

CHAPTER 7

MORPHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES IN SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN NDEBELE (*continued*)

7.1. Introduction

The thrust of the two previous chapters (i.e., Chapters Five and Six) are continued in this chapter. The morphological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele are analysed in terms of two further word categories, namely, copulatives and adverbs, in this chapter.

Different views prevail amongst Nguni grammarians with regard to the way they classify copulatives in isiZulu and the other Nguni languages. Though specialists are in agreement that the copulative is a part of speech that is constructed from non-verbal word categories, they differ in the way they classify copulatives. The most widely used classification of copulatives is the one based on the kind of information these words convey. Poulos and Msimang (1998:354), in isiZulu for instance, mention four main categories into which copulatives can be sub-divided, namely,

- (i) identifying copulative
- (ii) descriptive copulative
- (iii) locational copulative
- (iv) associative copulative.

Ziervogel (1959:95) defines an “identifying” or “true copulative” as a copulative which identifies itself with the subject, that is, subject and copulative are equal as, for instance, in the following Northern Ndebele examples.

- (1) Munru lo gubhabha. ‘This person is my father.’
Mugegulu lo mufati waMadimeja. ‘This old woman is the wife of Madimeja.’

It is important to note that identificatory copulatives can also have an indefinite significance which happens in instances where the copulative predicate has an indefinite subject referred to in English by means of the indefinite pronoun “it”. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

- (2) Akusilo ikhondlo lelo ngumaphelaphelana.
‘That is not a mouse, it is a bat.’

Yindoda kaHlaleleni etjhiye ikoloyi le la.
‘It is Hlaleleni’s husband who left this car here.’

“Descriptive copulatives” (as the name indicates) are, according to Poulos and Msimang (1998:359), copulatives that describe the referent or subject in some way as, for instance, in the following Southern Ndebele examples.

- (3) Umratha esiwudlako lo umakhaza.
‘This porridge that we eat is cold.’

Amanyathelo esiwathengisele uMandla izolo matjha.
‘The shoes that we sold to Mandla yesterday are new.’

“Associative copulatives” convey the concept of ‘to have’ and are formed in all Nguni languages by means of the associative formative **na**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

- (4) Ngizwile bona unina kaSuhla unomntwana (< u-na-umntwana).
‘I have heard that Suhla’s mother has a baby.’

UMnguni **unemali** (**u-na-imali**) ngikho azithengele iplasi ekulu nje.
'Mnguni has money that is why he bought himself a big farm.'

Poulos and Msimang (op. cit.:385-389) are the only Nguni grammarians who give a name to copulatives formed from locative adverbs by referring to these copulatives as "locational copulatives". Consider, for instance, the following locative copulatives in Northern Ndebele formed from the locative adverb **esibayeni** 'in the cattle kraal'.

Northern Ndebele

- (5) Tokxe tikxomo **tisesibayeni** (< **ti-s-esibayeni**).
'All the cattle are in the kraal.'

Salala kamunandi kxulu lokhwa **siseMashashane** (<**si-s-eMashashane**).
'We slept very pleasantly when we were at Mashashane.'

Van Eeden (1956:394-446), dealing with isiZulu, also distinguishes between different types of identificatory copulatives but unlike authors such as Poulos and Msimang (1998) does not base his distinction on semantic grounds. He classifies copulatives on the basis of whether they contain an agreement morpheme that refers to the subject noun or pronoun of the copulative predicate or not. On this basis, Van Eeden (1956:395) distinguishes between "personal" and "impersonal" copulatives. In terms of this approach the identificatory copulatives in the following Southern Ndebele examples are considered to be "personal" copulatives because of the agreement morpheme (bolded) that each of them contains.

Southern Ndebele

- (6) UNgwenya **umumuntu** onesibindi.
'Ngwenya is a brave person.'

Iminyaka kaSbhono ilitjhumi neminyaka ebunane.

‘Sbhono is eighteen years old.’

Zinengi izinto engizicabangako.

‘There are many things that I’m thinking.’

Copulative predicates with no agreement morpheme are regarded by Van Eeden (op. cit.:395) as “impersonal”. The following Southern Ndebele examples fall into this category –

Southern Ndebele

(7) Ukuze aqhware ngalendlela **yingozi** yekoloyi.

‘The reason that he became crippled in this way is because of a car accident.’

Ugogo lo **ngunosokana** kaFuduka.

‘This old woman is Fuduka’s mother-in-law.’

Scholars, such as Poulos and Msimang (1998:359-360), dispute the view that copulative predicates with agreement morphemes are “personal” and those without agreement morphemes are “impersonal”. They argue that the prefixation and non- prefixation of the agreement morpheme to the copulative predicate carries no semantic difference (i.e., their meaning is the same). Consider the following isiZulu examples they give in this regard.

IsiZulu

(8) Cl. 1: Umukhwe **yisotsha** / **uyisotsha**. ‘My father-in-law is a soldier.’

Cl. 2: Aboni **ngamagwala** / **bangamagwala**. ‘Sinners are cowards.’

Cl.5: Ihubesi **yisilwane** / **liyisilwane**. ‘A lion is a (wild) animal.’

Cl. 15: Ukufa **wubuthongo** / **kuwubuthongo**. ‘Death is sleeping.’(Lit.)

(Poulos and Msimang. op. cit.:359-360)

In the following paragraphs each of the four main kinds of copulatives mentioned at the onset are discussed as they are manifested in Southern and Northern Ndebele, respectively. At the end of this chapter, a summary is given of the most salient differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele with regard to these copulatives. The first category of copulatives to be analysed is the identificatory copulatives.

7.2 Differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele in the formation of identificatory copulatives

Two kinds of identificatory copulatives are normally distinguished by Nguni scholars, namely, “copulatives formed from nouns” and “copulatives formed from pronouns” including relative pronouns. Whereas all nouns in Northern Ndebele, except those of Classes 1a and 2a, are made copulative in the same way, this is not so in Southern Ndebele where three different strategies are employed in the formation of copulative nouns, that is, one for nouns with monosyllabic stems and one for nouns with polysyllabic stems.

7.2.1 Identificatory copulatives formed from nouns in Southern Ndebele

7.2.1.1 Positive form

7.2.1.1.1 Copulatives formed from nouns with monosyllabic stems

The formation of identificatory copulatives from nouns with monosyllabic stems in Southern Ndebele is done by doubling the true prefix of the noun concerned and lowering the tone of the initial syllable except in the case of Class 9 nouns where a semi-vowel *y*- is added to prefix and the tone of the prefix is lowered. Consider the following examples below in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

- (9) Cl.1: Ubabakho **mùmúntù** (<**úmúntù**) othulileko.
‘Your father is a quiet person.’
- Cl.5: Ulwa ngoba **lilífà** (<**ílífà**) lakhe.
‘He is fighting because it is his inheritance.’
- Cl.6: Liqiniso bona **màmázwè** (< **ámázwè**) athagako anezipi zepolotiki.
‘It’s true that it is poor countries that have political wars.’
- Cl.9: Ukusebenzela abantwabakho **yìntò** (<**íntò**) ehle.
‘To work for your children is a good thing.’

7.2.1.1.2 Copulatives formed from nouns with polysyllabic stems other than

Class 1a

All nouns with polysyllabic stems *discard their initial vowel or preprefix* when they are made copulatives except in the case of Classes 5, 8, 10, 14 and 15 nouns where the consonant that is similar to the consonant contained in their true prefix is prefixed to the noun and, in the case of Class 9 nouns, where a semi-vowel **y** is added to the prefix. In all these instances, the tone of the prefix is lowered. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

- (10) Cl.1: UNaMgidi **mfàzì** (< **úmáfàzì**) kaCitha.
‘NaMgidi is Citha’s wife.’

Cl. 2a: Abantu enibabone esitopeni sebhesi izolo **bòbámkhúlù** (**ábóbámkhúlù**).

‘The people you saw at the bus stop yesterday are my grandfathers.’

Cl.5: Bekangazi bona **liqándà** (<**íqándà**) elibolileko engimthengisele lona.

‘He did not know that it was a rotten egg that I sold him.’

Cl.9: **Yindábà** (< **índábà**) eqakathekileko abayicocela ngekoloyini.

‘It is an important matter that they discussed in the car.’

Cl.10: Bebangazi bonyana **zìnkómò** (<**íinkómò**) ezetjiweko lezo.

‘They did not know that those were stolen beasts.’

Cl. 15: Amaqanda **kùkúdlà** (<**kúkúdlà**) okunepilo.

‘Eggs are healthy food.’

[Note: In the case of all identificatory copulatives a subject concord may be prefixed to the copulative noun in order to form “personal” identificatory copulatives.] Consider the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard. (The subject concord is underlined).

Southern Ndebele

(11) Cl. 1: UNaMgidi usisebenzi (< **sisebenzi**) sakaCitha.

‘NaMgidi is Citha’s servant.’

Cl. 9: Ikomo le iyikabi (< **yikabi**) ngalokho ngiyayithengisa.

‘This cow is an ox therefore I’m selling it.’

Cl.15: Lobu bububuso (< **bubuso**) befene kungakho abantwana basaba.

‘This is a face of a baboon that is why children are afraid.’

7.2.1.1.3 Copulatives formed from Class 1a nouns

Copulatives are formed from Class 1a nouns in Southern Ndebele by means of the copulative formative **ngu-** while the tone of the initial vowel of the prefix is lowered. Consider the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(12) Cl.1a USomagijima **ngùmkhúlù** (< **úmkhúlù**) kababa hayi wami.

‘Somagijima is my father’s grandfather and not mine.’

UMaliwa **ngùnóbhálà** (<**únóbhálà**) eposweni yaKwaMhlanga.

‘Maliwa is a clerk at KwaMhlanga post office.’

7.2.1.2 Negative form

Identificatory copulatives formed from nouns in Southern Ndebele are negated in the indicative mood by means of the indicative negative morpheme **a** and the negative copulative formative **si-** that is prefixed to the copulative noun minus its pre-prefix or prefix in the case of Class 1a nouns. In the case of personal identificatory copulatives, the negative morpheme **a** combines with the subject concord referring to the subject involved, while in the case of impersonal identificatory copulatives it combines with the so-called indefinite subject concord **ku-**. Consider the following examples in (13) in this regard.



Southern Ndebele

(13) Cl. 1: Ubakhe **ak**asimumuntu (< **mumuntu**) osela utjwala.

‘His father is not a person who drinks beer.’

Cl. 2: Abesana bakaMasango **akusiba**bantu (< **babantu**) /**akusibu**ntu
(< **abantu**) ongabathemba.

‘Masango’s boys are not the people you can put your trust in.’

Cl. 5: Ibizo lakhe **al**isisibongo (< **sibongo**) kodwana lisithakazelo.

‘His name is not a surname but a praise name.’

Cl. 8: **Akusi**ziinthende (<ziinthende) / **akusi**inthende (< **iin**thende)
engizithenge izolo kodwana manyathelo amatjha.

‘It is not the heels that I bought yesterday but new shoes.’

In the situative mood negative the indicative negative morpheme **a-** is replaced by its non-indicative counterpart **-nga-** while an alternative negative form with the so-called “invariable concord” **i-** is also employed. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(14) Cl.1: Unina ulila msinya nanyana **angasi**mntwana/**ingasi**mntwana

(< **amntwana**).

‘His mother cries easily although she is not a child.’

Cl. 4: Sikhupha yoke imihlobo yemithi nanyana **ingasi**yisangu

‘We uproot all kinds of trees even if it is not dagga.’

Cl. 6: Asiwadli woke navane **angasi**maqanda/**ingasi**mamaqa (< **maqanda**)
aphekweko.

‘We do not eat them all if they are not boiled eggs.’

[Note: The alternative negative form with the so-called “invariable concord” **i-** is mostly heard in the speech of elderly speakers of Southern Ndebele.]

7.2.2. Identificatory copulatives formed from nouns in Northern Ndebele

7.2.2.1 Positive forms

7.2.2.1.1 Copulatives formed from nouns in classes other than Classes 1a and 2a

In Northern Ndebele all nouns are made copulative in the same way, that is, by lowering the tone of the prefix without any morphological change except in the case of nouns belonging to Classes 1a and 2a (Ziervogel.1959:96). See the examples in (15) below.

Northern Ndebele

(15) Cl.1: Bhabha waMapela **mùnrù** (<**múnrù**) lo akhulile.

‘Mapela’s father is an old person.’

Cl.2: Bokxe labo **bàfátì** (< **báfátì**) baBulongo.

‘All those are the wives of Bulongo.’

Cl.5: **Lìyè** (<**líyè**) elikhubate munswana wami.

‘It is a stone that has injured my child.’

Cl.9: Mapela **nkxòsì** (< **nkxósi**) yemaNdebele waGegana.

‘Mapela is a chief of the Ndebele of Gegana.’



In the situative mood positive in Northern Ndebele, all copulative nouns take the invariable prefix **i-** which, as mentioned earlier in par. 7.2.1.2 above, also occurs in Southern Ndebele, especially amongst old people. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

- (16) Ke **igumalumakho**, mbite. 'If he is your uncle, call him.'
Ke **ibalimi** batahuma. 'If they are farmers, they will get rich.'
- Ke **indodakati** yakho ndiyayati. 'If it is your daughter, I know her.'
Ke **imufundisi** urabhela Mudimu kwaphela. 'If he is a pastor, he only prays to God.'

The invariable prefix **i-** that occurs in the positive of the identificatory copulatives of the situative mood as can be seen in the examples in (16) above is no doubt the same as the invariable concord that also occurs with the auxiliary verb stems **-ba** and **-be** in these two Ndebele languages, (cf. Chapter 6. par. 6.5.3.2.2).

7.2.2.1.2 Copulatives formed from nouns in Classes 1a and 2a

Copulative nouns in Class 1a in Northern Ndebele take the prefix **gu-** while copulative nouns in Class 2a in this language take the prefix **m-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

- (17) Cl.1a Mapela **gumalume** waMaraba. 'Mapela is Maraba's uncle.'
Gubani lo afuna sibigiri na? 'Who wants the sugar?'



Cl.2a: Banru labo **mbobhabha**.

‘Those people are our fathers.’

Mbobani (banru) laba na?

‘Who are these ones (people)?’

The copulative prefix **m-** that is prefixed to Class 2a nouns is in all probability derived from the copulative prefix **ni-** (cf. Ziervogel. op. cit.: 30) of which the vowel has been elided and the nasal assimilated to the bilabial consonant of the noun class prefix of Class 2a, (i.e., **ni-b > n-b > mb**).

7.2.2.2 Negative form

7.2.2.2.1 Negation of copulatives from noun classes other than Class 1a

In Northern Ndebele identificatory copulatives constructed from noun classes other than Class 1a are negated by means of the indicative negative morpheme **a-** and the negative copulative formative **si-** while the noun retains its non-copulative tone pattern, (cf. also 7.2.2.1 (a) above). Consider the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(18) Cl. 1: Lo alele la **asimúnrwánà** (< **múnrwánà**) waSikxhobejane.

‘The one who is sleeping here is not Sikxhobejane’s child.’

Cl. 2: Bafati bamalume **asibáyéni** (< **báyéni**) baMaraba.

‘My uncle’s wives are not Maraba’s visitors.’

Cl. 5: Sara **asilívílà** (< **lívílà**).

‘Sara is not a sluggard.’

Cl. 9: Bari, “Ayi lowo **asińrò** (<**ńrò**) siphofu.

‘They said: “No that is nothing, he is blind’.”

7.2.2.2.2 Negation of copulatives in Class 1a

Nouns in Class 1a are negated in the same way as nouns in all the other noun classes except that the copulative prefix **gu-** that these nouns in 1a exhibit in the positive changes to **ku-** in the negative. Consider the following Northern Ndebele Class 1a examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(19) Mapela **asikumalume** (<**gumalume**) waMaraba.

‘Mapela is not the uncle of Maraba.’

Munru lo **asikusotala** (< **gusotala**) waLukhuleni.

‘This person is not Lukhuleni’s father-in-law.’

In the situative mood, copulative nouns are made negative by the non-indicative negative morpheme **ga-** plus the negative copulative formative **si**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(20) Cl.1: Sebothoma usumayela nemunru **igasi**mufati (< **mufati**) wakhe.

‘Sebothoma speaks to a person who is not his wife.’

Cl. 2: Sihlala nabo nkhyaya nalokhwa **igasib**anrwana (< **banrwana**) bethu.

‘We stay with them in the house although they are not our children.’

Cl. 4: Bafumene kuri kulusa timbhuti nekukxura tikxomo **igasimisebenti**

(< **misebenti**) abayithandako.

‘They found that herding goats and driving cattle were not the jobs they preferred.’

7.2.3 The formation of identificatory copulatives from pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele

Three of the four kinds of pronouns found in Southern and Northern Ndebele and, in fact, in all other Nguni languages, can be copulativized. They are the “absolute”, “demonstrative” and “possessive” pronouns, respectively, the exception being the quantitative pronouns. All three of these kinds of pronouns are copulativized in the same way, that is, by prefixing a copulative formative to the pronoun. This copulative prefix takes on different forms in Southern and Northern Ndebele, none of which can be phonologically explained. In the following paragraphs an outline is given of the most salient differences in the formation of copulatives of each of these three kinds of pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

7.2.3.1 Copulatives formed from absolute pronouns

7.2.3.1.1 Positive form

Absolute pronouns in Southern Ndebele are copulativized by means of a copulative prefix that has two forms in this language, namely **ngu-** and **ngi-**, respectively. In Northern Ndebele, these copulative prefixes occur in denasalized forms, that is, without the nasal, which is also the regular form of the velar Ur-Bantu nasal compound [**Jg**] in this language. In both Ndebele languages, the absolute pronoun drops its final syllable – **na** when copulativized. In Southern Ndebele the copulative prefix **ngu-** is prefixed to the abbreviated absolute pronoun of all noun classes except those of the 1st person singular and of the 2nd person plural that take the prefix **ngi-**. In Northern Ndebele the copulative prefix **gi-** is prefixed to the abbreviated absolute pronouns of all noun classes that



contains the vowel **i** or **a** in their class prefix (i.e., Classes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10) including those of the 1st and 2nd person singular, while the prefix **gu-** is prefixed to the abbreviated absolute pronouns of all the remaining noun classes. Compare the following examples below in this regard.

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(21) 1 st p.s: ngimi (< mina)	'it is I'	gumi (< mina)
e.g: Ngimi odlako.	'It is I who eats.'	Gumi lo adlako
2 nd p.s: nguwe (< wena)	'it is you'	guwe (< wena)
e.g: Nguwe olalako.	'It is you who steals.'	Guwe lo athobalako.
Cl. 1: nguye (< yena)	'it is (s)he'	guye (< yena)
e.g: Nguye owaziko.	'It is he who knows.'	Guye lo atiko.
Cl. 2: ngibo (< bona)	'it is they'	gibo (< bona)
e.g: Ngibo abaselako.	'It is they who drink.'	Gibo laba baselako.

7.2.3.1.2 Negative form

Copulativized demonstrative pronouns in both Southern and Northern Ndebele are negated in the indicative mood by means of the negative morpheme **a** and the copulative formative **si** that is prefixed to the copulativized demonstrative pronoun or abbreviated absolute pronoun. The main differences between these languages in this regard are that Southern Ndebele uses the indefinite concord **ku** while Northern Ndebele does not, and that in Northern Ndebele the positive form of the copulative prefixes, that is, **gu** and **gi**, changes to **ku** and **ki**, respectively. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in (22a) and Northern Ndebele in (22b) in this regard.



Southern Ndebele

- (22a) 1st p.s: **Akusingimi / akusimi** (<**ngimi**>) obizako. 'It is not me who calls.'
2nd p.s: **Akusinguwe / akusuwe** (<**nguwe**>) owebako. 'It is not you who steals.'
Cl.1: **Akusinguye / akusuye** (<**nguye**>) owaziko. 'It is not he who knows.'
Cl.5: Namuhla **akusingilo / akusilo** (<**ngilo**>) ilanga lokusebenza. 'Today it is not a working day.'

Northern Ndebele

- (22b) 1st p.s: **Asikumi** (<**gumi**>) lo wabita mma waMakhuleni.
'It is not me who called Makhuleni's mother.'
2nd p.p: **Asikili** (<**gili**>) laba banetjhu.
'It is not you (plural) who are lucky.'
Cl. 1: **Asikuye** (<**guye**>) lo aziko.
'It is not he who knows.'
Cl. 5: Lelo **asikilo** (<**gilo**>) likxanda lenkxukxu.
'That is not a fowl's egg.'

The reason for the phonological change of **gu-** > **gi-** and **ku-** > **ki-** in Northern Ndebele is not known since there is nothing overt in the phonological environment in which these prefixes occur that could have motivated this change.

7.2.3.2 Copulatives formed from the demonstrative pronouns

7.2.3.2.1 Positive form

The same copulative prefixes employed in the formation of copulativized absolute pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele are also employed in the formation of the copulativized demonstrative pronouns in these languages, that is, **ngi-** in Southern Ndebele which occurs before all demonstrative pronouns and **gi-** and **gu-** in Northern Ndebele, which occurs here in the same phonological environment as before the absolute pronouns. Compare the following examples in this regard;

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(23) Cl.1: **Ngilo** okhulumako.

Gulo lo asumayelako

‘It is this one who speaks.’

Cl.2: Ngizwe bathi abangibizako **ngilabo**.

Mve bari laba bambitako

gilabo.

‘I heard (them saying) who are calling me are those ones.’

[I heard them saying that those are the ones who are calling me.]

7.2.3.2.2 Negative form

More or less the same rule applicable in the negation of the copulativized absolute pronouns is employed in the negation of the copulativised demonstrative pronouns in these two Ndebele languages. Copulativized demonstrative pronouns in both Southern and Northern Ndebele are negated in the indicative mood by means of the negative morpheme **a** and the copulative formative **si**. The main differences between these languages in this regard are that Southern Ndebele uses the indefinite concord **ku** while Northern Ndebele does not and that in Northern Ndebele the positive form of the copulative prefixes, i.e., **gu-** and **gi-**, changes to **ku** and **ki**, respectively. Consider the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.



Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(24) Cl.1: **Akusingilo / akusilo** okhulumako.

Asikulo lo asumayelako

‘It is not this one who speaks.’

Cl.2: **Akusingilabo / akusilabo** abakhulumako.

Asikilabo laba basumayelako.

‘It is not those who speak.’

Cl.5: Iembe lami **akusingilelo / akusilelo**.

Llembhe lami **asikilelo**.

‘My hoe is not that one.’

7.2.3.3 Copulatives formed from possessive pronouns

7.2.3.3.1 Positive form

In Southern Ndebele, unlike in Northern Ndebele, the construction of copulatives from possessive pronouns comprises the copulative formative **nge-** that is prefixed to the possessive pronoun in all classes, while in Northern Ndebele

- (a) a syllabic nasal [N] is prefixed to possessive pronouns that commence with a consonant to which it also assimilates, and
- (b) the vowel **i-** is prefixed to possessive pronouns that commence with the semi-vowel **y-** while the vowel **u** is prefixed to possessives pronouns that begin with the semi-vowel **w**.

Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(25) Cl. 1: Umntazanyana lo **ngewami**.

Munrwatanyana lo **uwami**.

‘This little girl is mine.’

Cl.2: Abafazaba **ngebakhe** boke. Bafati laba **mbakhe** bokxe.
‘All these women are his.’

Cl. 4: Imizi le **ngeyami**. Miti le **iyami**.
‘These homes are mine.’

Cl. 5: Mtjele bona ezembeli **ngelakhe**. Mbuthe kuri lihloka leli **nlakhe**.
‘Tell him that this axe is his.’

Ziervogel (1959:12) regards the origin of the syllabic nasal **n-** (i.e., that occurs before consonants) to be one of the unknown elements that Northern Ndebele exhibits. However, according to Wilkes (2001:319), this nasal **n-** is most probably an abbreviated form of the copulative prefix **ndi-** in Venda.

7.2.3.3.2 Negative form

Copulativized possessive pronouns are negated in the same way in Southern and Northern Ndebele, that is, by prefixing the negative construction **asi-** to the possessive pronoun. In Southern Ndebele the “subject concord” is infixes between the negative vowel **a-** and the negative copulative formative **-si-** while the copulative prefix **nge-** in the positive may optionally be retained in the negative. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(26) Cl.1: Umntwana lo **akasinge**wami/**akasi**wami. Munswana lo **asi**wami.

‘This child is not mine.’

Cl.5: Ilembele **alisinge**lakhe/**alisi**lakhe. Llembehe leli **asilakhe**.

‘This hoe is not his.’

Cl.6: Amaqanda la **awasingewami/awasiwami**. Makxanda la **asiwami**.

‘These eggs are not mine.’

Cl.7: Isigubheso **asisingese**thu/**asisisethu**. Sikxugulu lesi **asisethu**.

‘That drum is not ours.’

In the second form, the invariable negative copulative construction **akusi-** is prefixed to the possessive copulative pronoun (as it is the case in the negation of the demonstrative copulative pronouns) in Southern Ndebele while the positive copulative prefix **nge-** may be dropped. Compare the following Southern Ndebele examples in this regard.

- (27) Cl. 1: Umntwana lo **akusingewami/akusiwami**. ‘This child is not mine.’
 Cl. 4: Imikhwa le **akusingeyenu/akusiyenu**. ‘These knives are not yours.’
 Cl. 6: **Akusingewakho/akusiwakho** amatje layo. ‘Those yonder stones are not yours.’
 Cl. 9: Le (indaba) **akusingeyami/akusiyami**. ‘This (matter) is not mine.’

7.3 The differences in the formation of descriptive copulatives in Southern and Northern Ndebele

Basically, the distinction between the names descriptive and identificatory copulatives is a semantic one (Poulos & Msimang, 1998:373). As mentioned earlier descriptive copulatives describe the referent or subject while identificatory copulatives identify the referent or subject. In the Nguni languages, descriptive copulatives are formed from qualificatives or words that describe the subject such as adjectives, relatives and adverbs. In Southern Ndebele and most of the other Nguni languages, adjectives are made descriptive copulatives by eliding the initial vowel of the adjective (except in the case of Class 9) as, for instance, in the following Southern Ndebele examples.

- (28) abantu **abahle** > abantu **bahle**
 ‘beautiful people’ > ‘People are beautiful.’



idondolo **elide**. > idondolo **lide**
'a long walking stick' > 'A walking stick is long.'

isikhathi **esincani**. > isikhathi **sincani**
'a short time' > 'Time is short.'

In the case of Class 9 the relative concord **e** is replaced by the subject concord **i** of Class 9 or **yi** as in the following Southern Ndebele examples.

(29) ikomo **ekulu**. 'a big cow.' > ikomo (**y**)**ikulu**. 'the cow is big.'

As will be seen in the following discussion of the descriptive copulatives formed from adjectives in Southern and Northern Ndebele, there are important differences between these two languages in this regard. A crucial difference that needs to be pointed out at this stage is the fact that these copulatives have both a "descriptive" and "identificatory" significance in Northern Ndebele while in all the other Nguni languages they exclusively have a descriptive significance. Compare, for instance, the following examples in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(only descriptive)	(descriptive and identificatory)
(30) Abesanaba bakhulu 'These boys are big.'	Batlhangaana laba mbabakxulu . 'These boys are big (the big ones).'
Iinkomo zakhe zihle . 'His cattle are beautiful.'	Tikxomo takhe ntetinhle . 'His cattle are beautiful (the beautiful ones).'

It is obviously on account of their identificatory significance that Ziervogel does not classify these copulatives in Northern Ndebele under descriptives as is done in all the

other Nguni languages but under identificatory copulatives (Ziervogel, 1959: 99). By doing so he implies that the identificatory significance of copulative adjectives in Northern Ndebele is more basic than their descriptive significance. However, if one considers that copulative adjectives have solely a descriptive significance in all the other Nguni languages then Ziervogel's view must be regarded as highly questionable. In this thesis, the descriptive significance of the copulative adjective in Northern Ndebele is also taken as the basic significance of these words and they are therefore treated here as descriptive copulatives so as to bring them more in line with their counterparts in other Nguni languages.

7.3.1 The formation of descriptive copulatives from adjectives in Southern and Northern Ndebele

7.3.1.1 Southern Ndebele

7.3.1.1.1 Positive form

With the exception of the 1st and 2nd person singular and plural the adjectives in all the noun classes in Southern Ndebele are copulativized by *deleting the initial vowel of the adjective concord*, except in the case of the adjectives of Class 9 where (y)i- replaces the initial vowel of this concord. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(31a) Cl.1: Soke siyazi bona uSibongile **muhle** (<omuhle).

‘We all know that Sibongile is beautiful.’

Cl.2: Nonyaka abafundi besiNdebele **bancani** (<abancani) kunanyakenye.

‘This year isiNdebele students are less than last year.’

Cl.14: Ukukhuphuka kwentengo yepetroli **kumbi** (<okumbi)

‘The increase in the petrol prize is bad.’

In the case of the 1st and 2nd person adjectives the subject concord of these persons is prefixed to the copulativized adjective which has the same form as those of Classes 1 and 2, respectively. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(31b) 1st p.s: Angikathandi izolo uSuhla nakathi **ngimumbi** (<**mumbhi**).

‘I did not like it yesterday when Suhla said I’m ugly.’

p.p: Kufanele nisitjheje ngombana **sibadala** (< **badala**).

‘You must take care of us because we are old.’

2nd p.s: Liqiniso bona **umuhle** (< **muhle**) namhlanje.

‘It is true that you are beautiful today.’

p.p: Awa, **nibanengi** (< **banengi**) angekhe niphelele ekoloyini le.

‘No, you are (too) many you cannot all get into this car.’

In the “situative mood” it is obligatory for the copulative adjective to take the subject concord (in its situative form) of the subject noun as, for instance, in the following examples.

Southern Ndebele

(32) Cl. 1a: UNdlelehle gade **amuhle** (<**muhle**) nakatjhadako nyakenye.

‘Ndlelehle was beautiful when she got married last year.’

Cl. 2: Abafuni ukubanikela umsebenzi ngoba **babadala** (< **badala**)

‘They don’t want to give them the work because they are old.’

Cl. 4: Lemithi yamaperegisi ithela nanyana **isesemincani** (< **mincani**).

‘These peach trees bear fruits although they are still young.’

7.3.1.1.2 Negative form

In the indicative mood the negation of copulativized adjectives of all noun classes, including those of the 1st and 2nd persons, are negated by means of the indicative negative morpheme **a-** and the negative copulative formative **-si-** (cf. par. 7.4.5). Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(33) 1st p.s: Angikathandi izolo uSuhla nakathi **angisimuhle** (< **ngimuhle**).

‘I did not like it yesterday when Suhla said I’m not beautiful.’

2nd p.p: Nizobehlula njani namhlanje ngombana **anisibanengi** (< **nibanengi**)?

‘How are you going to defeat them today as you are not many?’

Cl.1: Liqiniso bona umfowethu **akasimdala** (<**mdala**) kunoBongani.

‘It is true that my brother is not older than Bongani.’

Cl.9: Indlu kaNtuli eMamelodi **ayisiyikulu** (<**yikulu**) angayithengisa lula.

‘The house of Mr Ntuli at Mamelodi is not big, he can sell it easily.’

In the situative mood the negation of copulative adjectives is done by means of the negative morpheme **-nga-** that is followed by the negative copulative formative **-si-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(34) Cl. 1a: UNdlelehle gade **angasimncani** (<**amncani**) nakatjhadako.

‘Ndlelehle was not young when she got married.’

Cl. 2: Abantu baKwaMhlanga abafuni ukusebenza nanyana **bangasibadala**
(< **babadala**)

‘The people of KwaMhlanga do not want to work even if they are not

old.’

Cl. 4: Nanyana sithole imizabo **ingasimihle** (<**imihle**) ngaphakathi
kodwana ngaphandle mihle.

‘Even though we found their homes not beautiful inside but outside they
are beautiful.’

7.3.1.2 Northern Ndebele

7.3.1.2.1 Positive form

In Northern Ndebele the full qualificative form of the adjectives is retained in the formation of copulativized adjectives. According to Ziervogel (1959: 99) the formation of copulatives from adjectives in the indicative mood in this language entails the prefixing of:

- the “copulative prefix” **u** plus the “glide” **w-** to adjectives beginning with the vowel **o-** and a “copulative prefix” **i** plus the “glide” **y-** to those adjectives that begin with the vowel **a-** or **e-**, and
- the variant syllabic nasal [N] before adjectives that commence on a consonant. This syllabic nasal which acts as a copulative prefix in this instance assimilates to the initial consonant of the adjective (i.e., **n** > /**m**/ before bilabial **b** [ɓ], >[**ɟ**] before velar consonants and > /**n**/ before alveolar consonants. The adjectives of Class 5 are an exception as they take a copulative prefix **i**, instead of the syllabic nasal.

Ziervogel (1959:104) claims that the copulative vowel prefixes **u** and **i** (in **uw-** and **iy-** respectively) are assimilated forms of **B.ɣi** while the syllabic nasal /**n**/ (that orthographically becomes **m** before **b** and **n** before other consonants) probably stems from Ur-Bantu **ni-**. Meinhof (1906:13) is uncertain whether this **ni** is linked to the Ur-Bantu Class 9 prefix **ini-** or to the Ur-Bantu 1st person singular concord **ni**. The semi-vowels **w** and **y** (in **uw-** and **iy-**, respectively) are not true semi-vowels but are scarcely audible glides that occur between two vowels (Ziervogel. op. cit.: 99).

As was stated in 7.3.1 above, the copulativized adjectives in Northern Ndebele either have an identificatory or a descriptive significance. The type of significance they realize depends on the context in which they occur. Although no convincing evidence exists, a superficial examination of Northern Ndebele texts found in Ziervogel (1959) suggest that the descriptive significance of these copulatives is more frequent than their identificatory significance. Compare the following copulativized adjectives in Northern Ndebele. (Their identificatory formd are given in brackets.)

Northern Ndebele

(35) Cl.1: Munswana wami **uwomukxulu** (< **omukxulu**)

‘My child is old (the old one).’

Cl.2: Bafati benkxosi Nungu **mbabande** (< **babande**) bokxe.

‘Chief Nungu’s wives are all tall (the tall ones).’

Cl.5: Liye leli **ilelinhle** (**lelinhle**).

‘This stone is beautiful (a beautiful one).’

Cl.6: Matinyo wemunru lo **iyamaxulu** (< **amaxulu**).

‘The teeth of this person are big (the big ones).’

Cl.8: Tikxabula taNdlovu **ntetindala** (< **tetindala**)

‘Ndlovu’s shoes are old (the old ones).’

Northern Ndebele respondents consulted during this investigation dispute Ziervogel’s claim (Ziervogel, op. cit.:30) that the copulatives of the 1st and 2nd person plural adjectives are derived from Class 2 copulative adjectives through the addition of the subject concord of the person concerned, as can be seen in the following examples.

- (36) 1st p.p: Simbabakxulu (< **mbabakxulu**) ‘We are big.’
2nd p.p: Limbabande (< **mbabande**). ‘You are tall.’

In the speech of these respondents, the copulative prefix **m** as well as the initial syllabic **ba** of the adjective prefix of Class 2 adjectives are substituted by a formative **ye** whose origin is unknown as for instance in the following examples in (37a).

- (37a) 1st p.p: Siyebande (cf. **simbabande**) kugalokho sidlaluka nkxwili yetandla.
‘We are tall that is why we play netball.’

p.p: Likxiniso kuri thina siyebanyenti (<**simbabanyenti**).
‘It’s true that there are many of us.’

- 2nd p.p: Andiri lina lokxe liyebambhi (cf. **limbabambhi**), abanye bagawune.
‘I don’t say that you are all bad (the bad ones), some are better.’

Amfuni lifuke gekuri liyebanghane (<cf. **limbabanghane**).
‘I don’t want you to smoke because you are young.’

A further copulative form of the 1st and 2nd person plural adjective found in Northern Ndebele is one in which the formative **ye** is substituted by a **be-** of which the origin is also unknown. Compare the following examples in (37b) in this regard.

- (37b) 1st p.p: Lifanele lisithiyeleje gekuri sibebandala (cf. **simbabandala**)
‘You are supposed to listen to us because we are old.’

2nd p.p: Amfuni libulalane gekuri libebantima lokxe. (cf. **limbabantima**)
‘I don’t want you to kill each other because you are all black.’

In the “situative mood: the copulative prefix of these adjectives as found in the indicative mood is replaced by an invariable copulative prefix **i-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(38) Cl.1: Mutlhangana waMulomo ubile nkxosi **i**womunghane (< **u**womunghane)
‘Mulomo’s child became a chief being young.’

Cl.2: Banru bakaLanga bafudukela Mokopane kufikela **i**mbabanyenti
(< **m**babanyenti).
‘The people of Langa moved to Mokopane until they were many.’

7.3.1.2.2 Negative form

Northern Ndebele negates copulatives formed from adjectives by *discarding the copulative prefix* (plus the following glide where applicable) and replacing it with the *negative copulative construction* **asi-** that consists of the indicative negative morpheme **a-** plus the formative **-si-** except in the case of the 1st and 2nd person where it is deleted. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(39) Cl.1: Munswana wami **asi**womukxulu (< **u**womukxulu)
‘My child is not old.’

Cl.5: Liye leli **asile**li(n)hle (< **i**leli(n)hle)
‘This stone is not beautiful.’

Cl.9: Ndawo yaMalaji **asi**yembhi (< **i**yembhi) nayaMantjiwo.
‘The place of Malaji is not as bad as that of Mantjiwo.’

In the case of the 1st and 2nd person the descriptive copulative construction is negated by prefixing the negative morpheme **a-** to the positive form. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(40) 1st p.s: Abandihleki galokhwa **andi**womunghane (<**ndi**womunghane).

‘They don’t laugh at me because I’m not young.’

p.p: **Asi**bande / **Asi**yebande (<**siba**bande/ **si**yebande)

kugalokho sigadlaluki nkxwili yetandla.

‘We are not tall that is why we don’t play netball.’

2nd p.p: Bavile kuri lina lohle **aliba**bambhi/**ali**yebambhi(<**liba**bambhi / **li**yebambhi) lokxe.

‘They have heard that you are not all bad.’

In the situative mood the copulative adjectives are negated by prefixing the construction **igasi** (that consists of the invariable copulative concord **i** plus the denasalized negative morpheme **-ga-** plus the negative copulative formative **-si-**) to the copulativized adjective. Consider the following examples in this regard.

(41) Cl.1: Mutlhangana waNungu utekile **igasi**womukxulu (< **u**womukxulu)

‘Nungu’s boy married being not big.’

Cl.4: Bathole misebenti yekuyakha tindlu **igasi**yeminyenti(< **iy**eminyenti)

‘They found the jobs of building houses being not many.’

7.3.2 Formation of descriptive copulatives from relatives in Southern and Northern Ndebele

Unlike adjectives, relatives are words with two kinds of stems, namely (a) “derived stems”, that is, stems derived from various other word categories and (b) “primitive relative stems”, that is, stems that are not derived from any other word categories. With

the exception of Northern Ndebele, all the Nguni languages include a fair number of primitive relative stems (cf. Chapter 6. par. 6.5.71).

In the following section the formation of copulatives from only two kinds of relatives are analysed, namely relatives with primitive relative stems and relatives with nominal relative stems, or stems derived from nouns. The reason why these two kinds of relative stems have been singled out for the purpose of this discussion is because they are the only relative stems that can be regarded as “true” relative stems as they are the only relative stems that do not also function as stems in other word categories.

7.3.2.1 Southern Ndebele

7.3.2.1.1 Positive form

The formation of the descriptive copulatives from relatives with primitive and nominal relative stems in Southern Ndebele happens

- (a) in the case of the nasal classes by replacing the relative concord with the subject concord.
- (b) in the case of the non-nasal classes, by deleting the initial vowel of the relative concord.

Consider the following examples in (42a) and (42b) in this regard.

Nasal Classes

(42a) Cl.1: Akusilo iqiniso bona umFundisi Makhubela **utjhili** (< **otjhili**) la ePitori.
‘It is not true that Reverend Makhube is a stranger here in Pretoria.’

Cl.6: Akutjho bona abantwabakhe **bangcono** (< **abangcono**) kunathi.
‘It does not mean his children are better than we are.’

Cl.9: Itiye le **iduma** (< **eduma**) angekhe ngiyisele.
‘This tea is tasteless, I cannot drink it.’



Non-nasal classes

(42b) Cl.2: Boke abafazi bakhe **banzima**(< **abanzima**) kodwana bahle.

‘All his wives are dark (in complexion) but beautiful.’

Cl. 5: Irhembhe alimbethe namhlanje **lihlaza** (**elihlaza**) hayi elibovu.

‘The shirt he wears today is green and not the red one.’

Cl. 14: Utjwala beRebel buhlala **bumakhaza** (< **obumakhaza**)

‘The liquor of Rebel is always cold.’

In the situative mood the copulative relative is constructed in the same way as in the case of the indicative mood. (See the rules of the indicative mood in (par. 8.2.1) Consider the following examples in (43a) and (43b) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Nasal classes

(43a) Cl 1: Umntazana kaNtuli gade **amhlophe** (<**omhlophe**) nakendako.

‘Ntuli’s daughter was light (in complexion) when she got married.’

Cl. 4: UMasotja wayithwala nanyana **ibudisi** (< **ebudisi**) imithwalo kayise.

‘Masotja carried his father’s problems even if they were heavy.’

Non-nasal classes

(43b) Cl. 2: Ngamanye amalanga basebenza nanyana **banjalo** (<**abanjalo**)

‘On some days they work even if they are like that.’

Cl. 7: Isigodwesi ngasithwala ngoba **silula** (< **esilula**).

‘I carry this wood because it is light.’

7.3.2.1.2 Negative form

The same rule employed in the negation of copulatives formed from adjectives is applicable in the negation of copulatives constructed from relatives in Southern Ndebele. Consider the following examples in this regard.

(44) Cl.1: Umfazakhe **akasimhlophe**. (< **umhlophe**)
'His wife is not light (in complexion).'

Cl.2: Abantu abasebenza embusweni **abasingcono** (< **bangcono**)
kunalabo abasebenza emafemini.
'People who work for the government are not better than those who
work in factories.'

Cl.9: Indaba kamfowenu **ayisibudisi** (< **ibudisi**) sizoyirarulula.
'Your brother's issue is not difficult; we are going to solve it.'

In the situative mood the negation of copulative relatives is by means of the construction –**ngasi**- referred to earlier. Consider the following examples in this regard.

(45) Cl.1: Umntazana kaNtuli wenda **angasimhlophe** (< **amhlophe**)
'Ntuli's daughter got married although she was not light (in
complexion).'

Cl.1a: Ugogo samthola **angasingcono** (< **angcono**) ngomkhuhlani
'We found our grandmother not better (from the) fever.'

Cl.5: Mbala bathole irhembe lakhe **lingasibomvu** (< **libomvu**) ngeengazi.
'Indeed, they found his shirt not red with blood.'

7.3.2.2 Northern Ndebele

7.3.2.2.1 Positive form

Northern Ndebele copulatives formed from relative stems have both a descriptive and identificatory form. The construction of descriptive copulative relatives in this language is by prefixing the subject concord to the relative stem. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(46) Cl. 2: Malanga la batlhangana baMolomo **bagawune** (< **gawune**).

‘These days Molomo’s boys are better.’

Cl. 3: Nemunhla mulente wankhulu **ubuhlungu** (< **obuhlungu**).

‘Today my grandfather’s leg is painful.’

Cl. 4: Misebenzi yekuyakha tindlu **ibudisi** (< **budisi**).

‘The works of building houses are difficult.’

The same rule used in the indicative mood is applicable in the situative mood (i.e., by prefixing the subject concord of the situative mood to the relative stem). Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

(47) Cl. 1: Mutlhangana waGegana **amafulofulo** (< **mafulofulo**)

uhlayela bayeni mbhuti.

‘Gegana’s boy is energetic; he slaughters a goat for the visitors.’

Cl. 2: Balimi bamalanga la **bajalo** (< **jalo**) ke ubabuta gekuthengisa tixomo.

‘The farmers of today are like that when you tell them about selling beasts.’

Cl. 6: Mma uthanda kudla likhabe ke **limakhata** (< **makhata**).

‘My mother likes to eat watermelon if it is cold.’

7.3.2.2.2 Negative form

The negation of copulatives formed from relatives with a descriptive significance is by prefixing **a-** to the positive relative copulative in Northern Ndebele (Ziervogel. op. cit.: 104). Compare the following examples in this regard.

(48) Cl. 1: Mufati waNungu **gantima** (< **untima**) kunewami mufati.

‘Nungu’s wife is not as dark as my wife.’

Cl.2: Banrwana bakhe **abajalo** (< **bajalo**) ke baseTswane.

‘His children are not like that when they are in Pretoria.’

Cl.8: Tikxabula taMalajana **atibovu** (< **tibovu**) tijengetami.

‘Malajana’s shoes are not red, they are like mine.’

In the situative mood the negation of the relative copulatives with a descriptive significance is by means of the construction **-gasi-** (Ziervogel. 1959:105). Compare the following examples in this regard.

(49) Cl. 1: Itolo sikhambe munrwana lo **agasinje** (< **anje**) esibhedlela.

‘Yesterday we left this child not like this in hospital.’

Cl. 4: Ufumene mikxhwa yaMary **igasi**gawune (< **igawune**) kuri agamuteka.

‘He found Mary’s manners not good so that he can marry her.’

Cl. 5: Nemunhla iyise uthobeje je galokhwa litinyo labe **ligasi**buhlungu (< **libuhlungu**).

‘Today his father slept because his tooth was not painful.’

Cl.6: Mazambana la siwadle nalokhwa **agasi**munandi (< **amunandi**).

‘We ate these potatoes even though they were not delicious.’

7.4 Locational copulatives

Locational copulatives are copulatives that are formed from adverbs of “place”, “time” and “manner”. Poulos and Msimang (1998:385) refer to these copulatives as “locational copulatives”, which express the idea of “place” or “locatio” that the referent is in.

There is basically no difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the morphology of the copulatives formed from locative adverbs is concerned. In both these Ndebele languages, copulatives from adverbs are formed by simply prefixing the “subject concord” to the “locative adverb” as, for instance, in the following examples.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(50) Namhlanje umma **ukwamalume**. Nemuhla mma **ukamalume**.
‘Today my mother is at my uncle’s place.’

Imalakhe **ikuyise**. Ntjhelede yakhe **ikuyise**.
‘His money is with his father.’

Iinkomo zami **ziphasi kwentaba**. Tikxomo tami **tiphasi kwenraba**.
‘My cattle are at the bottom of a mountain.’

Utjwala bakhe **bukhona ekhaya**. Bayalwa bakhe **bukhona ekhaya/ nkhaya**
‘His beer is there at home.’

In instances where the locative adverb is a locative noun with an initial locative prefix **e-** a so-called “intervocalic” or “pre-locative” **-s** is inserted between the subject concord and the vowel **-e** in both languages. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(51) Umntwanakhe **usejele**. Munswana wakhe **usentorongoni**.
‘His child is in jail.’

Ababelethi bakhe basePitori. Batali bakhe baseTshwane/basePretoria.
'His parents are in Pretoria.'

Iinkomo zakababa zisesibayeni. Tikxomo tabhabha tisesibayeni.
'My father's cattle are in the kraal.'

7.5 Associative copulatives

Associative copulatives are formed by means of the connective formative **na-** expressing the idea of "ownership", "possessing" or "association with" (Poulos & Msimang, 1998: 381).

As is the case of locational copulatives there is very little difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele in as far as associative copulatives are concerned. Both languages make use of the associative formative **na-** which combines with the following noun. The only difference between these two languages in this regard is a phonological one. Whereas in Southern Ndebele the well known vowel coalescence rule of: **a-u > o**, **a-i > e** and **a-a > a** applies when the associative **na-** combines with the following noun, the so-called "substitution of **e** rule" applies in Northern Ndebele in this regard. (See also Chapter 4, par. 4.5 for the discussion of these rules.) Compare for instance the following examples in this regard.

(52) **Southern Ndebele:** Ikosi uNungu **unamadodana** amabili.

Northern Ndebele: Nkxosi Nungu **unemadodana** mambhili.

'Chief Nungu *has* two sons.'

Southern Ndebele: Namhlanje **sinekosi** yamaNdebele emhlanganweni.

Northern Ndebele: Nemuhla **sinenkxosi** yemaNdebele enkxundleni.

'Today we are (*together*) *with* the Ndebele chief at a meeting.'

Southern Ndebele: Umkakhe **unomntwana** womsana.

Northern Ndebele: Mukakhe **unemunrwana** wemulisa.

‘His wife has a baby boy.’

7.6 The adverbs

Most Nguni scholars divide the category “adverb” into three subcategories according to the meaning they convey. On this basis the three subcategories that are normally distinguished are “adverbs of place” or so-called “locative adverbs”, “adverbs of time” and finally “adverbs of manner”. When one compares each of these three categories as they occur in Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele, one finds that apart from differences in vocabulary they mainly differ in respect of the phonological features of their locative adverbs. In the following discussion, attention is therefore mainly focused on the differences between Southern Ndebele and Northern Ndebele concerning the formation of locative adverbs in these languages. In the case of the phonological differences only those phonological differences that (apparently) cannot be ascribed to the phonological environment in which they occur, or that have not been dealt with in Chapter Three where the phonological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele have been outlined, will be considered here.

7.6.1 Differences in the formation of locative adverbs in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

Locative adverbs are mainly formed from nouns and pronouns by means of derivational morphemes. In Southern Ndebele, the two main kinds of derivational morphemes used for this purpose are:

- (a) a morpheme which Wilkes (1993:172) refers to as an interrupted locative morpheme that consists of a locative prefix and a locative suffix that are exclusively used to locativize nouns, and
- (b) a number of locative prefixes that are used to locativize certain nouns as well as all pronouns, including qualificative pronouns.

Although Southern and Northern Ndebele use the same derivational morphemes to form locatives, in most instances, there are important phonological as well as a small number of morphological differences between them. In the following paragraphs these differences are highlighted.

7.6.1.1 Locativization of nouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele

7.6.1.1.1 By means of the so-called interrupted locative morpheme e...ini.

(i) Southern Ndebele

The most important strategy whereby nouns are locativized in Southern Ndebele is by means of a so-called interrupted morpheme **e...ini** of which the **e-** is prefixed to the noun in the place of the noun pre-prefix. The **...ini** is suffixed to the noun where it coalesces with the noun and also causes certain phonological changes commonly referred to as palatalisation (cf. Chapter 4, par. 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 for an outline of these rules). Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(53) umsana + ini > emsaneni	‘to a boy’
isigubhu + ini > esigujini	‘at/to a drum’
ilembe + ini > elembeni	‘to a hoe’
amanzi + ini > emanzini	‘to the water’
ikomo + ini > ekomeni	‘at/to a beast’

For some as yet unknown reason, a relatively small number of nouns when locativized do not employ the full interrupted locativisation form **e...ini** but only the initial **e-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele



- (54) **umnyango** > **emnyango** 'at the door'
ikhaya > **ekhaya** 'at home'
ipumalanga > **epumalanga** 'in the east'
ubusika > **ebusika** 'during winter'

(ii) Northern Ndebele

The interrupted locative morpheme referred to above takes on different forms in Northern Ndebele depending on the dialect in which it occurs. In the Lidwaba dialect, this morpheme occurs in all nouns as **e...ni**, that is, without the initial vowel of the suffix **...ini**, except in the case of nouns, the ending vowel of which is an **-a**. In this case, this suffix remains **...ini** and its initial **i-** coalesces with the ending vowel **-a** of the noun causing the latter to change to **e**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

- (55) **mutlhangana + ini** > **emutlhanganeni** 'to a boy'
Banrwana + ini > **banrwaneni** 'to the children'

But:

- sigubhu + ni** > **esigubhuni** 'at/to a drum'
llembe + ni > **ellembheni** 'to a hoe'
mbhuti + ni > **embhutini** 'to/at a goat'
tikxomo + ni > **etikxomoni** 'to/at the beasts'

In the Mugombhane dialect of Northern Ndebele, however, the complete form of this interrupted morpheme occurs and consequently causes palatalisation changes which are, by and large, the same as those found in the other Nguni languages and in Southern Ndebele in particular. Compare the following examples in this regard.

- (56) **Southern Ndebele: m > ny:** e.g. **umlomo** > **emlonyeni**

Mugombhane: **m > ny:** e.g: mulomo > emulonyeni. ‘to a mouth’

Southern Ndebele: **mb > nj:** e.g: ithambo > ethanjeni

Mugombhane: **mbh > nj:** e.g: lithambho > elithanjeni ‘to a bone’

Southern Ndebele: **b > tj:** e.g: ingubo > engutjeni.

Mugombhane: **b > y:** e.g: ngubo > enguyeni ‘in a blanket’

As is the case in Southern Ndebele, a relatively small number of nouns in Northern Ndebele are locativized by means of the locative prefix **e...** only. Consider the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(57)	munyago	>	emunyago	‘at the door’
	likhaya	>	ekhaya	‘at home’
	buhlalabanga	>	ebuhlalabanga	‘in the east’
	marixa	>	emarixa	‘during winter’

7.6.1.1.2 By means of the locative prefix **ku-**

A second strategy whereby nouns are locativized in the Nguni languages is by means of the locative formative **ku-** which is prefixed to nouns. There are, however, important differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as this locativization strategy is concerned. Whereas in most Nguni languages this rule applies to all nouns in Classes 1, 1a, 2 and 2a, it only applies (with a few exceptions) to nouns in the sub-classes 1a and 2a in Southern and Northern Ndebele. Note that in Southern Ndebele **ki-** is used before nouns in Class 2a. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(58)	Cl.1a: ugogo	>	kugogo	‘to grandmother’	gugu	>	kugugu
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umalume > **kumalume** 'at/to Mandla' malume > **kumalume**

Cl.2a: abobaba > **kibobaba** 'to our fathers' bobhabha > **kubobhabha**
aboMandla > **kiboMandla** 'to the Mandlas' boMandla > **kuboMandla**

In contradiction to the case in the other Nguni languages, Southern and Northern Ndebele apply both the interrupted locative morpheme **e...ini** and the locative prefix **ku-** in the locativization of their Classes 1 and 2 nouns. Compare the following examples in (59a) and (59b) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

e...ini 'to/from...'

(59a) Cl.1: umfazi	> emfazini.	'to/from a woman'	mufati	> emufatini
umuntu	> emuntwini	'to/from a person'	munru	> emunrwini
Cl 2: abantu	> ebantwini	'to/from the people'	banru	> ebanrwini

ku- 'to/from....'

(59b) Cl.1: umbazi	> kumbazi	'to/from a carpenter'	mmati	> kummati
umngani	> kumngani	'to/from a friend'	mungani	> kumungani
Cl.2: abazenda	> kubazenda	'to/from a messenger'	badzenda	> kubadzenda

7.6.1.2 Locativization of pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele

As in all the other Nguni languages, pronouns in Southern and Northern Ndebele are locativized by means of the locative formative **ku-** or **ki-**.

■ Before “absolute pronouns” both **ku-** and **ki-** are used in these languages. In Southern Ndebele, **ki-** is used before all abbreviated absolute pronouns except in the case of the absolute pronouns of the 2nd person singular and those of Classes 1 and 1a which take **ku-**. Northern Ndebele, on the other hand, prefixes **ki-** to all abbreviated absolute pronouns except for the absolute pronouns of the 2nd person singular and those of Classes 1, 3,

14 and 15 which prefix **ku-** (Ziervogel, op. cit.:114). Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(60)	2 nd p.s: kuwe	‘to you’	kuwe
	Cl.1: kuye	‘to him’	kuye
	Cl.4: kiwo	‘to it’	kiwo
	Cl.5: kilo	‘to it’	kilo
	Cl.7: kiso	‘to it’	kukho
	Cl.15: kikho	‘to it’	kukho

■ Before all “demonstrative pronouns”, **ki-** is used in Southern Ndebele and **ku-** in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(61)	Cl.1 : kiloyo	‘to that’	kuloo/kulowo
	Cl.2: kilaba(ya)	‘to those yonder’	kulaba
	Cl.3: kilo	‘to this’	kulo

■ Before “possessive pronouns”, **ku-** is used in both Ndebele languages. Since these words all begin on a vowel in Southern Ndebele **ku-** takes the variant form **k(w)-**. Compare the following examples in (62a) in this regard.

(62a) Cl.1: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngihlala **kowami** (< **k(u)-owami**) umntwana.

Northern Ndebele: Nhlala **kuwami** (**ku-wami**) munswana

‘I stay at my child [’s house].’

Cl.2: **Southern Ndebele:** Ufuna ukuya **kwabakhe/kabakhe**(<**k(u)-abakhe**)

ababelethi.

Northern Ndebele: Ufuna kuya **kubakhe** (< **ku**-bakhe) batali.

‘He wants to go to his own parents.’

Cl. 9: **Southern Ndebele:** Bahlala **kweyami/keyami** (< **k(u)**-eyami) indlu.

Northern Ndebele: Bahlala **kuyami** nndlu. (< **ku**-yami)

‘They stay at my house.’

However, according to Northern Ndebele respondents, the use of the locativized possessive pronoun pre-nominally is less common than their use post-nominally. This results in their antecedent noun being locativized and not the pronoun itself. Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

- (62b) Nhlala **emunrwaneni** wami. ‘I stay at my child’s place.’
 Ufuna kuya **ebatalini** bakhe. ‘He wants to go to his parents.’
 Bahlala **enndluni** yami. ‘They stay at my house.’

7.6.1.3 The locative prefix kwa-/ka- ‘(at/to/ from) the place of...’

The locative prefixes **kwa-** and **ka-** in these two Ndebele languages are used with all nouns in Classes 1 and 1a as well as with the demonstratives and absolute pronouns of all classes to express the concept of “(at / to / from) the place of ...”. Where Southern Ndebele only uses **kwa-** in all these instances Northern Ndebele uses both **ka-** and **kwa-**. Gauton (1995:185) confirms this and states.

‘... “the place of” is indicated in Northern Ndebele by the possessive concord **ka-** in the Lidwaba dialect, whilst the concord **kwa-** is used in the Mugombhane dialect.’ (own emphasis)

Compare the following examples in this regard.

(63) Cl.1: **Southern Ndebele:** Iveke le babuya **kwamkhwenyani** kaMapela.

Northern Ndebele: Mbeke le babuya **ka/kwamukhwenyani** waMapela.

‘This week they are coming from Mapela’s son-in-law.’

Southern Ndebele: Namhlanje siyokusebenza **kwami**.

Northern Ndebele: Nemunhla siyosebenta **ka/kwami**.

‘Today we are going to work at my place.’

Cl.1a: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngesikhethu awuhlali **kwasonmtazana**.

Northern Ndebele: Gesikhethu awuhlali **ka/kwasotala**.

‘In our custom you are not supposed to stay at your father-in-law’s.’

Southern Ndebele: Angifuni ukuhlala eduze **kwalendoda**

Northern Ndebele: Amfuni kuhlala dute **ka/kwale** ndoda.

‘I don’t want to sit next to this man.’

Although Ziervogel (1959:76) claims that both the locative prefixes **ka-** and **kwa-** occur in Northern Ndebele, speakers consulted disagree with him. According to them, the most preferred form to express “the place of...” is **ka-**. In fact, Ziervogel himself uses only **ka-** in his Northern Ndebele texts (Ziervogel, op. cit.:180-215). Compare the following Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(64) Asisabuswa **kaMashashane** ...

(Ziervogel, op. cit.:202)

‘We are no longer governed at Mashashane’s place.’

Mashashane wakhupha tikxomo tekulobola **ka**Madlala. (Ziervogel, op. cit.:203)
'Mashashane took out beasts to pay lobola at Madlala's place.'

Bare ke bagena **ka**Maxongwa kwasa. (Ziervogel, op. cit.:212)
'When they arrive at Maxongwa it dawned.'

According to Ziervogel (op. cit.:76) the locative prefixes **ka-** and **kwa-** (which he calls the "possessive concords") are derived from Classes 24 and 17, respectively. These locative prefixes are, in essence, dialectical in that the **ka-** is a possessive concord of Class 24 of the Lidwaba dialect whilst **kwa-** is the possessive concord of Class 17 of the Mugombhane (Ziervogel, op. cit.:50).

7.6.1.4 Locative prefixes found in Northern Ndebele but not in Southern Ndebele

7.6.1.4.1 The locative prefix nnga-

Northern Ndebele has a locative possessive prefix **nnga-** that expresses the concept of "besides / next to" but which does not occur in Southern Ndebele. According to Ziervogel (op. cit.:76), the origin of the locative prefix **nnga** is unclear. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(65) Bajame **nngami** (<**nnga-mina**>).

'They stood beside me.'

Sibonne nkxukxu ifele **nngandlu** (<**nnga-(i)ndlu**>).

'We saw a chicken dead next to the house.'

Southern Ndebele uses a word as the equivalent of this morpheme, namely, **qadi** or **hlanu**. The fact that these words take the possessive concord **kwa-** shows that they must be regarded as nouns in the locative Class 17. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(66) Bengijame **qadu/hlanu kwaka**Masombuka.

‘I was standing next to Masombuka.’

Usibonile sihlezi **qadu/hlanu komuthi** woburelani.

‘He saw us seated besides the apricot tree.’

Abafuni ukudlula **qadi/hlanu kwakhe**.

‘They don’t want to pass next to him.’

7.6.1.4.2 The locative prefix **n-**

Northern Ndebele has a further locative prefix **n-** that signifies locality and is only found before the velar consonant **-k** in a very limited number of locative nouns in this language. Its origin is according to Ziervogel (2959:113) unclear. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(67) Banrwana **bankhaya** (<ba-**n**-(li)khaya).

‘Children are in the house.’

Livuke njani **nkheni** (<**n**-(li)khenu)?

‘How are you keeping in your place?’

Sinkhabo (<si-**n**-(li)khabo).

‘We are at his place.’

According to Gauton (1995:190), the above Northern Ndebele examples are the relics of the prefixes of Classes 25 and 24. Compare the following examples she (Gauton. op. cit.:190) gives –



Cl. 25	Cl. 24
(68) (n - kha - ya >) nkhaya ‘inside’	
(n - kha - inu >) nkheni ‘in your place’	
(n - kha - bo >) nkhabo ‘in their place’	

This locative prefix is also found in a limited number of locative nouns in Southern Ndebele where it also occurs before the velar consonant **-k**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(69) Ngenani **nkhaya**. *(instead of: ngekhaya)*
‘Get inside the house.’

Alikani **nkhetu** izolo. *(instead of: ngekhethu)*
‘It did not rain at our place yesterday.’

Udlala nabesana **bankhabo**. *(instead of: bangekhabo)*
‘He plays with the boys from his place.’

According to Gauton (1995:224), this locative prefix is most probably derived from the locative prefix **nga-** of Class 25. Gauton (1995:224) points out that

‘Although it is not clear to which class this prefix **nga-** might belong, there seems to be little doubt that it is a locative (class) prefix which can be affixed to nouns and pronouns in the B.70 Teke group of languages in order to derive locatives.’

Compare the following examples of the Teke languages given by Gauton in this regard.

(70) (a) **Affixation to nouns**

nga nsa ‘inside’
nga yulu ‘above, on high’

(b) **Affixation to pronouns**

nga nde ‘on (to, at) him’

Gauton (op. cit.:225) further asserts that in the Nguni languages the formative **nga-** is a secondary locative morpheme which functions to convey a more indefinite locative meaning when combining with the locative or locativized nouns. It is, however, not a locative prefix that can form locative nouns or pronouns from their non-locative counterparts.

7.7. Conclusion

In this chapter the copulative construction between the Southern and Northern Ndebele has been investigated and discussed. The four different types of copulatives (i.e. identifying, descriptive, locative and associative) from nouns, pronouns, adjectives and relatives have been shown to be formed differently in the two Ndebele languages. The formation of the different types of adverbs (i.e. adverb of time, manner and place) in Southern and Northern Ndebele, as one of the most important morphological aspects in African languages, have also been illustrated and it has been demonstrated that they are distinct. In the next chapter the morphological differences between these two Ndebele languages continue.

CHAPTER 8

MORPHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN NDEBELE (*Continued*)

8.1 Introduction

The morphological differences discussed in the three previous chapters are not the only differences which Southern and Northern Ndebele exhibit. In this chapter, the remaining types of morphological differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele are discussed under the following sub-headings –

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| (i) mood | (ii) tenses |
| (iii) verbs | (iv) auxiliary verbs |
| (v) conjunctives | (vi) ideophones [sic] |

8.2 Mood

Before discussing the modal features of Southern and Northern Ndebele, it is necessary to first briefly comment on the concept of “mood” and, in particular, how this concept has been and to a certain extent still is employed in the grammars of the Nguni languages. From the earliest years in the history of African languages studies in South Africa scholars of these languages have used this concept as a means of describing and explaining the different conjugational forms of verbs. The fact that these pioneers of Bantu grammars and, in particular, those of the grammars of the Nguni languages (that is to say, isiXhosa and isiZulu), used this approach is not surprising. Most of them were missionaries and theologians from Europe (Doke, 1961:27), who were well trained in the grammar of the classical languages and were, therefore, well acquainted with traditional grammatical concepts such as gender, case, time, mood, modality, preposition and others, which they assumed applied universally to all languages. This was clearly the most important reason why these scholars produced grammars in these languages in which they described and analysed these languages in terms of grammatical concepts (such as the ones referred to above) that are typical of the classical languages but foreign to the African languages with their vastly different grammatical structures. Examples of this

traditional approach are found in the grammars of several of the earlier grammarians of the Nguni languages (cf. for instance, the grammars produced by Boyce, 1834; Appleyard, 1850; and Davis, 1872 for isiXhosa and the ones written by Colenso, 1890 and Bryant, 1905 for isiZulu).

At the beginning of the 20th century scholars of the African languages began to realize the mistake of describing the African languages in terms of grammatical concepts that were primarily developed to analyse and describe the grammatical structure of the classical European languages but that were not wholly applicable to the grammatical structure of the African languages. In his lectures of the University of Vista during the 1980s Wilkes states that in a certain way this marked a turning point in African linguistics in this country, because for the first time an attempt had been made to analyse and describe the grammar of these languages in terms of their own unique structural properties. In the same notes, Wilkes also claims that the first clear sign of this new tendency was given by the Frenchman Jacottet (1927) who, in his Southern Sotho grammar, was the first Africanist in this country to come out strongly against the employment of European linguistic terminology for the purpose of analysing and describing the grammatical structure of the African languages. This ambition to describe the African languages more and more in terms of their own unique structural properties reached its climax in 1927 with the publication of C. M. Doke's *Text Book of Zulu Grammar* which was hailed at the time as the first African grammar for African languages (Wilkes, personal communication). In this work, Doke tried to make a clear break from the traditional grammatical approach by discarding old grammatical concepts such as "case", "preposition" and "degree of comparison". Doke (1927) did, however, retain the traditional concepts of "mood" and "time" in his work. These relics of the traditional grammatical approach eventually found their way into most of the grammatical works that were subsequently published on the African languages spoken in South Africa. This was especially the case in the Nguni languages, notably isiZulu and isiXhosa.

According to Louwrens (1994), the term "mood" is defined in different ways in various authoritative works of Northern Sotho that deal with this concept. What these definitions

have in common, however, is that they all associate the concept “mood” with the verb and more particularly with the different forms which a verb may assume depending on the form and meaning it has in sentences (Louwrens, op. cit.:111).

Although Louwrens is referring to the situation in Northern Sotho in this regard, his comment applies equally to the situation in the Nguni languages where this concept is used solely in the description of the conjugation of the verb in these languages. One looks in vain in most isiZulu grammars, for instance, to find a definition of this term. One of the very few isiZulu scholars who has endeavored to define this concept as it applies to the African languages is De Clercq (1961:6) who gives a tentative definition of “mood” as:

‘...’n reeks morfologiese (werkwoord) strukture met ‘n gemeenskaplike betekenismoment na aanleiding waarvan so ‘n reeks oor bepaalde addisionele valensie(s) beslik.’

According to Engelbrecht (1994:1), little consensus exists among Nguni scholars as to which verbal forms are to be regarded as moods. For instance, whereas Doke (1935) and Van Eeden (1956) regard the “situative” as a mood, Taljaard and Bosch (1998) treat it as “form”; what Doke (1935) regards as the “contingent mood”, Van Eeden (1956) and others view as a “tense form”, and what most traditional isiZulu grammarians consider to be the “potential mood” more modern isiZulu grammarians (such as Taljaard & Bosch, 1998; and Poulos & Msimang, 1998) regard as a “verb form”.

It is not the intention of this investigation to examine and evaluate these different opinions regarding the grammatical status of the category ‘mood’. Rather, the focus is on distinctive features of what has traditionally been regarded as “mood” in Southern and Northern Ndebele. The following are the mood categories that the traditional grammarians have distinguished in these two Ndebele languages:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| (i) indicative | (ii) infinitive |
| (iii) situative | (iv) subjunctive |

(v) potential, and

(vi) imperative mood.

A comparison of these categories in Southern and Northern Ndebele reveals that there is very little difference between these two languages as far as the morphological features of mood are concerned and that it is mainly the phonological features of these that are different in the two languages. In the following paragraphs, attention is consequently more on the phonological differences than on the few morphological differences that distinguish “mood” in Southern Ndebele from those in Northern Ndebele. A comparison of the distinctive features of the indicative mood in these two languages follows.

8.2.1 Indicative mood

Verbs in this mood are negated by the so-called negative morpheme **a-** which is prefixed to the subject concord while the verbal ending **-a** changes to **-i** in the present tense. Consider the following examples in (1a) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(1a) Cl.2: Abantwabakhe **abahlali** ekhaya.

Banrwana bakhe **abahlali** ekhaya.

‘His children do not stay at home.’

Cl.3: Umsebenzi wokwakha **awulimazi**.

Musebenti wekuyakha **awulimati**.

‘Building work does not injure.’

Cl.5: **Alizwakali** ilizwi lakhe.

Alivakali livi lakhe.

‘His voice is not audible.’

[Note: The form of the subject concord of Classes 1, 1a and 6 in the negative of the indicative mood is **-ka-** in Southern Ndebele while in Northern Ndebele it is either **-a** or **-ka-**.] Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele



(1b) Cl.1: Umfazi kaMahlangu **ak**asebenzi. Mufati waMahlangu **a(k)**asebenti.
'Mahlangu's wife does not work.'

Cl.1a: UMandla **ak**alusi iinkomo zomlimi. Mandla **a(k)**alusi tixxomo
tamulimi.
'Mandla does not look after the farmer's cattle.'

Cl.6: Amadoda la **ak**alwi nathi. Madoda la **a(k)**alwi nathi.
'These men do not fight with us.'

According to Ziervogel (1959:87) many Northern Ndebele speakers use the negative subject concord **-ka-** only before monosyllabic verbal stems and its negative counterpart **-a-** elsewhere. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(1c) Cl.1: Mufati **ak**adli makxanda. 'A woman does not eat eggs.'
Cl.6: Madoda la ari **ak**ayi embijoni. 'These men say they are not going
to the meeting.'

8.2.2 Infinitive mood

This is the only mood where there is a morphological difference between Southern and Northern Ndebele. Whereas in Southern Ndebele the infinitive prefix includes a prefix **u-** as well as a 'real' class prefix **-ku** (i.e., **uku-**), in Northern Ndebele this prefix, like all the other noun class prefixes in this language, does not have a pre-prefix but only consists of a 'real' prefix (i.e., **ku-**). Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

(2a) **U**kuhlala ekhaya kuhle.

Northern Ndebele

Kuhlala ekhaya kuhle.

‘To stay at home is good.’

Kuhle **ukuthanda** ababelethi bakho.

Kuhle **kuthanda** batali bakho.

‘It is good to love your parents.’

The negation of this mood is by means of the negative morpheme **nga** in Southern Ndebele and its counterpart **ga** in Northern Ndebele while the verbal ending **–a** is substituted by the negative ending **–i**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(2b) Kumbi ukungahlali ekhaya.

Kumbhi kugahlali ekhaya.

‘It is bad not to stay at home.’

Kuhle ukungathandi imali.

Kuhle kugathandi ntjhelede.

‘It is good not to like money.’

8.2.3 Situative mood

There are no formal differences in the distinctive features of the situative mood positive in Southern and Northern Ndebele. Consider the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(3a) Cl.1: Simthole **adlala** nenjakhe.

Simfumene **adlaluka** nenja yakhe.

‘We found him playing with his dog.’

Cl.2: Badla **basela** utjwala.

Badla **basela** buyalwa.

‘They eat while drinking beer.’

The morpheme that is used to negate infinitive verbs (i.e., **(n)ga**), is also employed in the negation of the situative mood. The negative ending of verbs in this mood is the same as

those found in the indicative mood (See par. 8. 2. 1 (b) above). Compare the following examples in this regard.

(3b) Cl.1: **Southern Ndebele:** Simthole **angadlali** nenjakhe.

Northern Ndebele: Simfumene **agadaluki** nenja yakhe.

‘We found him while he was not playing with his dog.’

Cl.2: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngombana **bangahlali** kude ngizobathatha.

Northern Ndebele: Je galokhwa **bagahlali** kude ntobalanda.

‘Because they are not staying far I will fetch them.’

Cl.6: **Southern Ndebele:** Amadoda la nak**angafuni** ukusebenza singenza njani?

Northern Ndebele: Ke/na madoda la **agafuni** kusebenta sigayenta njani?

‘If these men do not want to work what can we do?’

Cl.9: **Southern Ndebele:** Ikomo le sayithenga **inganakonyana**.

Northern Ndebele: Nkxomo le sayithenga **iganalixonyana**.

‘We bought this cow without (having) a calf.’

Cl.14: **Southern Ndebele:** Ubukhosi bakaMaxashula buhlala **bunganamali**.

Northern Ndebele: Bukhosi baMaxashula buhlala **buganantjhelede**.

‘Maxashule’s chieftainship always has no money.’

[Note: Non-verbal predicates in the situative mood are, in both Southern and Northern Ndebele, also negated by means of the negative formative **-(n)ga**. In all the other main Nguni languages these predicates are negated with the negative formative **-nge**.] Compare the following isiZulu examples in this regard.

IsiZulu

(3c) Sigibele ibhasi **singenamali**.

‘We boarded the bus without any money.’

Bamthola **engekho** esikoleni. 'They found him not (being) at school.'
Kungoba **engeyona** ingane. 'It is because he is not a child.'

8.2.4 Subjunctive mood

In the subjunctive mood positive the subject concord for Classes 1 and 1a is **a-** in both languages, while the verbal ending **-a** changes to **-e**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(4a) Cl.1: **Southern Ndebele:** Vane **adle** ngaphambi kokulala.

Northern Ndebele: Nse **adle** gembhili kokuthobala.

'He usually eats before going to sleep.'

Cl.1a: **Southern Ndebele:** Unyoko ufuna ukupheka **akhambe**

Northern Ndebele: Nnyoko ufuna kupheka **akhambe**.

'Your mother wants to cook and go.'

While Southern Ndebele has two strategies of negating the subjunctive mood Northern Ndebele has one. The negation strategy common to both languages is by means of the negative formative **-nga-** in Southern Ndebele and **-ga-** in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(4b) Cl.1: **Southern Ndebele:** Uyangena kodwana **angahlali** nathi sikhulume ngemalakhe.

Northern Ndebele: Uyagena kodwa **agahlali** nathi kuri sisumayele gentjhelede yakhe.

'He comes in but does not sit down with us so that we talk about his money.'

Cl.2: **Southern Ndebele:** Ngitjele umnganami bona **angezi** (<**anga-izi**) kusasa.

Northern Ndebele: Mmutise mungani wami kuri **agezi** (<**aga-iti**) kusasa.

‘I have told my friend not to come tomorrow.’

Southern Ndebele, unlike its northern counterpart, has a second negative form for its subjunctive mood in which the terminal vowel –**a** of the negative verb does not change to –**i**. Consider the following example in this regard.

(4c) Cl.1: Umma wathi ngingaya (cf. ngingayi) kwagogo iveke ephelileko.

‘Last week my mother said I should not go to my grandmother’s place.’

8.2.5 Potential mood

Some scholars such as Van Wyk (1957) do not recognize the existence of the potential mood in languages such as Northern Sotho and isiZulu, because it also appears as part of other mood categories. Compare the following Northern Sotho examples in this regard.

Northern Sotho

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| (5) O ka tloga bjale | ‘You can / may leave now.’ |
| Ba ka se re thuše | ‘They can / may not help us.’ |
| Naa le bōna ba ka tlō ya gae. | ‘They will also be permitted to go home.’ (Van Wyk, 1957:163) |

According to Van Wyk (op. cit.:175), the potential mood can best be regarded as an “implication”.

This present discussion follows the views held by the traditional Nguni grammarians by treating the potential as a mood. In both Ndebele languages, the positive form of the potential mood is the same, that is, it is formed by means of the formative –(n)**ga**- (i.e. –**nga**- in Southern Ndebele and –**ga**- in Northern Ndebele). Compare the following examples in this regard.



Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(6a) Nabafunako **bangakhamba**. Ke/na bafuna **bagakhambha**.

‘If they want they can go.’

Singawenza namhlanje umsebenzi lo. **Sigawenta** nemunhla musebenti lo.

‘We can do this job today.’

In the negation of the potential mood, the two Ndebele languages differ. In Southern Ndebele the potential mood is negated by means of the negative auxiliary verb **(a)ngekhe** with the main verb ending **-a** changing to **-e**. In Northern Ndebele verbs in this mood are negated by means of the construction **-gasi-** with the main verb ending **-a** changing to **-e**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(6b) **Angekhe** ukhambhe namhlanje. **Ugasikhambhe** nemunhla.

‘You cannot go today.’

Angekhe ngimthathe umfazi wesibili. **Ngasimuteke** mufati webumbhili.

‘I cannot marry a second wife.’

According to Ziervogel (1959:93), the origin of the negative construction **-gasi-** in Northern Ndebele is derived from the Northern Sotho potential negative construction form **ka se**, as can be seen in the following examples –

Northern Sotho

(6c) **Nka se** sepele le wena. ‘I cannot go with you.’

Ba **ka se** dule fase.

‘They cannot sit down.’

Wilkes (2007:172) differs in this regard in that he claims that the Northern Ndebele negative form –**gasi-** could also be derived from the TshiVenda potential negative form **nga si**. According to Poulos (1990:275), the negative form of the TshiVenda potential mood has an additional prefix **si-** which normally occurs after the prefix **nga-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

TshiVenda

(6d) I **nga si** ne madekwana.

‘It might not rain tonight.’

A **nga si** gude vhege e daho.

‘He might not study next week.’

8.2.6 Imperative mood

There is no difference to speak of between Southern and Northern Ndebele as far as the imperative mood positive and negative is concerned. Compare the following examples in (7a)-(7c) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(i) Monosyllabic verb stems

	Singular	Plural		Singular	Plural
(7a)	Yidla! / Idla!	Yidlani!	‘Eat!’	Idla!	Idlani!

(ii) Polysyllabic verb stems

(7b)	Vuka!	Vukani!	‘Wake up!’	Vuka!	Vukani!
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+ object concord

(7c)	Lidle	Lidleni!	‘Eat it!’	Lidle!	Lidleni!
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According to Van Eeden (1956:241), the terminative vowel –e of the imperative mood (cf. examples in (7c) above) is the same as that of the subjunctive mood (See par. 8.2.4 above).

The negation strategy of the imperative mood in both Ndebele languages is the same as that of the subjunctive mood (cf. par. 8.2.4 above), which is by means of **(n)ga**, (i.e., **∠nga**-in Southern Ndebele and **–ga**-in Northern Ndebele). Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(7d) Ungadli	‘Do not eat !’	Ugadli!
Ningafi	‘Do not die !’	Ligafi!
Ungayi	‘Do not go!’	Ugayi!

Southern Ndebele has a second negative strategy for its imperative verbs, that is, of the auxiliary verb **mus(a)** (in the singular) and **musani** (in the plural) which is followed by an infinitive verb. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele			Northern Ndebele	
Singular			Plural	
(7e) Musa ukudla/ musukudla!	‘Do not eat!’	Musani ukutlola!	‘Do not write!’	
Musa ukuya/ musukuya!	‘Do not go!’	Musani ukulala!	‘Do not sleep!’	
Musa ukulila/ musukulila!	‘Do not cry!’	Musani ukudlala!	‘Do not play!’	

8.3 Tenses

Morphologically, there are no remarkable differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele in as far as the positive forms of the verbs in the present, perfect, future and past tenses of the indicative and other mood forms are concerned. The few differences that do

occur, here, between these two Ndebele languages mainly concern the negative form of these tenses. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

8.3.1 Negative of the future tense in the indicative mood

The future tense in Southern Ndebele is negated by means of a negative vowel **a-** while the verb retains the positive terminative vowel **-a**. In Northern Ndebele this tense is negated by **-gasi-** or the negative vowel **a-**. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele
(8) Neg: Asizokudla nje.	‘We are not going to eat now’	Sigasitodla/Asitodla.
Pos: Sizokudla nje.	‘We are going to eat now’	Sitodla njenje.
Neg: Abazokukhuluma.	‘They are not going to talk.’	Bagasitosumayela/ abatosumayela
Pos: Bazokukhuluma.	‘They are going to talk.’	Batosumayela.
Neg: Alizokuna namhlanje.	‘It is not going to rain today.’	Ligasitonetha /Alitonetha nemunhla.
Pos: Lizokuna namhlanje.	‘It is going to rain today.’	Litonetha nemunhla.

8.3.2 Negative of the perfect tense in the indicative mood

The perfect tense of the indicative mood in Southern Ndebele is negated by means of either

- (i) the negative indicative formative **a-** plus the perfect negative morpheme **-ka** (which is prefixed to the verbal stem) or
- (ii) by means of the (negative) auxiliary verb **(a)zange** or **(a)khange**.

In case of the former strategy the vowel ending **-a** changes to **-i** while in the case of the latter it changes to **-e**. In Northern Ndebele, however, this tense form is negated by means of the first strategy only (i.e. the negative indicative formative **a-** plus the perfect negative morpheme **-ka** which is prefixed to the verbal stem). Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(9a) Abafazi bakhe **abakafiki**.

Bafati bakhe **abakafiki**.

‘His wives have not arrived.’

Asikababoni ukuthi bakuphi.

Asikababoni kuri bakuphi.

‘We have not seen them where they are.’

Izolo **(a)zange/(a)khange** line (izulu)

Itolo **alikani** (litulu)

‘Yesterday it did not rain (the rain).’

Namhlanje **(a)zange/(a)khange** siye emsebenzini. Nemunhla **asikayi** muberengoni.

‘Today we did not go to work.’

The perfect negative morpheme **-ka-** referred to above is unknown in isiZulu but occurs in siSwati (Taljaard et al., 1991:55) where its use is obligatory in the negation of the perfect tense. Compare the following examples in this regard.

IsiSwati

(9b) Sipho ak**akalali** (< ulele) namuhla.

‘Sipho did not sleep today.’

Asikahambi (<sihambe) nebantfwana bakhe. ‘We did not go with his children.’

Ab**akagibeli** (< bagibele) emahhashi.

‘They did not ride the horses.’

8.3.3 Negative of the past tense in the indicative mood

While Southern Ndebele negates the past tense of the indicative mood by means of **(a)zange** which precedes the verb (cf. also the perfect tense in par. 8.3.2 above), this tense is negated by a negative construction **agabe khe** in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(10) Azange baya esikolweni. ‘They never went to school.’	Agabe khe baya sikoloni
Abomma azange basitjela. ‘Our mothers never told us.’	Bomma agabe khe basibuta.
UGegana azange abusa uLidwaba. ‘Gegana did not rule Lidwaba.’	Gegana agabe khe abuse Lidwaba.

8.4 Verbs

The differences in the verbal stems between Southern and Northern Ndebele are analysed and discussed under the following four sub-headings –

- (i) verbal stems that have the same meaning but completely or slightly different form
- (ii) verbal stems that have the same form but with different meanings
- (iii) vowel verb stems
- (iv) verb stems expressing diminutivized actions in Southern and Northern Ndebele.

8.4.1 Verbal stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele that have the same meaning but with a completely or slightly different form

Wilkes (1997:161) points out that

‘The non-existence of dictionaries and or of any other written material for that matter in Northern Ndebele... makes it difficult to get a clear idea of what the content of the lexicon of this Nguni language really looks like.’

An analysis of Ziervogel’s Northern Ndebele texts (Ziervogel, 1959:179-215) shows that Northern Ndebele has a fairly large number of verbal stems that have the same meaning as in Southern Ndebele but with either a “completely” or “slightly” different form. Compare the following examples in (11a) and (11b) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

Stems which are completely different in form

(11a)	-zombezeza	-songela	‘surround /circle’
	-tjela	-buta	‘tell/inform’
	-vuma	-bina	‘sing’
	-thatha	-teka	‘take/marry’
	-bawa	-khombela	‘request/ask’
	-emba	-gaja	‘dig’
	-dala	-hlola	‘create’
	-beletha	-tala	‘give birth’
	-raga	-khapha/-kxura	‘drive (cattle)’
	-busisa	-shixufaja	‘bless’
	-qala	-bheka	‘look’
	-tlola	-gwala	‘write’
	-nqopha/-qonda	-bheka	‘(move) towards’
	-hlukana	-kghawuka	‘separate’
	-limala	-khubala	‘getinjured/be hurt’
	-tjho	-ri	‘say’

Stems which are slightly different in form

(11b)	-khetha	-kghetha	‘choose’
	-khamba	-khambha	‘go’
	-phakulula	-phakuluta	‘dish out (food)’
	-gijima	-gidima	‘run’
	-phaphama	-phakxhama	‘wake up’
	-qina	-kxina	‘be firm/be strong’
	-thi	-ri	‘say’
	-sahlela	-fahlela	‘attack’
	-biza	-bita	‘call’

8.4.2 Verbal stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele that have the same form but different meanings

There are a number of verbal stems in Southern and Northern Ndebele that are similar in form but different in meanings. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Table 8.1: Similar Southern and Northern Ndebele verbal forms with different meanings

Verbal stem	Southern Ndebele (meaning)	Northern Ndebele (meaning)
-singatha	hold (someone) in arms	carry (something) under the arm
-(a)lama	come next in (the order of) birth	the brood
-yatha	faint / be unconscious	carry (something) on a shoulder
-rhuga	tease (someone)/provoke	propose love
-phumelela	be successful	be sufficient
-thusa	frighten /scare	swear at
-phetha	stitch up the end /bottom of a pair of trousers or any material	decide
-gwala	paint the Ndebele traditional patterns	write
-khapha	avoid someone purposely	drive cattle

8.4.3 Vowel verb stems

As alluded to in Chapter 4, par. 4.8, contrary to the case in the other Nguni languages including Southern Ndebele, there are very few vowel verb stems in Northern Ndebele (Ziervogel, 1959:79). The few Northern Ndebele vowel verb stems occur with a semi-vowel **y** or **w**, while in Southern Ndebele these stems are all without a semi-vowel. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele	
Vowel verb stems		Semi-vowel verb stems	
(12a)	-akha	‘build’	-yakha
	-enza	‘do/make’	-yenta
	-ongeza	‘add to’	-wongeta
	-osa	‘roast’	-wosa

Compare the examples of their usage in this regard.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele
(12b) Baphume beqela kimi ekoloyini.	Baphume bayenkxela kimi enkoloyini.
‘They came out and jumped over to me in the car.’	

Sibathole badla inyama **yokosiwa**. Sibafumene bagoma nnyama **yekuwosiwa**.
‘We found them eating roasted meat.’

8.4.4 Verbal stems expressing diminutive actions in Southern and Northern Ndebele

In Southern and Northern Ndebele verbal stems expressing diminutive action are formed in two ways. In the case of monosyllabic verbal stems a **-yi-** is inserted between such stems in Southern Ndebele while in Northern Ndebele these stems are formed by adding

the suffix **-nyana** to the stem (Ziervogel. 1959:84). Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele	
(13)	-dla > -dlayidla	-dlanyana	‘eat a little bit’
	-na > -nayina	-nanyana	‘rain a little bit’
	-lwa > -lwayilwa	-lwanyana.	‘fight a little bit’
	-pha > -phayipha	-phanyana	‘give a little bit’

In the expression of diminutive actions by multisyllabic stems, the differences occur between Southern and Northern Ndebele in that while both languages repeat the first two syllables of the verbal stem, according to Ziervogel (op. cit.: 84) Northern Ndebele may also suffix **-nyana** as an alternative strategy. Compare the following examples in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele	
(14)	-hlalahlala	-hlalahlala or -hlalanyana	‘stay a little bit’
	-khambakhamba	-khambhakhambha or khambhanyana	‘walk a little bit.’

(Ziervogel, op. cit.: 84)

8.4.5 Latent vowel verb stems

Contrary to the case in the other Nguni languages (such as isiZulu) which have a number of latent vowel verb stems, Southern Ndebele has only two such verb stems (i.e., **-(i)za** and **-(i)zwa**) and Northern Ndebele has none. Compare the following examples in this regard.

(15) **Southern Ndebele:** Nabafuna ukukubulala **abeze** (<**aba-iza**) bakubulale sikhona.

Northern Ndebele: Ke bafuna kukubulala **abate** (<**aba-ta**) bakubulale

sikhona.

‘If they want to kill you let them come and kill you in our presence.’

Southern Ndebele: UMashashane **w_{ez}wa** (< **wa-izwa**) bona uSikxhobhejana uzile...

Northern Ndebele: Mashashane **wava** (< **wa-va**) kuri Sikxhobhejana utile...
‘Mashashane heard that Sikxhobhejana had come...’

The latent vowel verb stem **-(i)mba** ‘dig’ that occurs in other Nguni languages (such as isiZulu) occurs as **-emba** in Southern Ndebele and **-gaja** in Northern Ndebele.

8.5 The auxiliary verbs

Ritchards and Schmidt (2002:44) define an auxiliary verb (or auxiliary) as

‘a verb which is used with another verb in a sentence and which shows grammatical functions such as aspect, voice, mood, tense, and person.’

Nguni linguists such as Ziervogel (1985), Taljaard (1991), Poulos and Msimang (1998), and others, classify (or group) auxiliary verbs according to the form of their complements and derivation. According to Taljaard (1991:154), for instance, the complementary verb, as it cannot stand on its own in a sentence, is usually in a specific mood or form which is determined by the meaning, mood or form of the auxiliary verb, notably the participial, the consecutive and the infinitive. In regard to the derivation of the auxiliary verbs, a distinction between derived and non-derived auxiliary verbs is made. Derived auxiliary verbs are the auxiliary verbs formed by substituting the positive terminative vowel **-a** of the verbal stem by **-e** (e.g., **-hlala** ‘sit, stay’ > **-hlale** ‘always, continuously’) while non-derived auxiliary verbs are auxiliary verbs that are not derived from another word category.

In the following paragraphs the distinction between the two Ndebele languages in as far as their auxiliary verbs are concerned is discussed under the following sub-headings –

- (i) The derived and non-derived auxiliary verb stems with the same meaning in Southern and Northern Ndebele
- (ii) Auxiliary verb stems that occur in Northern Ndebele but with no equivalents in Southern Ndebele.

8.5.1 The derived and non-derived auxiliary verb stems with the same meaning in Southern and Northern Ndebele

The two Ndebele languages demonstrate no differences in as far as the morphological forms of their auxiliary verbs are concerned except a few that are phonologically completely or partially different. Compare the following list of the derived and non-derived auxiliary verbs in (16a) and (17a), respectively, in this regard.

8.5.1.1 Derived auxiliary verbs

Southern Ndebele		Northern Ndebele	
(16a) -sale	‘rather, henceforth, thereafter, then’	-sale	(< -sala ‘remain’)
-phele	‘just, sometimes, simply’	-phele	(< -phela ‘finish, end’)
-buya	‘again’	-buya	(< -buya ‘come back, return’)
-funeke	‘must’	-funeke	(< -funa ‘want’)
-fike	‘thereafter’	-fike	(< -fika ‘arrive’)
-ze	‘eventually, in order, so that, until’	-te	(< -za/-ta ‘come’)
-suke	‘after’	-suke	(< -suka ‘leave, go away’)
-thuke	‘suddenly’	-thuke	(< -thuka ‘take fright’)



-vele 'of course, just' (<-**vela** 'appear, emerge')

Compare their usage below in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(16b) Kwasala yena ayedwa **basale** bambulala. Kwasala yena anedwa **basale** bammulala.

'He remained alone and they then killed him.'

Siphele sidlule siye ePolokwane.

Sinophele sidlule siye ePolokwane.

'We sometimes pass along to Polokwane.'

Sibuye sayikhuluma lendaba ekosini.

Sibuye saisumayela le ndaba enkxosini.

'We again discussed this matter at the chief's place.'

[Note: No equivalent for the Southern Ndebele auxiliary verb stem '**vele**' could be found in Northern Ndebele.]

8.5.1.2 Non-derived auxiliary verbs

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(17a) vane, hle

hlwe

'no more, usually, commonly (habitual action).'

gade

kade

'once, have been'

sele

sele, biyo

'already, yet'

je

jwa

'meanwhile, so long'

vama/vame

swe, se

'usually, commonly'

pheze	phase, phoswe, phoso	‘almost, nearly’
khe	khe	‘ever, once, sometimes’
-be	-be	‘be’
-se	-se	‘still’
nonde	phele, nojwa	‘keep on, sometimes’
mele, fuze	fanele	‘must, has to, suppose to, out to’
nele	ri	‘just as’
(nga)mane	swe	‘rather ...’
sanda	sanda	‘just have’
akhe	nkhe	‘please’ (with hortative function)

Compare their usage below in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(17b) Ziphi iinyoni **abavane/abahle** bazibulala? Tiphi tinyonywana **leti bahlwe** batibulala?

‘Where are the birds which they usually kill.’

Bathola **sele** kujame amanzi koke.

Bafumana **kusele/kubiyo** kujame manti kohle.

‘They found water already standing everywhere.’

Ije usebenza la ngiyabuya.

Ujwe uberenga la ntabuya

‘Meanwhile work here, I shall come back.’



8.5.2 Auxiliary verbs that occur in Northern Ndebele but with no equivalents in Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele has a small number of non-derived auxiliary verb stems that are unique in that they do not have equivalents in Southern Ndebele. Compare the following list in this regard.

	Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele	
(18a)	swa	‘what else’
	tjhwe/tjhe	‘hurry’
	nja	‘continually’
	nambha	‘furthermore, besides’
	hleti	‘keep on, continue’

Also compare their usage in this regard.

(18b) **Ntjhwe/Ntjhe** ndakxeja kusumayela ndakhambha.
‘I quickly finished talking and left.’

Bahlala emiragiyeni **banonja** bayiselwa timbuphu.
‘They lived at the cattle posts and were continually brought meal.’

Kwaswa kwayentwa njani?
‘What else was done.’

According to Ziervogel (1959: 151), the Northern Ndebele auxiliary verb stem **nambha** is derived from Northern Sotho ‘**napa**’.

8.6 The conjunctives in Southern and Northern Ndebele

The main function of conjunctives is to join or introduce sentences. In the Nguni languages, a distinction is made between primitive and derived conjunctives. According to linguists such as Doke (1927:271) and Van Eeden (1956:495), primitive conjunctives are conjunctives that are not derived from any other word category (cf. the isiZulu conjunctive **futhi** ‘again’ and **kanti** ‘after all/whereas’) while derived conjunctives are those that have been derived from other word categories (cf. the Southern Ndebele conjunctive **kodwa(na)** ‘but’ (< the exclusive quantitative pronoun **kodwa** ‘alone’) and **bona** ‘that / so that’ (< the verbal stem **bona** ‘see’). Most conjunctives in Southern Ndebele have counterparts in Northern Ndebele that are different in form but identical in meaning. Compare the following Southern and Northern Ndebele conjunctives in (19a) in this regard.

Southern Ndebele	Northern Ndebele	
(19a) bona/bonyana/bana/ukuthi	kuri	‘that/so that/whether’
ngomba(na)/ngoban(ya)na	gekuri/je galokhwa	‘because’
ngalokho	je/ke	‘therefore/consequently’
na/lokha	ke/na/lokhwa	‘when/while/if/as’
kodwa(na)	kodwa	‘but’
kanti	xanti	‘whereas/after all’
ukuze	kuba	‘in order to/(so) that’
(be)kuze/be(kube)	kufikela	‘until’
nanya(na)/namkha(na)/	nanya/nalokhwa	‘although/or/even if’
namtjhana/nalokha(na)/namgadi		
nobana		
noma(na)/nofa(na)/namkha(na)	kuba	‘or’
noba(na)		
nokho/(be)godu	nalokhwa	‘however/again/moreover /nevertheless’

Compare the usage of some of the above conjunctives in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(19b) Uyakwazi ukusebenza **kodwa(na)** livila. Uyawati kuberenga **kodwa** ilivila.

‘He can work but he is a sluggard.’

Bafuna **bona** sibuye kusasa.

Bafuna **kuri** sibuye kusasa.

‘They want that we must come back tomorrow.’

Bazokuhlala **(be)kuze/ kube** kuphele iveke. Batohlala **kufikela** kuphele mbege.

‘They are going to stay with you until the end of the week.’

Ikabi le inonile **nanyana** iyindala.

Nkxabi le inonne **nalokhwa** iyendala.

‘This ox is fat although [it] is old.’

Na/lokha bafuna iinkomo bangazithenga.

Ke/na/lokhwa bafuna tikxomo

bagatithenga.

‘When they want the cattle they can buy them.’

According to Ziervogel (1959:166), the Northern Ndebele conjunctive **ke** is derived from the Northern Sotho conjunctive **gê** ‘if/when’. Compare the following Northern Sotho and Northern Ndebele examples in this regard.

Northern Sotho

Northern Ndebele

(20) Ke tla mmotša **gê** ke boa.

Ntammutisa **ke** mbuya.

‘I will tell him when I come back.’

The Southern Ndebele conjunctive **na** ‘when/if’ (cf. **na/lokha** above), which also occurs in siSwati (Lubisi, 1996:94), always precedes the predicate and is written jointly with the predicate it precedes. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Conjunctive: na

(21) Ungokubuya ekupheleni kwenyanga **nawusebenza** (< **na-usebenza**) kude nekhaya.

‘You should come at the end of the month when you work far from home.’

Nanilapho (< **na-nilapho**) angekhe nisabuya.

‘If/when you are there you will not come back.’

The conjunctive **lokha** ‘when’, by contrast, is:

- (a) written disjunctively with the word it precedes, and
- (b) commonly used together with the conjunctive **na** in discourse.

Compare the following examples in (22a) and (22b) in this regard.

(22a) Liqiniso bona **lokha umuntu** angafuni ukukhuluma nawe ngcono uthule.

‘It is true that when a person does not want to talk to you [you had] better keep quite.’

Ngimbone **lokha** sihlezi nawe sidla.

‘I saw him when we were seated with you eating.’

(22b) **Lokha nabasela** utjwala abafuni ukuphazanyiswa.

‘*When when* they drink beer they do not want to be disturbed.’

‘*When* they drink beer they do not want to be disturbed.’

Sikhambe **lokha nawujame** lapha.

‘We came *when when* you were standing there.’

‘We came when you were standing there.’

Note that syntactically when the conjunctive **lokha** has been used together with the conjunctive **na** in a sentence, it always precedes the latter (cf. examples in (22b) above).

8.7 The ideophones in Southern and Northern Ndebele

An *ideophone* is a part of speech that is typical of the Bantu languages but has no equivalent in English except for onomatopoeic words like ‘splash’, ‘his’ (Ziervogel et al., 1985:116), Taljaard et al., (1991:158) and Poulos and Msimang (1998:413)). Poulos and Msimang (op. cit.:414) point out that

‘Ideophones are highly expressive words- they are ‘colourful’ expressions ...in that they are associated with some form of emotion when they are uttered- and it is these additional characteristics of the ideophone which makes it rather difficult to directly translate them into other languages.’

Linguists of the African languages give different definitions of ideophones. Many of these definitions are based on the semantic and morphological features of these words. Semantically, Doke (1927:255), for instance, defines an ‘ideophone’ as a word, often onomatopoeic, which describes a predicate in respect of manner, colour, sound or action. Poulos and Msimang (1998:413) argue that although the onomatopoeic nature of an ideophone is undeniable, there are ideophones that have nothing to do with imitative sound in languages. According to these scholars, ideophones represent an idea that stretches beyond the sense of hearing (i.e., sound). Compare the following isiZulu examples in this regard.

IsiZulu

- (23) Amanzi abomvu **klubhu**. ‘The water is as red as blood.’
Kunephunga elide lithi **khafu** ngakithi. ‘There is a terrible smell which is

frequently blown in our direction.’
(Poulos & Msimang, 1998:413)

The ideophones **klubhu** and **khafu** in the examples in (23) above have nothing to do with the sound but with *redness* and *badness of smell*, respectively. Weakley (1977:66) propounds that ideophones are morphologically simple, that is, they are monomorphemic words which, unlike other word categories, cannot be divided into smaller units or morphemes. In support of Weakley, Wilkes (1992:53) emphasizes that ideophones present a marked contrast with the rest of the grammar in that there is a complete absence of inflection for tense, etc., and morphologically they are not as complex as other words in the language. The only morphological features that ideophones in the African languages have are, according to Weakley (1977:13), the sub-morphemic (in the current sense) units, namely syllables and recurring partials.

Nguni linguists such as Doke (1935:86), Van Eeden (1956:86) and Jordan (1965), however, maintain that the ideophones in the Southern Bantu languages may be used as interjectional descriptives, while other scholars, such as Weakly (1977) for instance, emphasize the predicative nature of ideophones in discourse. Weakly (op. cit.: 37) states that

‘Probably the most convincing evidence of the verbal nature of the ideophone is where an ideophone has actually replaced the verb.’

Compare the following isiXhosa examples where the ideophone **shwaqa** and **dyulukumpu** represent the verbs **waphuka** ‘it broke’ and **wangena** ‘he entered’, respectively.

IsiXhosa

(24) UDumisani uthe eme njalo **shwaqa** umlenze wakhe.

‘As Dumisani stood like that his leg snapped and broke.’

Sithe siyabona, **dyulukumpu** inkwenkwe emanzini.

‘When we looked the boy was plunging into the water.’ (Weakley, 1977:37)

In the Nguni languages, ideophones often follow the verb **ukuthi** which in these circumstances according to Doke (1927:255), seems to mean ‘to express’, ‘to act’, ‘to demonstrate’, to manifest’, rather than ‘to say’ ‘to consider’ as can be seen in the following examples.

Southern Ndebele

(25) **(To act):** Uthanda ukuthi **nya** nakonakeleko.

‘He likes to disappear when things are bad.’

(To express): Sithanda ukuthi **khwintikhwinti** ngesiNgisi.

‘We like to speak English.’

(To manifest): Lembewu seyithanda ukuthi **siphu**.

‘This seed begins to germinate.’

In the following paragraphs the differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele as regards the category ‘ideophone’ are discussed under the ideophones that are

- (i) the same in form but with different meaning.
- (ii) different in form but with the same meaning, and
- (iii) ideophones that occur in the one language but not in the other.

8.7.1 Ideophones that are the same in form but with different meaning

There are a fair number of ideophones in Southern and Northern Ndebele that are identical in form but different in meaning. Compare the following examples in this regard.



Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(26) **(n)tsi** ‘stillness in motion’

e.g. Iinkoloyi zajama **(n)tsi** endleleni.

‘Cars stopped still on the road.’

tsi ‘tightness of a knot’

Mbophe lifindo **tsi**.

‘We have tied a knot firm.’

bhidli ‘falling down of a wall/
ripening of fruits/meat’

e.g. Sidle inyama evuthwe **bhidli**.

‘We ate meat that is well cooked.’

bhidli ‘melting (e.g. of fat)

Mafutha ahleti ellangeni ari **bhidli**.

‘The fats have lain in the sun and melted.’

tjhelele ‘to quickly go somewhere
with an aim of coming back.’

e.g. Sisathi **tjhelele** lapha siyabuya.

‘We are quickly going there, we
will come back.’

tjhelele ‘slip (e.g. on the banana)’

Watjhelela wari **tjhelele** edakeni.

‘He slipped in the mud.’

tlerr ‘tearing off of cloth’

e.g. Inja yambamba ngebhaji yathi **tlerr**.

‘The dog caught him by the jacket
and tore it off.’

tlerr ‘redness (e.g. of blood)’

Tingati tembhuti le tibovu **tlerr**.

‘The blood of this goat is (blood) red.’

wubu ‘take suddenly/snatch’

e.g. Basithe **wubu** isikhwama sakhe.

‘They snatched his bag.’

wubu ‘throw down something’

Uwuthe **wubu** mugodla wawuphosa
phasi.

‘He threw the bag down on the ground.’

nke ‘brightness of a moon/clearness
of the sky after rain’

nke ‘clanging of metal’



e.g. Ngemva kokuna lithe **nke** Mve nsimbhi iri **nke nke**.

‘After it rained the sky became clear.’ ‘I heard the bell ringing.’

8.7.2 Ideophones that are different in form but with the same meaning

Most Southern and Northern Ndebele ideophones differ in form but have the same meaning. Compare the following examples in this regard.

Southern Ndebele

Northern Ndebele

(27) **twa**

‘whitness in colour’

pya

e.g. Bambethe amarogo amhlophe **twa**.

Bambethe marogo ahlophe **pya**.

‘They are wearing pure white dresses.’

petle

‘scatter’

sa

e.g. Iimbuzi zakhe zithe **petle** entabeni.

Timbhuti takhe tire **sa** enrabeni.

‘His goats are scattered all over the mountain.’

meke ‘lightning/flickering of light’

phati

e.g. Sabona **meke** lasele lifikile izulu.

Sabona **phati** yasele ifikile mvula.

‘We just saw the lightning and it was suddenly raining.’

rabhalala ‘lying down on your belly’ **jabha**

e.g. Bambetha wathi **rabhalala** phasi.

Bamubetha wari **jabha** phasi.

‘They hit him and he lay down on his stomach.’

rwe ‘stand up right’

dzidalala

e.g. Amadoda ajama athi **rwe** phambi

Madoda ajama ari **dzidalala** embhili

kwakamulakazana.

ketingweji.

‘Men stood up right in front of the bridegroom.’

vumbu ‘appear /emerge suddenly’ **thushalala**

e.g. Bathe nabathi **vumbu** ngesango Bathe ke bari **thushalala** gelisango
abafazi bagida. bafati badlala.

‘When they suddenly appeared at the courtyard women started dancing.’

8.7.3 Ideophones that occur in the one language but not in the other.

Southern Ndebele seems to have many more ideophones than its northern counterpart. One of the differences observed between Southern and Northern Ndebele in as far as their ideophones are concerned is that Southern Ndebele has a number of ideophones that do not have equivalents in Northern Ndebele. Compare the following examples of ideophones in (28a) that occur in Southern Ndebele but that do not have equivalents in Northern Ndebele.

Southern Ndebele

(28a) **saka** ‘ideophone of signifying good health’

e.g. Besivakatjhele ugogo samthola aphile **saka**.

‘We had visited our grandmother and found her very healthy.’

do ‘ideophone signifying emptiness/nothingness’

e.g. Abafundi bezile esikolweni kodwana bafumana **do** abotitjhere.

‘The learners did come to school but no teachers.’

phara ‘ideophone of dropping/falling down (e.g. snake).’

e.g. **Phara** inyoka phambi kwethu sabaleka.

‘The snake fell in front of us and we ran away.’

rhamu ‘ideophone of taking a sip/bit of tea/beer.’

e.g. Akhe sithi **rhamu** itiyе msinya sikhambeni.

‘Let us quickly have a bit/sip of tea and go.’

It is of interest that Northern Ndebele also has a small number of ideophones that do not have equivalents in Southern Ndebele. Compare the following examples in (28b) in this regard.

Northern Ndebele

(28b) **hha** ‘ideophone of an open mouth’

e.g. Ukhamisile mulomo uri **hha!** ‘His mouth is wide open.’

bhidli ‘melting (of fat)

e.g. Mafutha ahleti ellangeni ari **bhidli**. ‘The fats have lain in the sun and melted.’

matha ‘stick fast onto something.’

e.g. Mbampiri yanamthela yari **matha** esigodoni.
‘The paper stuck fast on a pole.’

tonono ‘galloping/running (e.g. horse)’

e.g. Le mpere igidima iri **tonono**.
‘This horse gallops.’

wabalala ‘jump out’

e.g. Waphuma endluni wari **wabalala**.
‘He suddenly jumped out of the house.’

8.8 Conclusion

The morphological structure of moods, tenses, verbs, auxiliary verbs, conjunctives and ideophones have been the focus in this chapter. The investigation and discussions on moods in Southern and Northern Ndebele have revealed that there is little difference between these two languages as far as the morphological features of mood are concerned. In the indicative mood it is only the phonological feature that shows the difference

between the two Ndebele languages while the morphological differences only occur in the infinitive mood. Morphological no differences occur in regard to the positive forms of the different tenses (i.e. present, perfect, future and past) of verbs. The only differences shown in verbal tenses are in the negative form of these tenses. Under verbal stems the two Ndebele languages have been shown to have verbal stems that have the same meaning, but are completely different in form and there are verbs with the same form but different meanings. The vowel verb stems and the expression of diminutivized actions in Southern and Northern Ndebele have also shown some distinctiveness. There are also few differences between Southern and Northern Ndebele languages with regard to the derived and non-derived auxiliary verbs. Northern Ndebele has further shown to have adverbs that do not occur in its southern counterpart. Most conjunctives examined in the two languages have been shown to be different in form, but identical in meaning. Ideophones that occur in the two Ndebele languages have also been demonstrated to be different in form but with the same meaning, whereas some have the same form but different meanings. The investigation has further illustrated that the two Ndebele languages have ideophones that they do not share. In the next chapter the Spelling rules of Southern and Northern Ndebele are compared and discussed.