





Lexical Elements of Some IsiZulu School Names

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Introduction

This chapter examines the combination of lexical elements of some school names found in the Gauteng province. It looks closely at how some school names are formed using a combination of parts of speech such as nouns and verbs. The process of forming words using a combination of two or more other words is also known as compounding. Rundell (2007: 283) affirms that in linguistic terms, a compound is a word which is made up of a combination of two or more words. Fowler et al., (1984: 150) and Smith and O'Loughlin (1946: 228) also state that a compound is a word formed by a combination of other words. From these insights, it is evident that a compound word can be viewed as a single word that is formed by using two or more words. This can be in the form of combining two nouns, two verbs, or a verb and a noun. In some cases, this can also involve combining a verb and a pronoun.

For some isiZulu grammarians, who follow the Dokean notion of compounding (Madondo, 2001: 111), compounding of isiZulu words results in the formation of a word which has

features of the words that form it This implies that the words which are combined to form another word have semantic relations. For instance, the compound word 'uchibidolo' is made up of two words 'uchibi' and 'udolo'. According to Mbatha (2006: 143), the noun 'uchibi' can be defined as "abantu noma izinkomo eziningi ndawonye" [many people or cattle together], whereas the term 'udolo' refers to "inqwaba yabantu noma umhlambi omkhulu wezinkomo" [a large number of people or a large herd of cattle] (Mbatha, 2006: 229). Thus, the afore words 'uchibi' and 'udolo' exhibit semantic relatedness as they both bare a common meaning of a large number of people or herd of cattle.

There are also instances where a compounded word does not consist of or resemble any characteristics of the individual words combined. An example of the afore-mentioned view is evident in the noun 'unhliziyonkulu'. According to Mbatha (2006: 820), the noun 'unhliziyonkulu' refers to "uhlobo lwesihlahla esikhulu esimila ehlanzeni, amaxolo aso avamile ukusetshenziswa uma kwelashwa umuntu oqulekile" [a kind of large tree that grows in the widl, its bark is often used to treat a person who has fainted]. The noun 'unhliziyonkulu' refers to a type of tree and is coined from the noun 'inhliziyonkulu' (a heart) and the adjective '-nkulu' (big). It is evident that the noun 'unhliziyonkulu' can be translated as 'big heart' and yet it refers to a type of tree, thus there is no semantic relation between the compound word and its actual meaning. There are two categories of compounds in the isiZulu language, namely, the exocentric and the endocentric compounds. These will be explained in detail in one of the forthcoming sections.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss and investigate how some school names in Gauteng are formulated through the process of compounding. The school names that will be analysed are: Vezukhono Secondary School, Phandimfundo Secondary School, Khulanolwazi Primary School, Vukazenzele Primary School, and Wozanibone Interm Farm School.

There are two types of research methods that one can use to conduct research: qualitative and quantitative research

methods. The difference between the two methods is that the qualitative method involves the collection of data through the analysis and interpretation of various sources or texts which are concerned with why and how things unfold whereas the quantitative method involves the collection of data that is concerned with digits or numerical information – it may take the form of statistical data Msomi (2015: 42). Creswell, in Mhlongo (2017: 15), points out that qualitative research assists a researcher by looking at how people view the world around them, including the knowledge that they already possess about things that take place. For Holloway and Wheeler, in Mhlongo (Op cit.), the qualitative research method is concerned with analysing various behavioral patterns by first understanding the social and cultural contexts. Thus, the qualitative method helps the researcher investigate and answer the ‘why’ questions of research.

Lincoln in Maake (2021: 7), maintains that qualitative research can be viewed as an interpretive approach which studies social aspects including people’s experiences and imaginations through the interpretation of texts or audios. This is usually an attempt to understand certain societal phenomena as it appears in the current period. Therefore, the qualitative method of research can be perceived as a non-numerical data approach which is used to examine how society operates based on the views and opinions of people. It can be done through the process of collecting and interpreting existing studies, articles or literary texts composed by various authors or researchers. Qualitative research can also take the form of conducting interviews with certain members of society to further acquire a deeper understanding of how they view certain aspects of life as well as the world around them.

Khumalo (2022), from whose honours research paper this article is collated, mainly analyses the naming of some selected schools in Gauteng. As a method of gathering data, the research paper relies on the researcher’s observations and information found on the internet. Moreover, sources such as dictionaries, books and various other research studies significantly form part

of the method used to collect data to validate the researcher's findings and observations.

When conducting research, it is impossible for the researcher to conduct research without referring to a theory or theories. This chapter adopts onomastics theory, particularly its branch or discipline known as toponymy or toponomastics. This is because the focus of this study is on the naming of schools. Onomastics is about naming. It is the study of names of people, places, and so on. When this concept is linked to texts like novels, short stories, or plays, etc, it tends to focus on the naming of characters. It is also possible that the concept of onomastics includes the naming of places found within a certain text.

According to Koopman (2002: 8), the term 'onomastics' is derived from the Greek word 'onoma', which means 'name'. Ngubane (2000: 17) maintains that onomastics theory involves various and complex naming techniques. It is an open-ended science which accommodates new ideas and developments which may arise because of naming in any language. Nordquist (2019) differentiates between the various types of disciplines or branches found under the theory of onomastics. This includes anthroponomy (the study of human proper names), toponomy (the study of proper names of places), literary onomastics (the study of proper names of fictional characters found in literary works), and socio-onomastics (the study of names in the context of societal and cultural aspects).

From the above views, it can be deduced that the study of names (onomastics) looks at where a word comes from and how it was coined. It allows different racial groups to learn about their various cultural backgrounds. What is noteworthy is that onomastics is broad. It consists of various connected forms. Since this study is based on the names of man-made geographical features like schools, it can be said that toponomastics or toponomy is the main discipline of onomastics which underpins this article.

On the notion of endocentric and exocentric compounds

Želvienė (2015: 5) distinguishes between the two types of compounds by maintaining that their differences depend on the semantic properties of the head constituent of a compound. He (Op cit.) further affirms that an endocentric type of compound normally has its head element within the compounded word itself, and it is the head element which expresses the core meaning of the compound. Madondo (2001: 112) concurs with Želvienė's view when defining an endocentric compound as one that denotes a sub-class of the item denoted by one of the elements. For instance, the word 'itshenkomo' is a noun which consists of two terms, namely 'itshe' (stone) and 'inkomo' (cow). According to Mbatha (2006: 1227), the term 'itshenkomo' bares the meaning of "itshe elithi alibe luhlaza okwesibhakabhaka eliqinile elisetshenziswa ekwakheni izindlu" [it is a hard blue stone that is used to build houses]. Although the two terms are combined to coin the compound noun 'itshenkomo', they contain different meanings. The head element or word 'itshe-' (stone) of the compound provides an indication of what the overall meaning of the compound is. Thus, the noun 'itshe' (stone) serves as a hyponym of the endocentric compound 'itshenkomo'.

As opposed to the endocentric compound, the exocentric compound denotes an item which is not a sub-class of elements making up the compound (Madondo, Op cit.). Želvienė (2015: 21) adds that unlike in the case of an endocentric compound, where the head element is found within the compound itself, exocentric compounds lack a head element. Thus, it is impossible for one to figure out the meaning of the compound by merely looking at the sum of meanings of the words which form it. For example, the noun 'ukhandampondwe' (poll tax) is made up of the nouns 'ukhanda' (a portion of cow head) and 'uphondo' (a horn). According to Mbatha (2006: 551) 'ukhandampondwe' refers to "intela yekhanda imvama okwakuba ngumpondo eyabe ithelwa ngabesilisa" [the head tax which amounted to a pound and was usually paid by men]. It is evident that the two words that form the compound have no

semantic relation. Therefore, an exocentric compound can be defined as a word formed by combining two or more words that consist of distinct meanings.

The analysis of school names found in the Gauteng Province

The following discussion on the names of schools will be divided into two parts, namely: school names compounded using a verb and a noun, and school names that are compounded using two verbs.

School names compounded using a verb and a noun

The following section discusses the names of schools made up of verbs and nouns. These school names include Vezukhono, Phandimfundo, and Khulanolwazi.

Vezukhono Secondary School

Vezukhono Secondary School is a government school based in an area called Barcelona near Daveyton. The name of the school literally means to show, reveal, or demonstrate a skill. This name is made up of two isiZulu words. It is made up of the verb ‘-veza’ (reveal) and the noun ‘ikhono’ (a skill). Therefore, the school’s name can be viewed as one that has been compounded using a verb and a noun. This implies that the name can be viewed as a compound that was formed by using two lexemes.

According to Mbatha (2006: 1244), the word ‘ukuveza’ (to reveal) can be defined as follows: “Ukubonakalisa, ukutshengisa, ukubukisa, ukukhangisa” [To make visible, to demonstrate, to show off, to advertise]. It can then be concluded that the verb ‘veza’ (reveal) means showcasing or exposing something. Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1996: 263), on the other hand, claim that the noun ‘ikhono’ (a skill) can be defined as “Ubungcweti, isiphiwo sokuyenza kahle into” [Professionalism, the gift of doing something well]. Mbatha (2006: 580) concurs with Nyembezi and Nxumalo and maintains that the term ‘ikhono’ (a skill) refers to “Isiphiwo sokwenza kahle okuthile

ukwenze ngobuchwepheshe” [It is the gift of doing something well with expertise]. Therefore, ‘ikhono’ (a skill) can be viewed as an ability that one is not born with. This implies that it is taught, and, as a result, it is learnt by those who wish to master it. A skill requires constant training, practice, and guidance so that one may eventually master it.

It can be deduced that the compound ‘Vezukhono’ refers to revealing, showcasing, or demonstrating a skill as indicated above. The assumption here is that the school was named in this manner to encourage learners to showcase their skills and talents. This includes abilities such as singing, draw, sports activities, etc. Some school learners may not be academically gifted, but they may excel in their natural abilities and skills. Therefore, it can be said that the school’s name aims to encourage learners to discover and showcase their academic and non-academic abilities or skills. It is noteworthy that the compound ‘Vezukhono’ can be considered an endocentric one. Unlike in the case of a typical endocentric compound, where only a single part or word within the compound is considered the core or head element of the overall meaning, the compound ‘Vezukhono’ consists of a meaning which can be traced back to the two words which form it. Thus, both the verb ‘veza’ (showcase) and ‘ikhono’ (skill) in this case can be considered to play the roles of being head elements.

Phandimfundo Secondary School

Phandimfundo Secondary School is a government school located in Etwatwa East, near Daveyton. It carries a name that is made up of a combination of two isiZulu words. The verb ‘phanda’ (dig) and the noun ‘imfundo’ (education) have been combined in this case to form the compounded name ‘Phandimfundo’. This word can thus be viewed as a compound word that is formed by combining two isiZulu lexemes – a verb and a noun. According to Mbatha (2006: 954), the verb ‘ukuphanda’ (to dig) can be defined as “Ukumba ngokuqhusha umhlabathi, ukukhupheza, ukugubha” [To excavate by breaking the ground, digging]. In modern terminology, this verb also refers to the act of searching for various means of generating money (Ngwenya, 1995: 52).

Therefore, the verb 'phanda' (dig) can be viewed as the act of digging with the purpose of finding or extracting something. Normally, one digs for the purpose of planting something like a seed with the hope that whatever they sow will come out beautiful and they can harvest it.

Mbatha (2006: 700) holds the ideology that the noun 'imfundo' (education) can be defined as "Isenzo sokuthungatha ulwazi, ukuthola ulwazi" [It is the act of searching for knowledge, obtaining information]. It can then be concluded that this now can be viewed as a system of searching and acquiring knowledge. It also refers to the process of learning and teaching, which often takes place in schools or universities.

The name 'Phandimfundo', in its literal sense, refers to the act of excavating education. However, one cannot physically dig or excavate education as education has no physical form – it is an abstract noun. For something to be dug, it must exist in the physical world and not in the mind. Therefore, in the context of education, digging can be viewed as the act of investigating and searching for scholarly knowledge. It can be concluded that the name 'Phandimfundo' aims to motivate and inspire learners to seek knowledge and to continuously long to acquire education. It can also be said that the school aims to produce learners who are critical thinkers, observant, as well as learners who constantly use their brains to dig deeper into knowledge.

Khulanolwazi Primary School

Khulanolwazi Primary is a government school located in Bram Fischerville in Soweto. The school is attended by learners who are at their first stage of acquiring basic education. The name of the school is made up of two isiZulu words. This involves the combination of the verb 'khula' (grow) and the noun 'ulwazi' (knowledge). According to Mbatha (2006: 591), the word 'ukukhula' (to grow) means: "Ukuthuthuka kobukhulu kanye nobudala bomuntu kumbe kwesilwane" [The development of the size and age of a person or an animal]. Nyembezi (1992: 244) concurs with Mbatha by maintaining that the verb 'khula' means "Ukuthuthuka ngobukhulu nobudala bomuntu

noma besilwane. Ukuqhuma kwembewu isimila ibe nkulu. Ukuchuma komsebenzi” [The development in the size or age or a person or animal. A seed burst, such that the plant develops to a larger size. Work prosperity]. It can be concluded that the verb ‘ukukhula’ refers to a person, an object or any other phenomenon growing and developing for the better. When a person grows, it is an indication that he or she has reached a higher level of something such as age, height or even understanding. Therefore, the verb ‘ukukhula’ (grow) can be said to have connotations of maturity, achievement, prosperity, and success.

Mbatha (2006: 15) maintains that the noun ‘ulwazi’ (knowledge) refers to “Umqondo ojulile ngokuthile, inhlakanipho, ukukhalipha” [A deep thought about something, intelligence, to be smart]. Nyembezi (1992: 8), on the other hand, claims that the term ‘ulwazi’ denotes “Inhlakanipho, ukuqondisisa” [Wisdom, to understand]. Based on the above definitions, the noun ‘ulwazi’ can be viewed as information, lessons, or skills that one has obtained or learned from experiencing a phenomenon such as education or life in general. It reflects wisdom, cleverness, and brilliance as well as the ability to apply and transmit what has been learnt or acquired. It can then be said that the term refers to the knowledge that one acquires in their lifetime.

When the conjunction ‘na-’ (with) is compounded with the noun ‘ulwazi’ (knowledge), this creates the word ‘nolwazi’ (with knowledge). Furthermore, when this occurs, vowel coalescence takes place. The vowels ‘a’ and ‘u’ (na+ulwazi = nolwazi) form another vowel when they are combined. According to Sibanda (2009: 39), isiZulu language employs vowel coalescence to avoid vowel juxtaposition. One of the rules of vowel coalescence states that the sum of the vowels ‘a’ and ‘u’ is equal to the vowel ‘o’ (Sibanda, Op cit.).

It can be concluded that naming the school Khulanolwazi is a result of the vision that its stakeholders have and aim to achieve. Since it is a primary school, it enrolls young children in their early stages of acquiring education. Thus, the idea is that

they need a lot of guidance from their educators. It can be said that the school name 'Khulanolwazi' (grow with knowledge) encourages children to learn and grow with the knowledge that they obtain from school. Moreover, the name serves as a reminder to the educators and parents that their main aim is to aid the young ones to grow not only physically, but also intellectually or academically.

School names compounded using a verb and a verb

This part of the article explores school names that are made up of two verbs. The schools are: Vukazenzele Secondary School and Wozanibone Intern Farm School.

Vukazenzele Primary School

Vukazenzele Primary School is based in Soweto. The name of this school is a combination of two isiZulu verbs, namely 'vuka' (wake or get up) and 'zenzele' (do it for yourself). According to Mbatha (2006: 1254), 'ukuvuka' (to get up or awake) means "Ukusukuma lapho kade ulele khona, ukuphaphama ebuthongweni" [To get up from where you have been sleeping, to wake up from sleep]. Similarly, Nyembezi (1992: 528) defines the verb as "Phaphama ebuthongweni, phakama ocansini noma embhedeni" [Wake up from sleep, get up from bed]. For Rundell (2007: 81), to awake can also refer to the act of making someone begin to realise, notice, or experience a certain emotion or feeling. It can then be concluded that apart from the verb's literal meaning of waking up from a place of rest or sleep, it can also denote the act of realising, noticing, or experiencing a certain feeling, such that the awakening leads to the implementation of certain changes.

The verb 'zenzele' (do it for yourself) is derived from the verb stem 'enza' (do). Therefore, it is necessary for one to first understand the meaning of the verb stem 'enza' (do) to understand what the verb 'zenzele' means or how it came about. According to Mbatha (2006: 263), the verb 'ukwenza' (to do or doing) means "Ukusungula okuthile, ukufuna indlela yokuphumelelisa umsebenzi, ukulinga noma ukuzama ukufeza

okuthile” [To begin or establish something, to find a way to make a job or task more successful, attempting or trying to achieve something]. Thus, it can be said that the verb stem ‘enza’ refers to the act of doing something with the aim of seeing an outcome or result from the action. Moreover, the verb ‘zenzele’ is made up of the reflexive morpheme ‘zi-’, the verb ‘enza’ and the applied verbal extension ‘-el-’. When the applied verbal extension ‘-el-’ is infixed in the verb ‘enza’ (do), the verb becomes ‘enzela’ (do for or do on behalf of). Therefore, the verb ‘enzela’ refers to the act of doing something for or on behalf of something or someone else. When the reflexive morpheme ‘zi-’ is prefixed to the verb ‘enzela’, it then becomes ‘zenzele’, thus barring the meaning of someone doing something for or to him- or herself. The afore-mentioned command or verb can also apply in cases where an animal is doing something for or to itself. Thus, the reflexive morpheme can be considered a prefix that speaks to the action performed by ‘self’ and for or to self. Therefore, the word ‘zenzele’ refers to an act of one doing something for oneself.

By naming the school using the compounded word or phrase ‘vukazenzele’ (awake and do it yourself), it can be concluded that the name givers intended to encourage or motivate learners to be independent in their journey to acquiring education or knowledge. They eventually must come to a realisation that they will not always be provided with information. Thus, the name can be viewed as a reminder to the school learners that it is important for them to be self-regulated and learn how to take it upon themselves to seek knowledge.

Wozanibone Interm Farm School

Wozanibone is a government high secondary based in Bronkhorstspuit farm. This school name is made up of two verbs, namely ‘wozani’ (come) and ‘nibone’ (and see). The verb ‘wozani’ (come) is derived from the verb ‘ukuza’ (to come). According to Nyembezi (1992: 550), the term means “Nyakaza usondele, lindelwa” [Move closer, be waited upon, or expected]. For Mbatha (2006: 1321), the word refers to “Ukusondela kumuntu noma kokuthile, ukulindelwa ukuthi uzofika” [To

move closer to someone or something, to be expected to arrive]. Thus, the term 'ukuza' can be said to denote the act of either moving towards or closer to a person or an object or being expected to arrive at a certain destination. Moreover, when a verb or command is directed to more than one person, it is usually suffixed with the morpheme '-ni' (Van Huyssteen et al, 2008: 60). It is for the afore-mentioned reason that the verb 'wozani' (come) is suffixed with the morpheme '-ni' to indicate that the command or request is directed to a certain group of people.

The phrase 'nibone' (and see), on the other hand, is derived from combining the subject concord 'ni-' (you), which originates from its plural pronoun 'nina' (you), and the verb 'bona' (see). According to Nyembezi (1992: 41), the verb 'bona' means "Yiba namehlo aphilile, caca emehlweni, khanyelwa engqondweni" [Have healthy eyes, clear eyes, a clear mind]. In agreement with Nyembezi's view Mbatha (2006: 103) maintains that the verb means "Ukwazi ukwahlukanisa ubunjalo bento ngokugxilisa ihlo kuyo, ukuqonda noma ukwazi okuthile, ukuhlola noma ukuhlaziya, ukucabanga ujule ngokuthile" [Being able to distinguish the nature of something by focusing on it, understanding, or knowing something, examining, or analyzing, thinking deeply about something].

The compounded school name 'Wozanibone' can be viewed as an invitation to the target learners. In its literal form, the name simply means 'come and see'. Since this is a learning or education institution, it can be said that the name of the school aims to attract learners who will eventually be deep and critical thinkers. This includes learners who will be experts in analysing and examining a phenomenon or a situation.

Conclusion

The above chapter focused on the naming of schools which have compounded names. Exocentric compounds were the point of interest. An analysis was made using one of the branches of the onomastics theory known as toponomastics or toponymy. Since toponomastics is the study of names, it was necessary

for this article to be analysed through the lenses of the theory. The school names which were examined included Vezukhono, Phandimfundo, Khulanolwazi, Vukazenzele, and Wozanibone. The above-mentioned schools are all state-owned and they have been producing good results throughout the years.

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