominal relative stems

As mentioned above, these are relative stems derived from nouns through the elision of the initial vowel, that is, the pre-prefix. It is important to note that not all nouns can be used as relative stems in this way. There are, however, a fairly large number of these nouns in the Nguni languages (except Northern Ndebele) that are regularly used as relative stems. Many of these stems denote colour. Consider for instance the following nominal relative stems in examples (45) that are found in isiZulu.

#### IsiZulu

(45)	-manzi ‘wet’	(< amanzi (Cl.6) ‘water’)
	-buhlungu ‘painful’	(< ubuhlungu (Cl.14) ‘pain’)
	-luhlaza ‘green, blue’	(< uluhlaza (Cl.11) ‘green herb’)
	-bukhali ‘sharp’	(< ubukhali (Cl.14) ‘sharpness’)
	-lukhuni ‘hard’	(< u(lu)khuni (Cl.11) ‘firewood’)
	-buthuntu ‘blunt’	(< ubuthuntu (Cl.14) ‘bluntness’)
	-lula ‘light’	(< ilula (Cl.5) ‘light article’)
	-lunama ‘sticky, tenacious’	(< u(lu)nama (Cl.11) ‘tenacity’)
	-lunga ‘speckled black and white’	(< ilunga (Cl.5) ‘speckled beast’)
	-lusizi ‘self sacrificing’	(< u(lu)sizi (Cl.11) ‘sorrow’)
	-luthuthuva ‘sandy’	(< u(lu)thuthuva (Cl.11) ‘sandy coloured object, e.g: beast’)
	-makhaza ‘cold’	(< amakhaza (Cl.6) ‘cold’)
	-mdaka ‘mauve’	(< umdaka (Cl.3) ‘dark soil’)
	-nzima ‘black’	(< inzima (Cl.9) ‘black beast’)

Against the background of the above comments, attention can now be paid to the manifestation in Southern and Northern Ndebele of the two kinds of relative stems (that is, basic and nominal stems) alluded to in these comments, with special reference to the differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele in this regard.

## 6.5.7 Relative stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele

### 6.5.7.1 Basic or primitive relative stems

One of the most important differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele is the fact that Southern Ndebele, like the other Nguni languages, has “basic” or “primitive” relative stems while, according to Ziervogel (1959:72), Northern Ndebele has none, a finding that was also confirmed by this investigation. The following are examples of some of the basic relative stems found in Southern Ndebele.

#### Basic relative stems in Southern Ndebele

(46)	-tjhili	‘different, strange, foreign, unusual’
	-thamana	‘sweet’
	-ngcono	‘better’
	-duma	‘tasteless’
	-lula	‘light, easy’
	-thile	‘certain’

The following are examples of usage of some of the basic relative stems in Southern Ndebele listed in (46) above.

- (47) Ungamthembi umuntu **otjhili**. ‘Do not trust a strange person.’  
 Ngomele amanzi **athamana**. ‘I’m thirsty for sweet water.’  
 Ilanga **elingcono** lokubonana ngelanamhlanje. ‘A better day to meet is today.’  
 Nangidakweko ngisela itiyе **eduma**. ‘When I’m drunk I drink a tasteless tea.’

### 6.5.7.2 Nominal relative stems







Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(50) -hlazumkayi (< ihlaza + umkayi) ‘green/blue’	-tala (< tala)
-tjheli (< isitjheli) ‘yellow/orange’	-mudibha (< dibha)
-lula (< ubulula) ‘light, easy’	-fefo (< bufefo)
-duma (< ubuduma) ‘tasteless’	-ntatalala (< ntatalala)
-manzi (< amanzi) ‘wet’	-thambhile (< -thambha)
-banzi (< ububanzi) ‘wide’	-vulekile (< -vula)
-ze (< ilize) ‘empty, nothing’	-genanro (< -ge+na+nro)

The use of a number of the phonologically distinct relative stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele is illustrated in the following examples.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(51) Abesana bathanda umsebenzi <b>olula</b> .	Batlangana bathanda musebenti <b>lo ufefo</b> .
‘The boys like an easy job.’	
Indlela <b>ebanzi</b> ngile eya ePolokwane.	Ndlela <b>le ivulekile/ikhamisile</b> gile eya ePolokwane.
‘The wide road is the one that goes to Polokwane.’	
Ngimbethe ipahla <b>emanzi</b> .	Mbethe mpahla <b>le ithambhileko</b> .
‘I’m wearing wet clothes.’	
Ngifuna imbiza <b>eze</b> ukuze ngipheke inyama.	Mfuna mbhita <b>le igenanro</b> kuri mpheke nnyama.
‘I want an empty pot so that I can cook the meat.’	

Abafazi abadli umthubi **otjheli** weqanda. Bafati abadli muthubi **lo umudibha**  
welikxanda.

‘Women do not eat the yellow yolk of an egg.’

In the case of some of the relative stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele, this difference in form stems from a difference in their derivational source as in the case the final three examples listed in (50) above. The stems **-manzi** ‘wet’ and **-banzi** ‘wide’ in Southern Ndebele are nominally derived stems, whilst their counterparts in Northern Ndebele are verbally derived. The relative stem **-ze** (<**ilize**) is a nominally derived stem, whilst its Northern Ndebele counterpart is derived from a negative construction consisting of the negative morpheme **-ge** plus the associative formative **na-** plus the Class 9 nominal **-nro** ‘thing’.

A further explanation for the phonological difference between some of the relative stems of Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele is that many of these stems in Northern Ndebele are of non-Nguni origin and, in particular, of Northern Sotho and Setswana origin as, for instance, is the case with the following stems.

Northern Ndebele		Northern Sotho	
(52) -tala	<	-tala	‘green, blue’
-mudibha	<	-modipa	‘yellow, orange’
-thambhile	<	-thapile	‘wet’
-fefo	<	-bofefo	‘light, easy’
		Setswana	
-tjhuwana	<	-suwana	‘white’

A further noticeable difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as relative stems are concerned is that in Northern Ndebele some of these stems can be used as adjective stems. Instead of taking a relative concord as these stems normally do, they take

an adjective concord. This is not the case in Southern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

- (53) Nthanda mmala **omubomvu**.

‘I like the colour red.’

(cf. **Southern Ndebele**: Ngithanda umbala *obomvu*)

Munru **omuntima** uthanda buyala.

‘A black person likes African beer.’

(cf. **Southern Ndebele**: Umuntu *onzima* uthanda utjwala.)

Banwana bathanda muthubi **womudibha** welikxanda.

‘Children like the yellow yolk of an egg.’

(cf. **Southern Ndebele**: Abantwana bathanda umthubi *otjheli* weqanda.)

### 6.5.7.3 Nominal relative stems in Southern Ndebele that are semantically distinct in Northern Ndebele

A few such stems were found during this investigation as, for instance, the stems for the colours ‘yellow’ and ‘grey’. Compare the following examples in this regard.

- (54) **Southern Ndebele**: Ngimbethe amanyathelo **atshehla**.

**Northern Ndebele**: Mbethe tikxabula **leti titshetlha**.

‘I’m wearing a pair of grey shoes.’

**Southern Ndebele**: Imibala **etshehla** nemihlophe mihle.

**Northern Ndebele**: Mibala **le itshetlha** ne(m)hlophe mihle.

‘The grey and white colours are beautiful.’

The relative stem **-tshéhla** ‘grey’ that occurs in the two Ndebele languages has obviously originated from the Northern Sotho stem **-tshéhla** (or **sêhla**). Some of the Northern Ndebele speakers use the terms **-tshéhla** and **-mudibha** to mean ‘yellow’ (Van Wyk, 1986:171) while others claim that the term **-tshéhla** means ‘grey’ and **-mudibha** ‘yellow’. According to Kriel (1965:299) **-tshéhla** (and **-modipa**) means ‘yellow’ while Louwrens (1993:126) finds the term **-tshéhla** (or **-sêhla**) unacceptable as meaning ‘yellow’. Hence, it can also be used to denote colours other than ‘yellow’ such as *grey*, *fawny*, etc. in Northern Sotho.

## 6.6 The enumerative

Enumeratives are words that in the Nguni languages consist of a “prefix” and a “stem”. In most instances, the prefix is identical in form to that of the ‘real’ class prefix of the noun that the enumerative qualifies. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

(55) Ngatjala **umuthi munye** welamule engadinami.

‘I planted one orange tree in my garden.’

Mahlangu ufuna **ilitje liphi** kila?

‘Mahlangu, which stone do you want from these ones?’

As can be seen below, there are salient differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the form and content of this word category are concerned. In the paragraph below, attention is first paid to the enumerative stems with particular reference to the differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele in this regard. Thereafter, the focus shifts to the differences in the enumerative prefixes in these two Ndebele languages.

### 6.6.1 Enumeratives in Southern and Northern Ndebele



Southern and Northern Ndebele differ quite radically from one another as far as the number and type of enumerative stems are concerned. Whereas Southern Ndebele has three enumerative stems, Northern Ndebele has seven of which five are the stems of the numerals from 1-5. The following are the enumerative stems found in these two Ndebele languages.

<b>Enumerative stems</b>		
<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
(56) -phi ?	-phi ?	'which ?'
-ni?	---	'what kind'
-nye	-nye	'one'
	-shidi/-shili	'strange, foreign'
---	-mbhili	'two'
---	thathu	'three'
---	-ne	'four'
---	-hlanu	'five'

Ziervogel (1959:71) refers to the stems of the numerals 1-5 and the stem **-ngai** 'how many' as "enumerative adjective stems" and the enumerative stems **-phi?** 'which?' and **-shidi/-shili** 'different' as "enumerative relative stems" (Ziervogel, op. cit.:72). The reason why Ziervogel regards the stem **-ngai** 'how many' and the stems of the numerals 1-5 as "enumerative adjective stems" in Northern Ndebele is because the form of the prefix of these enumeratives in Northern Ndebele is the same as that of the enumerative prefix in the other Nguni languages. In other words, it is equal to the "adjective prefix" minus its "initial vowel" (or its initial syllable in the case of some of the noun classes in Northern Ndebele). Compare in this regard the differences in the form of the "prefix of the numerals" 1-5 in Southern and Northern Ndebele as elucidated in the following examples in (57a).

**Southern Ndebele**

**Northern Ndebele**



- | <b>Adjectives</b>                                 | <b>Enumeratives</b>                       |
|---|---|
| (57a) Cl. 2: Sikhamba nabantu <b>ababili</b> .    | Sikhambha nebanru <b>bambhili</b> .       |
| ‘We walk with two people.’                        |   |
| Cl. 4: Ngineminyaka <b>emithathu</b> .            | Gineminyaka <b>mithathu</b> .             |
| ‘I’am four years old.’                            |   |
| Cl. 6: Ngithenge amaqanda <b>amane</b> .          | Nthenge makxanda <b>mane</b> .            |
| ‘I bought four eggs.’                             |   |
| Cl. 8: Babulala iiwebu <b>ezihlanu</b> ngendlini. | Babulala tixhogu <b>tihlanu</b> gendluni. |
| ‘They killed five spiders in the house.’          |   |

- | <b>Enumerative stem</b>                  | <b>Enumerative stem</b>           |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>-nye</b>                              | <b>-nye</b>                       |
| (57b) Ubaba wahlaba ikabi <b>yinye</b> . | Bhabha wahlaba nkxabi <b>inye</b> |
| ‘My father slaughtered one ox.’          |                                   |

[Note: The enumerative stem **-ngai?** ‘how many’ in Northern Ndebele has an adjective stem **-ngaki?** as a counterpart in Southern Ndebele.] Compare the following examples in this regard and note the difference in form in the prefix of this enumerative stem in these two languages.

- | <b>Southern Ndebele</b>                         | <b>Northern Ndebele</b>               |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Adjective</b>                                | <b>Enumerative</b>                    |
| (58) Babantu <b>abangaki</b> abafuna umsebenzi? | Banru <b>bangai</b> bafuna musebenti? |
| ‘How many people are looking for a job?’        |                                       |
| Kufuneka amadoda <b>amangaki</b> la?            | Kufuneka madoda <b>mangai</b> la?     |
| ‘How many men are needed here?’                 |                                       |

The difference in the form of the prefix is no doubt also the reason why Ziervogel (1959:171-174) distinguishes between “enumerative adjective” and “enumerative relative stems” in Northern Ndebele. He regards the stems **-phi** and **-shidi/-shili** as enumerative relative stems in all probability on account of the fact that the prefix of these stems is different from that of the other enumerative (adjective) stems. Whereas the prefix of the enumerative adjective stems resembles the noun class prefix of the noun they qualify, the prefix of the enumerative relative stems resembles the form of the subject concord of the noun these enumeratives refer to. Consider the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

(59) Cl. 1: Bhabha ubita mutlhangana *uphi*? ‘Which boy is the father calling?’  
Nsebenta nemunru *ushidi/ushili*. ‘I work with a strange person.’

Cl. 2: Sikhambha nebanru *baphi*? ‘With which people do we go?’  
Nsumayela nebanru *bashidi/bashili*. ‘I speak with strange people.’

Cl. 4: Lifuna misebenti *iphi*? ‘Which jobs are you looking for?’  
Ugafuni misebenti *ishidi/ishili*. ‘You must not look for strange jobs.’

Cl. 6: Wasumayela mavi *aphi* naye? ‘Which words did you speak with him?’  
Simbutise mavi *ashidi/ashili*. ‘We have asked him strange words.’

Cl. 9: Ndoda *iphi* eya eliwandle? ‘Which man goes to the sea?’  
Asifuni nkxosi *ishidi/ishili* la Muledlhane. ‘We don’t want a strange chief here at Muledlhane.’

In Southern Ndebele the stem **-phi** is a “genuine” enumerative stem and as such it takes a prefix that resembles the ‘real’ prefix of the noun to which it refers. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.



### Southern Ndebele

- (60) Cl. 1: Ubaba ubiza **muphi** umsana? 'Which boy is the father calling?'  
Cl. 2: Sikhambha nabantu **baphi**? 'With which people do we go?'  
Cl. 4: Nifuna imisebenzi **miphi**? 'Which jobs you are looking for?'  
Cl. 6: Ukhulume amazwi **maphi naye**? 'Which words did you speak with him?'  
Cl. 9: Yindoda **yiphi** eya elwandle? 'Which man goes to the sea?'

In the case of the so-called nasal classes the enumerative prefix of the stem **-phi**? in Southern Ndebele has an alternative form that consists of the “vowel of the class prefix of its antecedent noun” preceded by “a semi-vowel”. Consider the following examples in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

- (61) Cl.1: Bafuna umntwana **wuphi**? 'Which child are they looking for?'  
Cl.4: Wenza **yiphi** imisebenzi ubaba? 'Which jobs is father doing?'  
Cl.6: Usebenza **waphi** amalanga ngeveke? 'Which days do you work in a week?'  
Cl. 9: Umntazana lo ufuna **yiphi** indoda? 'This girl is looking for which man?'

The enumerative concords of Southern and Northern Ndebele discussed above can be summarized as follows in tabular form.

**Table 6.5: Enumerative prefixes in Southern and Northern Ndebele**

Class	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
1	mu-/wu-	mu-/u-
2	ba-	ba-
3	mu-/wu-	mu-/u-
4	mi-/yi-	mi-/i-
5	li-	li-
6	ma-/wa-	ma-/a-
7	si-	si-
8	zi-	ti-
9	yi-	n-/i-
10	zi-	ti-
14	bu-	bu-
15	ku-	ku-

## 6.7 The possessive

The basic morphological structure of possessives in African languages, and in the Nguni languages in particular, consists of two parts: a “possessive concord” which refers to the possession, plus a “stem”, which refers to the possessor.

### 6.7.1 The possessive concord

The possessive concord is formed by means of a “concordial morpheme” (that has the same form as the subject concord of the different noun classes) and which for the purpose of this discussion will be referred to as the subject concord plus a so-called “possessive” - **a** which combines with the subject concord. In instances where the subject concord consists of the vowel **u-** (i.e., Classes 1.1a and 3) or **i-** (i.e., Classes 4 and 9)

consonantalization takes place which causes **u**-> **w** and **i**> **y**. In the case of the subject concord of Class 6, (i.e., **a-**), vowel coalescence with the possessive **a** takes place except in Southern Ndebele where this **a** is also consonantalized. The following are examples of the formation of the possessive concords in isiZulu.

## IsiZulu

### s.c.+a- > possessive concord

- (62a) Cl. 1: u + a > wa-, e.g: Umfazi wakhe uyasebenza. 'His wife works.'  
 Cl. 3: u + a > wa-, e.g: Umuzi wakho mncane. 'Your home is small.'  
 Cl. 4: i + a > ya-, e.g: Iminwe yakhe mikhulu. 'His fingers are big.'  
 Cl. 6: a + a > a-, e.g: Amehlo akhe mahle. 'His eyes are beautiful.'  
 Cl. 9: i + a > ya-, e.g: Indoda yami igugile. 'My husband is old.'

In noun classes where the subject concord consists of a consonant plus the vowel **i**, **u** or **a**, as is the case with the subject concord of the so-called non-nasal classes (i.e. Classes 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15), "vowel elision" takes place whereby the vowel of the subject concord is dropped before the possessive particle **a**. Consider the form of the possessive concord of the following noun classes in isiZulu.

## IsiZulu

- (62b) Cl. 2: **b(a) + a > ba-** e.g. Baphi abafana **bami** ? 'Where are my boys.'  
 Cl. 5: **l(i) + a > la-** e.g. Ngidla ifa **lami**. 'I eat/use my wealth.'  
 Cl. 7: **s(i) + a > sa-** e.g. Letha isitsha **sami**. 'Bring my dish.'  
 Cl. 8: **z(i) + a > za-** e.g. Sithanda izingane **zabo**. 'We like their children.'  
 Cl.14: **b(u) + a > ba-** e.g. Abantu bathanda ubuhle **bakhe**. 'People like her beauty.'

In the case of subject concords consisting of a consonant plus the vowel **u**, semi-vocalisation of the **u** occurs before the possessive **a**. Semi-vocalisation would also have

occurred in the case of the subject concord of Class 14, **bu-** if it was not for the fact that the combination “bilabial” plus **w**’ is an inadmissible phonological combination in the Nguni languages. Consider the formation of the following isiZulu possessive concords in this regard.

### IsiZulu

(63) Cl. 11: Ngidinga usizo **lwakhe** (< **lu**-a-khe) ngoba ngiseyingane engazi lutho.

‘I need his help because I’m a child that knows nothing.’

14: Ubuhle **bamantombazana**(<**b(u)**-a-amantombazana) bukhanga amadoda emizi.

‘The beauty of girls attracts married men.’

15: Ukukhothama **kwenkosi** (<**ku**-a-inkosi) kuthinte isizwe.

‘The death of the King has touched the nation.’

When the possessive concord combines with words such as nouns or certain possessive pronominal stems that begin with a vowel, vowel coalescence takes place according to the normal phonological rules of: **a + u > o**, **a + i > e** and **a + a > a**. This occurs in all Nguni languages, except siSwati and to a lesser extent Northern Ndebele where the so-called “substitution of *e* rule” is observed. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

### Southern Ndebele

(64) Cl. 1: **wa-** + **u-** > **wo-** e.g: Mfazi **womuntu** (**wa-umuntu**) lo.

‘This is someone’s wife.’

Cl. 4: **ya-** + **i** > **ye-** e.g: Imisebenzi **yethu** (< **ya-ithu**) mihle.



‘Our jobs are good.’

Cl. 5: **la-** + **a** > **la-**

e.g: Isaka **lamalahle** (**la-amalahle**) yi-R30.

‘A bag of coal is R30.’

Apart from the possessive concords discussed in the above paragraph, all the Nguni languages, with the exception of siSwati and Northern Ndebele, employ a formative **ka-** as an independent possessive concord or as part of a possessive concord. This possessive concord normally occurs in all instances where the possessor is a noun in Class 1a and the possession a noun in a so-called nasal class, that is, classes with a nasal in their prefix. In instances where the possession noun is a noun in a non-nasal class, that is, a class without a nasal in its prefix, and the possessor a noun in Class 1a, the possessive concord takes the form of a “subject concord” plus **ka-**. Consider the following isiZulu examples in this regard.

### IsiZulu

#### (65a) Possession as a noun in nasal class

Cl. 1: Umfazi **kaMfaniseni** unguthisha. ‘Mfaniseni’s wife is a teacher.’

Cl.1a: Bamnqumela ugwayi **katiki** ngamahlawulo. ‘They fined him on the spot.’

Cl. 6: Bamfake amabhengele **kaSigonyela**. ‘They have put him in Sigonyela’s bangles, i.e. They have arrested him.’

Cl. 9: Ingubo **kamama** yinhle. ‘My mother’s dress is beautiful.’

#### (65b) Possession is a noun in the non-nasal class

Cl.2: Bangabantwana **bakababa** uNtuli. ‘They are the children of Mr Ntuli.’

Cl. 5: Ifa **likababa** lingelethu sonke. ‘Our father’s wealth is for us all.’

Cl. 7: Isikole **sikaNdlovu** esiphuke amafasitela. ‘It is Mr Ndlovu’s school the windows of which are broken.’



Cl.10: Qaphela! Izinja **zika**Ndlovu zinolaka. ‘Watch out! Mr Ndlovu’s dogs are vicious.’

Cl. 15: Zonke izilwane zababaza ukuhlakanipha **kuka**Nogwaja. ‘All animals praised the wisdom of Nogwaja.’

According to Meinhof (1932:39), the diachronic form of Class 10 noun prefix consists of the Class 8 noun prefix **izi-** (<**B.vi**) plus the Class 9 noun prefix **i[N]** (<**B.ini**) in the Nguni languages, as can be seen in **izinja** (<**iz(i)-in-ja**) ‘dogs’ where the nasal **n** of the Class 9 noun prefix has gradually developed to a homorganic nasal of the stem **-ja** (i.e., forms part of the noun stem **-ja**).

### 6.7.2 The possessive stems

Various word categories, such as nouns, pronouns, adjectives, relatives and adverbs, can function as stems in possessive constructions. Consider the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

#### Southern Ndebele

(66) (a) **Noun as a possessive stem**

Isandla **somsana** silimele. ‘The boy’s hand is injured.’  
Ulahle isikhwama **seencwadi**. ‘He lost the bag of books.’

(b) **Pronoun as a possessive stem.**

Igama **lami** nguMadugu. ‘My name is Madugu.’  
Umfowethu uthanda **zami** izinja. ‘My brother likes my dogs.’

(c) **Adjective as a possessive stem.**

Ama-RDP zizindlu **zabatjha**. ‘RDPs are houses of the young ones.’  
Lezo ziinyawo **zomdala** umuntu. ‘Those are the feet of an old person.’

(d) **Relative as a possessive stem.**

Isikhathi **sofundisako** sincani. 'The time for teaching is short.'

Ukulwela imali mkhuba **wabanzima**. 'To fight for money is a habit of black people.'

When a locative noun with an initial **e-** or **o-** (in the case of a few Classes 11 and 14 nouns in isiZulu) acts as possessive stem, a so-called '*intervocal s*' is inserted between the possessive concord and the locative. This occurs in all Nguni languages except Southern Ndebele. Compare the following isiZulu examples in this regard.

**IsiZulu**

(67) U**Mpiyakhe** yingane **yaseSoweto**.

'Mpiyakhe is a child of Soweto.'

Namuhla ngenza umsebenzi **wasendlini**.

'Today I'm doing house work.'

Izinyoni zakha izidleke zazo ezihlahleni **zasogwini** lomfula.

'The birds build their nests in the trees on the river bank.'

Abantu **baseNkandla** abalunganga ngempela uma sebecasukile.

'People of Nkandla are really not kind when they are angry.'

Against the background of the above discussion of the possessive, attention can now be shifted to the differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the morphology of the possessives in these two languages is concerned.

**6.7.3 Differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele with regard to the possessive concord.**

There is no difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the construction of the possessive concord is concerned. In both these languages, the possessive concord is formed by way of the same morphological rule as in the other Nguni languages, that is, by means of a “subject concord” plus the “possessive particle” **a**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

<b>Southern Ndebele</b>	<b>Northern Ndebele</b>
(68) Cl.1: <b>u + a &gt; wa-</b> Ngiyamazi umtwana <b>womfazi</b> lo. ‘I know the child of this woman.’	<b>u + a &gt; wa-</b> Ndiyamati munswana <b>wemufati</b> lo.
Cl.4: <b>i + a &gt; ya-</b> Imikhono <b>yakhe</b> mide. ‘His arms are long.’	<b>i + a &gt; ya-</b> Mikhono <b>yakhe</b> minde.
Cl.5: <b>li + a &gt; la-</b> Sadla ikhabe <b>labo</b> saliqeda. ‘We ate their watermelon and finished it.’	<b>li + a &gt; la-</b> Sadla likhabe <b>labo</b> salikxeda.
Cl. 6: <b>a + a &gt; wa-</b> Ngiqale amanzi <b>womlambo</b> . ‘I’m looking at the river’s water.’	<b>a + a &gt; ya-</b> Mbheke manti <b>emulambho</b> .

Apart from the regular Class 6 possessive concord **a**, Wilkes (2001:310) (in his research of Northern Ndebele) has found a number of speakers in this language that use **ya-** as the possessive concord of Class 6 nouns instead of the usual **a-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

<b>Northern Ndebele</b>	
(69) Malembhe <b>yabo</b> aphukile.	‘Their hoes are broken.’



Mangai malanga yembeke?

‘How many days are there in a week?’

Bawavile mavi yami.

‘They have heard my words.’

Unfortunately, Wilkes does not say how widespread among Northern Ndebele speakers this alternative possessive concord of Class 6 is or whether it is used interchangeably with the regular possessive concord of this class (i.e., **a**). According to Wilkes (op. cit.:312), the occurrence of the semi vowel **y** in the “alternative possessive” concord of Class 6 in Northern Ndebele and the semi vowel **w** in its counterpart in Southern Ndebele suggests the underlying presence of the vowels **i** and **u**, respectively in their construction, since **i** –**a** > **ya**- and **u**-**a** > **wa**-. If this assumption is correct, then it means that the derivational source of these possessive concords cannot be the class prefix of Class 6 (i.e. **(a)ma**-), because of the obvious lack of any formal agreement between these concords and their class prefixes.

If Wilkes had considered foreign interference as a possible explanation for the occurrence of this irregular possessive concord in Northern Ndebele, he probably did not look any further than Northern Sotho and Tswana where he obviously would not have found an answer since neither of these Sotho languages has such a possessive concord for Class 6 nouns. Had he looked further, he would have found an answer in Xitsonga where Class 6 nouns have a similar (irregular) possessive concord (cf. Baumbach, 1987:177). Compare the following examples in this regard.

### **Xitsonga**

(70) **Marito ya** tata wa wena ya xiximeka. ‘Your father’s words are respectful.’

Mfumo wu hakerile **masiku ya** hina ya livi. ‘The government has paid our leave days.’

**Mavoko ya** mina ya vava. ‘My arms are painful.’

**Malamula ya** malume ya herile. ‘My uncle’s oranges are finished.’

Although the Xitsonga Class 6 possessive concord does not throw any light on the irregularity of the form of this concord in Northern Ndebele, it at least proves that this irregularity has not been caused by anything in the phonological system of Northern Ndebele itself, but that its presence in this language is probably the result of it having been ‘borrowed’ from Xitsonga.

The fact that Xitsonga and Northern Ndebele share the same Class 6 possessive concord **ya-**, comes as a bit of surprise since no historical record or evidence exists that confirms any earlier contact between these two population groups.

#### **6.7.4 Possessive concords with the possessor noun in Class 1a and 2a in Southern and Northern Ndebele**

Remarkable differences occur between these two Ndebele languages in instances where the possessive stem is a noun in Class 1a or 2a. These differences are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

##### **6.7.4.1 The possessor is a noun in Class 1a and the possession is a noun in a nasal class**

When in Southern Ndebele the possessor noun is a noun in Class 1a and the possession a noun from a nasal class, the possessive construction can consist of either:

- the *regular possessive concord* (of the noun referred to) plus *possessive formative -ka-* plus the *nominal stem*,
- or
- the *possessive formative ka-* plus the *nominal stem*.

In Northern Ndebele, on the other hand, the possessive concord with **-ka-** does not apply. The possessive consists of the “regular possessive concord” plus the “nominal stem”. Compare the following examples in this regard.



- (71) **Southern Ndebele:** Cl.1: Uphi umfazi wakaMadimeja/kaMadimeja?  
**Northern Ndebele:** Uphi mufati waMadimeja?  
'Where is Madimeja's wife?'
- Southern Ndebele:** Cl.4: Abesana bathanda ukulandela imikghwa \ yakababa/kababa kuneyabafazi ekhaya.  
**Northern Ndebele:** Batlangana bathanda kulandela mikxhwa yabhabha kuneyabafati ekhaya .  
'Boys like to follow the father's behaviour rather than (that) of women at home.'
- Southern Ndebele:** Cl.6. Amazinyo wakaSipho/kaSipho mahle. **Northern Ndebele:** Matinyo yaSipho mahle.  
'Sipho's teeth are beautiful.'
- Southern Ndebele:** Cl.9: Isimu yakamma/kamma yikulu.  
**Northern Ndebele:** Nsimu yamma ikxulu.  
'My mother's garden is big.'

#### 6.7.4.2 The possessor and the possession are nouns in Class 1a

When both the possessor and the possession are nouns in Class 1a in Southern Ndebele the possessive concord may consist of one of the following –

- the *possessive particle* **ka-** plus the *nominal stem*,
- or
- a *Class 5 subject concord* **li-** plus the *possessive formative* **-ka-**
- or
- the regular *Class 5 possessive concord* **la-** plus the *possessive formative* **-ka-**.

In Northern Ndebele, only the “regular possessive concord” of Class 1/1a (i.e., **wa-** is used in this instance). Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(72) Cl.1a: **Southern Ndebele:** Ubaba **kamma / limma / lamma**

**Northern Ndebele:** Bhabha **wamma**

‘My mother’s father’

**Southern Ndebele:** Unina **kaSuhla / likaSuhla / lakaSuhla**

**Northern Ndebele:** Nnina **waSuhla**

‘Suhla’s sister’

**Southern Ndebele:** Ugogo **kaZanele / likaZanele / lakaZanele**

**Northern Ndebele:** Gugu **waZanele**

‘Zanele’s grandmother’

**Southern Ndebele:** Umkhulu **kaMashashane/likaMashashane/  
lakaMashashane**

**Northern Ndebele:** Nkhulu **waMashashane.**

‘Mashashane’s grandfather.’

According to Skhosana (1998:105-107), the doubling of the possessive concord in the formation of Class 1a possessive concords in Southern Ndebele is the result of the influence that Setswana had had on Southern Ndebele. Cole (1975:161) points out that the construction of the possessive concord in typical Setswana dialect requires the insertion of the element **-ga-** between the “possessive concord” and the “stem”. Compare the following Setswana examples in (73) with those of Southern Ndebele in (72) above in this regard.

## **Setswana**



- (73) Cl.1: Ngwana **wa ga Dikêlêdi /wa Dikêlêdi** ‘Dikeledi’s child’  
 Cl.4: Meraka **ya ga Pulê/ya Pulê** ‘Pule’s cattle posts’  
 Cl.5: Leina **la ga rrê/ la rrê** ‘The name of my father’  
 Cl.6: Manyena **a ga Dikêlêdi** ‘Earrings of Dikêlêdi’

[Note: Whereas in Southern Ndebele vowel coalescence occurs between the vowel of the possessive concord and the initial vowel of all Class 1a nouns (e.g., **wa + ikosi > wekosi** ‘of a chief’), vowel coalescence only takes place in Northern Ndebele in the case of two Class 1a nominals, that is, **iyise** ‘his father’ and **iyihlo** ‘your father’ (Ziervogel, 1959:75).] Compare the following Northern Ndebele Class 1a examples in this regard.

### Northern Ndebele

- (74) Mbita munswana **weyise** (<**wa-iyise**) ‘I call his father’s child’  
 Bakha ndlu **yeyise** (<**ya-iyise**) ‘They build his father’s house’  
 Uphi mutlhangana **weyihlo** (<**wa-iyihlo**)? ‘Where is your father’s boy?’  
 Muti **weyihlo** (<**wa-iyihlo**) gewethu sokxe ‘Your father’s kraal is for us all’

The possessive concord of Southern and Northern Ndebele discussed above can be illustrated as follows in tabular form.

**Table 6.6: The table of Southern and Northern Ndebele possessive concords**

Class	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
Cl.1	wa(ka)-	wa-
Cl.2	ba-	ba-
Cl.3	wa(ka)-	wa-
Cl.4	ya-	ya-
Cl.5	la-	la-
Cl.6	wa-	a-/ya-
Cl.7	sa-	sa-





Cl.8	za-	ta-
Cl.9	ya-	ya-
Cl.10	za-	ta-
Cl.14	ba-	ba-
Cl.15	kwa-	kwa-

### 6.7.5 The possessive stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

There are a few differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the possessive stem is concerned. All word categories that can function as possessive stems in Southern Ndebele can also do so in Northern Ndebele. The most salient differences between these two languages as far as the possessive stem is concerned is the difference in form of some of these stems and the use of the “intervocalic” *s*’ when the possessive concord combines with locative nouns with an initial *e-*. When the possessive stem is a locative noun with an initial *e-* an intervocal *s* is inserted between the possessive concord and this initial *e-* in Northern Ndebele, while this does not happen in Southern Ndebele where the vowel of the possessive concord is dropped. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(75) Abantwana <b>be</b> khaya bayasebenza.	Banrwana <b>ba</b> <u>s</u> ekhaya bayasebenta.
	‘Children of my home are working.’
Amatje <b>wen</b> tabeni makhulu khulu.	Maye <b>ya</b> <u>s</u> enrabeni makxulu kxulu.
	‘The mountain’s stones are too big/Stones of the mountain are too big.’
Izindlu <b>ze</b> dorobheni zikulu zoke.	Tindlu <b>ta</b> <u>s</u> endorojeni tikxulu tokhe.
	‘Houses of the town are all big/Town houses are all big.’
Ufanzula wathi angabapha iplasi <b>ye</b> Driefontein.	Fanzula wari agabapha mbulasi <b>ya</b> <u>s</u> eDriefontein.

‘Fonzula said he can give them the farm of Driefontein.’

Babiza iimphala zakaMadlala, Babita tikxolo taMadlala, *taseMuleji*.  
*zeMuleji*.

‘They called the bands of Madlala, of Muleji.’

## 6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter the morphological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele have been investigated and discussed as a continuation of chapter six. The discussion has fallen on the adjectives, relative, enumerative and possessive. The investigation has revealed that the differences between the two Ndebele languages in the adjectives are on the concordial agreements and the phonological structure of the adjective concords. The relative concord construction also differs in Southern Ndebele compared with Northern Ndebele. Whereas Northern Ndebele, for instance, recognizes two types of relative constructions (i.e., Nguni and Sotho type), Southern Ndebele only recognizes the Nguni type. The enumerative and possessive concords and stems of the Northern and Southern Ndebele have been demonstrated as distinct in this chapter. In the next chapter the morphological aspects that make the two Ndebele languages differ from each other is continued.