

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ACCURACY IN THE ORTHOGRAPHICAL
DEVELOPMENT OF ISIXHOSA IN A POST- DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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31 January 2013

Declaration

I, Zandisile. W. Saul, student number 8417604 declare that this thesis is my work and that it has not been presented either in part or whole for the award of a degree in any other university.

Signature.....

Z.W. Saul

DATE: 31st JANUARY, 2013.

Place: UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE



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May the Almighty bless all those who gave a hand in the production of this thesis.

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Dedication

I dedicate this beautiful work to all my daughters, Zimkhitha, Ziyanda and Babalwa.



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Abstract

isiXhosa language is one of the first languages in sub-Saharan Africa to be reduced into writing. The first written texts in isiXhosa were produced by British missionaries in the Tyhume river valley as early as 1824. In spite of these early developments, there still remain today many inconsistencies and anomalies with regard to the standardization of isiXhosa orthography that require attention.

This research focuses on the status quo of the current orthography of isiXhosa which is used in the writing of the selected texts which were published from 2000 to date. The research study investigates how these texts are written, that is, whether they are written according to the principles of the writing of this language as developed by the respective language boards or not. The reason for doing this is that this language has become one of the official languages of the Republic of South Africa. Therefore, in order for it to be read and written without any difficulty by anyone, as it is expected to be used as a medium of instruction even at tertiary level in the future, it should be written accurately and consistently.



The study analyses a number of isiXhosa written texts including the following:

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- (1) Selected literary texts which were published from 2000 to date.
- (2) Selected publications by government departments.
- (3) Selected translated texts.
- (4) Some of the newspapers and magazines which are currently in circulation in this language.
- (5) Some dictionaries of isiXhosa.
- (6) The updated isiXhosa Orthography as compiled by the PanSALB (2008).

The aims of the study are outlined in Chapter 1. This chapter also provides the theoretical framework within which the research is located. Chapter 2 is about the theoretical perspectives on the development of the art of writing and orthography. The historical background, that is, the development of the art of writing and the general as well as the specific requirements of a good orthography are discussed. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 observe and analyse the orthographical features of some written documents of

isiXhosa such as writing of capital letters, word division, usage of concords, etc. These three chapters also observe and analyse the various anomalies and inconsistencies in the spelling of isiXhosa words that were identified in the consulted texts. Chapter 6 is devoted to the conclusion and the recommendations.



Amagqaba-ntshintshi

Ulwimi lwesiXhosa lolunye lweelwimi zokuqala kwiAfrika eseMazantsi eSahara ezathi zaba nokubhalwa. Ubhalo lokuqala ngesiXhosa lwaphuhliswa ngabefundisi baseBhrithane kwingingqi yomlambo weTyhume mandulo phaya, ngomnyaka we-1824. Ngele kolu phuhliso lwangaphambili, kunanamhla kusekho amagingxi-gingxi amaninzi ngokubhekisele ekubekweni emgangathweni kobhalomagama lwesiXhosa asafuna ingqwalaselo.

Lo msebenzi ugxile kubhalomagama lwesiXhosa, olusetyenziswe ekubhalweni kobhalo olukhethiweyo, olwapapashwa ukususela kowama-2000 ukuza kuthi ga ngoku. Umsebenzi lo uphanda indlela, oku kubhaliweyo, okubhalwe ngayo, ukutsho oko, ingaba kubhalwe ngokwemigaqo yobhalo lolu lwimi olwaphuhliswa ngamaqumrhu ahloniphekileyo okanye hayi. Isizathu sokwenza oku, sesokuba olu lwimi, luye lwaba lolunye lweelwimi zaseburhulumenteni zeRiphablikhi yoMzantsi-Afrika. Ngoko ke, ukuze lube nako ukuthi lufundwe ze lubhalwe ngaphandle kobunzima nangubani na, njengoko kulindeleke ukuba lusetyenziswe njengolwimi lokufundisa nkqu kumabanga aphezulu kwixesha elizayo, kufuneka lubhaleke ngokuchanekileyo nangokuthe ngqo.



Lo msebenzi uhlalutya iqela lokubhaliweyo, okubhalwe ngesiXhosa njengoku kulandelayo:

- (1) Uncwadi olukhethiweyo olwapapashwa ukususela kowama- 2000 ukuza kuthi ga ngoku.
- (2) Upapasho olukhethiweyo ngamasebe karhulumente.
- (3) Ubhalo olukhethiweyo oluguqulweyo.
- (4) Amanye amaphepha-ndaba neemagazini ezijikelezayo kungoku nje kolu lwimi.
- (5) Izichazi-magama zesiXhosa.
- (6) Ubhalomagama lwesiXhosa oluhlaziye ngokuqulunqwa yi-PanSALB (2008)

linjongo zalo msebenzi zidakanciwe kwisaHluko soku-1. Esi sahluko sikwanika ingxelo-zimvo yophahla apho lo msebenzi wakhelwe khona. IsaHluko sesi-2 sona simalunga nengxelo-zimvo yengqikelelo-migama kuphuhliso lobuchule bokubhala nobobhalomagama. Imvelaphi eyimbali, ukutsho oko, uphuhliso lobuchule bokubhala kwakunye neemfuno ngokubanzi nangokuthe ngqo bobhalomagama olulungileyo, luxoxiwe. IzaHluko zesi-3, ezesi-4 nezesi-5 zihlalutya iimpawu zobhalomagama zamanye amaxwebhu abhaliweyo esiXhosa, anjengobhalo loonobumba abakhulu, ulwahlulo lwegama, usetyenziso lwezivumelanisi, njalo-njalo. Ezi zahluco zibini kwakhona zihlalutya oko kungaqhelekanga nokungathanga ngqo kupelo lwamagama esiXhosa, athe achongwa kuluncwadi nakumaphepha-ndaba asetyenzisiweyo kolu phando. IsaHluko sesi- 6 sona sijongene nesiqukumbelo kunye nomakwenziwe ngokubhekisele kubhalomagama olululo.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

Since one of the main features of human language is its iterative and developmental nature, the orthography of a language will also be of a developmental nature. Therefore, it is the purpose of this study to discover how well the orthography of isiXhosa is suited to the new post 1994 dispensation, now that it is recognised as one of the official languages of South Africa.

As an official language, isiXhosa orthography needs to be well developed and evince a consistent manner of writing. A language to be used as a medium of instruction even at tertiary level in the future, requires that new terminology currently being developed by the respective language boards, be appropriate to the language's general standardised form.



1.2 Rationale and background to the study

Before the colonization of South Africa the isiXhosa language did not exist in written form. Information was communicated orally from generation to generation. In the process not all information was perceived as well as it might have been.

Pahl, Pienaar and Ndungane (1989:xxxiii) explain that the first serious attempt to devise an orthography for isiXhosa was made by the celebrated missionary, Rev. John Bennie of Lovedale, who was the pioneer in reducing isiXhosa to writing, and who in 1823 produced the first printed texts in the language. The isiXhosa language therefore was converted into writing for the first time by John Bennie and others in the year 1823. His orthography consisted of a system of separate "words," or, rather often, mere syllables. This was an extremely disjunctive form of writing. The pioneers in providing isiXhosa with a written form faced significant challenges in the absence of

reference materials other than those designed to suit the European languages. As Jafta (1987:130) observes:

Xhosa was first reduced to writing in 1823 by the Scottish missionaries who brought a printing press at Tyhumie in Alice. Education for blacks was under the control of missionaries who were mainly of English extraction. English was declared the only official language in 1822 so that in all the schools it was the medium of instruction. It was not until 1922 that Xhosa was introduced as a compulsory subject in all primary schools. It was only examined as a matric subject in 1931.

This study focuses on the orthography of isiXhosa, whose speakers are found mostly in the Eastern and Western Cape. Today South Africa recognises eleven official languages. Of these, nine are African while the other two, English and Afrikaans, are referred to as European languages. However, Afrikaans is a hybrid language and may also be regarded as an African language. Some of the African languages form part of the Nguni language group, whilst others are part of the Sotho language group. The Nguni group consists of isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati and isiNdebele, whilst the Sotho group consists of seSotho, sePedi and seTswana. The remaining two languages are tshiVenda and xiTsonga and these do not belong to the two major groups.

At present, the respective National Language Boards (NLBs) together with other role players who have an interest in the development of isiXhosa, are busy revisiting the so-called 'standard' orthography of this language. Furthermore, terminology in isiXhosa is being developed on a daily basis. Term-creation is continuously being evaluated to establish whether its written version is in agreement with the orthography of isiXhosa language. This practice of term-creation will, amongst others, enable the language to become a fully-fledged medium of instruction at institutions of higher education.

The South African Language-in-Education Policy document (released on the 14th of July 1997), states that in terms of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Government and the Department of Education recognize that cultural diversity is a valuable national asset and hence the Department is called, among other things, to

promote multilingualism, to oversee the development of the official languages, and to foster respect for all languages used in the country.

According to Foley (2004:58-59), the question is whether South Africa's indigenous languages can be developed as 'academic/scientific languages' fully capable of serving as 'media of instruction in higher education.' Foley argues that, although bodies such as the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) and the various residual language bodies continue to have, as part of their brief, the facilitation of a fully multilingual education system, they have proved themselves to be generally unable, in terms of organisational capability or logistical expertise, to meet this brief. More recently, in 2003, the Department of Arts and Culture launched its National Language Policy Framework and there is talk of the promulgation of a forthcoming South African Languages Act which will give rise to the establishment of a national department of language. However, while these may be welcome and apparently promising initiatives to promote the indigenous languages, much needs doing before the Ministry of Education's goal of developing these languages into fully functional media of instruction in Higher Education is realised.

The current Minister of Higher Education, the Honourable Dr Blade Ndzimande, recently announced a set of measures aimed at the elevation of the status and use of African languages within the tertiary sector. In a speech made at St George's Hotel in Pretoria on the 16th of September 2011, Dr Ndzimande said that "the development of African languages as languages of scholarship is an imperative that we all need to commit ourselves to. It is not for government alone to see to it that African languages get their rightful place in our society, but indeed this is a responsibility for all of us. Academic institutions, language practitioners and broader society should all come on board to ensure that African languages are strengthened at universities and in society as a whole."

1.3 Research problem

One of several weaknesses in the existing “standardised” orthographical system of isiXhosa, is a lack of orthographic consistency. Preliminary investigations into this phenomenon have suggested the existence of a significant range of discrepancies in the writing of this language. These discrepancies are widely reflected in literary texts, press reports, government publications and educational materials published in isiXhosa.

Discrepancies commonly found include the following:

- *ejection versus aspiration*, e.g. /ukhuko/ vs /ukhukho/ (Eng.: “mat”)
- *capitalisation*, e.g. /uMzantsi Afrika/ vs /umZantsi-Afrika/ (“South Africa”)
- *word division*, e.g. /baza kufika/ vs /bazakufika/ (Eng.: “they will arrive”)
- *the spelling of loan words*, e.g. /ibrukhwe/ vs /ibhrukhwe/ (Afr.: “broek”)
- *representation of different sounds by one and the same symbol*, e.g. /uhili/ (Eng.: “dwarf”) vs /ihagu/ (Eng.: “pig”)

In some instances, these discrepancies are serious in that they reflect different semantic values; for example:

- /tata/ vs /thatha/ (Eng.: “father” versus “take”);
- /ukhoko/ vs /ukhokho/ (Eng.: “crust” versus “forefather”)

Such discrepancies are not conducive to accurate and effective written communication in isiXhosa.

In addition, there are clear indications that the existing level of standardisation of isiXhosa orthography is not satisfactory. Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:99) in the document Imigaqo Yokubhalwa Nokupelwa Kolwimi LwesiXhosa have made the point as follows:

It should be noted, however, that there are still quite a number of aspects of the orthography of isiXhosa that need more attention. This can be fulfilled by way of research that will entail verification by the knowledge as well as institutions of the speakers of the language and other isiXhosa language practitioners. That process

should take place soon so that a comprehensive work on uniform ways of writing this language should be produced, as a matter of urgency. This document suffices, for the moment, as a guide until the production of a more perfect orthography book.

This study therefore will address the phenomenon of inconsistency as well as inaccuracy in isiXhosa orthography. A more satisfactory degree of uniformity must be attained if isiXhosa is to be studied effectively by both mother-tongue speakers and non-mother tongue speakers.

1.4 The aim of the study

The aim of the study is to analyse the existing standardised orthographical system of isiXhosa. The intention is to investigate the magnitude of the problem of inconsistency in the orthography of this language, by posing the following research questions as central to the enquiry:



- to what degree does the present standardised isiXhosa orthography succeed faithfully representing all the phonetic aspects of the spoken language in an inclusive, accurate and consistent manner?
- to what extent is the standardised orthography of isiXhosa actively recognized and adhered to by all the users of written isiXhosa?
- to what extent does the standardised orthography of isiXhosa recognise and make provision for the accommodation of dialectal differences?

The aim of this study is also to propose measures that will lead to the improvement of the orthography of the language. This includes a critical analysis of some of the rules of isiXhosa orthography, and proposed measures to encourage writers of isiXhosa texts to adhere to its rule structure in a more disciplined and consistent manner.

During the course of this investigation, texts written in isiXhosa and published since 2000 will be analysed. The reason for the focus on documents published from 2000, rather than 1994, (as the title may lead one to expect) is merely to narrow down the field of study for practical purposes and focus on documents published more recently from 2000 to the present. The orthography used in selected publications by government departments, in selected translated texts and in isiXhosa newspapers, will also be considered. The focus will be on the representation of sounds by means of symbols, hyphen usage, usage of subject concords, apostrophe usage, word division, capitalisation and tone marking.

1.5 Methodology

The language structure of Rharhabe-Xhosa, traditionally considered to be the standard literary Xhosa will serve as the main point of reference for this study. The term “standard” in the context of this study follows the approach taken by the Xhosa Dictionary Committee which reads as follows:



The Xhosa Dictionary Committee decided that the work should not be confined to Tshiwo Xhosa (the Xhosa spoken by the amaGcaleka and the amaRharhabe), until the mid-1950's regarded as the standard Literary Xhosa, (The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Volume 3, 1989:xxxix).

Whilst it is evident that all the earliest academic and literary texts were produced in Rharhabe-Xhosa, the language patterns of other language groups within the wider Xhosa-speaking community, generally known as the dialects of isiXhosa, namely isiThembu, isiBomvana, isiMpondomise, isiMpondo, isiXesibe, isiRharhabe, isiBhaca, isiCele, isiHlubi and isiMfengu, will also be taken into consideration during the course of the study.

This study will be based on a specific framework derived from the fields of general as well as applied linguistics. From general linguistics, the theoretical models of recognised linguists such as De Saussure and other more contemporary linguists will be considered. From applied linguistics, the concepts of scholars such as Smalley (1963) will play their part in the framework for this investigation.

In this study several data sources were utilised. The various sites where lexicographical projects (also known as dictionary projects) which are currently being undertaken, were visited in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the development of the orthography of isiXhosa language. In addition, various role-players directly or indirectly involved in the development of isiXhosa orthography were consulted to obtain first-hand information on the challenges confronting them. These role-players were selected from among:

- publishers
- journalists
- language practitioners in the private sector
- relevant role-players within the civil service, including Parliamentary language units, education, arts and culture
- language practitioners at universities where isiXhosa is being developed as part of the institutional language policy and
- members of the Pan South African Language Board and the National Language Body (isiXhosa)

This study is based upon the recognition that the orthography of a language is an iterative, developmental phenomenon. As such, the researcher focuses on the most recent developments in isiXhosa language. This study therefore takes careful cognisance of work already in progress.

The orthographical features of isiXhosa publications produced by the various role-players referred to above were analysed and interpreted to determine the correctness (or not) of particular orthographical items.

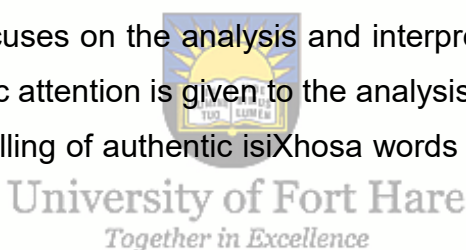
1.6 Organisation of the study

Chapter 1 introduces the study and provides the background and rationale of the study, the research problem and the questions and methods used to collect and analyse data.

Chapter 2 deals with the theoretical framework and historical background, that is, the development of the art of writing, as well as the general and specific requirements of an exemplary orthography.

Chapter 3 investigates various written specimen documents of isiXhosa, starting with the orthography as used in selected literary texts published from 2000 to the present. The orthography, as used in selected publications by government departments, in selected translated texts and in some isiXhosa newspapers will also be analysed. The focus will be on the accuracy (or inaccuracy) of the representation of sounds by means of symbols.

This chapter therefore focuses on the analysis and interpretation of language usage in consulted texts. Specific attention is given to the analysis of various anomalies and inconsistencies in the spelling of authentic isiXhosa words as used in the documents consulted.



Chapter 4 similarly analyses and interprets data from the isiXhosa documents consulted. Here, however, specific attention is given to the various anomalies and inconsistencies in the spelling of loan-words in isiXhosa as used in these documents.

Chapter 5 focuses on the orthographic differences and similarities found in the respective documents as to hyphen usage, usage of concords, word division, capitalisation and tone marking.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and recommendations. Here, concluding remarks will be made concerning the presence of various inconsistencies in the orthography of isiXhosa. Finally, recommendations will be made concerning the future development of the orthography of the language to ensure a more effective written communication in isiXhosa.

1.7 Limitations of the research

If it were not for financial constraints more role-players could have been consulted. Opportunity to conduct research at sites at some distance from the University of Fort Hare was restricted for the same reason.

1.8 Significance of the study

It is envisaged that this study will contribute towards the development of the orthography of isiXhosa so as to be on a par with that of languages that have been standardised and to a more effective use of the isiXhosa language as a medium of instruction in Higher Education.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, it was indicated that the purpose of this study is to find out how accurate the orthography of isiXhosa is in this new post 1994 dispensation, as one of the officially recognised languages. Cognisance was taken of the fact that, prior to the arrival of the missionaries, the isiXhosa language did not exist in written form. Information was communicated orally from generation to generation. That caused a problem as some of the information of amaXhosa was lost in the process. The isiXhosa language was converted into writing for the first time by John Bennie and others in the year 1823.

It was pointed out that this study focuses on the orthography of isiXhosa, whose speakers are found mostly in the Eastern Cape as well as in the Western Cape. For purposes of this study, the language structure of Rharhabe-Xhosa which traditionally has been considered as “standard” will be used as the main point of departure. The language patterns of other language groups within the wider isiXhosa-speaking community which are generally known as the dialects of isiXhosa, will also be taken into consideration during the course of the study.

In light of these challenges, it was indicated that the aim of the study is to make an analysis of the existing standardised orthographical system of isiXhosa and also to propose measures that will lead to the improvement of the orthography of the language. In order to achieve this aim, various written specimen documents of isiXhosa will be observed, starting with orthography as used in selected publications by government departments, the orthography as used in selected translated texts and the orthography as used in the newspapers of isiXhosa.

This study is based upon a specific framework within the fields of general as well as applied linguistics. It was mentioned that within the area of general linguistics, the theoretical models of recognised linguists such as De Saussure and other more contemporary linguists will be considered. At the level of applied linguistics, the concepts of scholars such as Smalley will provide the main framework for this investigation.

It is envisaged that this study will contribute towards the development of the orthography of isiXhosa in order for it to be equal to any other official language that has been more standardised, as there will be a more uniform system of writing. At the same time, the isiXhosa language can be used more effectively without any doubt as a medium of instruction in Higher Education, once the orthography has been improved.

This chapter introduced the study stating the research problem, question, aims and the methodology used to analyse documents. The next chapter will present theories of writing as well as orthography theories as formulated by different linguists.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING AND ORTHOGRAPHY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents theoretical perspectives on the development of the art of writing and orthography. Historically the art of writing began with the use of pictures to represent concepts until symbols became central to language. The general as well as specific requirements of a good orthography, will be discussed here. An academic study should be clear about the theoretical framework that serves to inform it. This research draws heavily on De Saussure's approach. General linguistic theory concerning the characteristics of a good writing system/orthography, as outlined by Smalley (1963), will also be reviewed in this chapter.

The historical development of the orthography of isiXhosa will receive attention in this chapter. This will be accompanied by brief comments on the historical development of the orthographies of other languages in the Nguni language group, including isiNdebele and isiZulu. In the final section of this chapter, attention will be given to specific aspects of orthography such as spelling, capitalisation etc. Specific challenges for isiXhosa such as the effective representation of prosodic features such as stress and tone will also receive attention in this section.

2.2 Historical background: The development of the art of writing

This discussion commences with a brief historical overview of the history of the art of writing, both in the ancient world as well as in the more specifically African context. It is a well-known fact that all social animals communicate with each other, but only human beings have developed languages which can communicate highly advanced mental concepts. From time immemorial, man has been able to communicate verbally with his fellow man, albeit with a slower delivery, a smaller vocabulary and a simpler grammar than the languages of today (<http://www.historian.net/hxwrite.htm>) (Accessed 05/05/2007).

A language is a particular kind of system for encoding and decoding information. In its most common sense, the term refers to so-called “natural languages” – the forms of communication considered peculiar to humankind. In cognitive science the term is also sometimes extended to refer to the human cognitive facility of creating and using language. Essential to both meanings is the systematic creation and usage of symbols – each pairing a specific sign with an intended meaning, established through social conventions. Although some animals make use of quite sophisticated communicative systems, and these are sometimes casually referred to as animal language, none of these are known to make use of all the properties that linguists use to define language in the strict sense (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language>) (Accessed 15/06/2007).

Across the world different languages are used for communication. Even animals do have their own ‘languages’ for communication, although theirs are not as formal as those of human beings. Still, human language is so different from animal ‘language’ that Traugott and Pratt (1980:1) rightly observe:



The question ‘What is language?’ has been asked from remotest times, yet its answer is still far from clear. The more we discover, the more mysterious and complex language appears to be. One thing seems certain, however: Language is a capacity that distinguishes human beings from other creatures.

It is evident that it is not easy to describe what language is. What is clear however, is that human beings are the only creatures that have the ability to communicate sophisticated concepts by means of language.

The importance of this ability is also recognised by Crystal (1968:28) who maintains that “human life in its present form would be impossible and inconceivable without the use of language as it is a set of signals by which we communicate.” Linguists argue that the smallest units of language are sounds. These sounds come together to form words. These words combine to form sentences. Therefore the following studies in language present themselves: (a) The study of speech sounds which is called phonetics, (b) the study of word structure which is called morphology and (c) the study

of sentence structure which is called syntax (Gwinn, Rinaldo, Lundberg, Britz and Vari, 1992:556).

Furthermore, no language is a static phenomenon. Language forever develops. This is confirmed by Schlauch (1967:2-3) who states that “language is a fundamental means of preserving, transmitting and continuously enriching the achievements of human culture. Not only is it very delicate in structure, but it is capable of indefinite modification and expansion as society evolves and becomes ever more complex.” The developmental nature intrinsic to spoken language should also be reflected in the orthography of a language. The orthography of a language needs to be revised and updated on an ongoing basis.

The advent of a writing system seems to have coincided with the transition from hunter-gatherer societies to more permanent agrarian communities, where it became necessary to count one's property, whether it be animals or measures of grain (www.historian.net/hxwrite.htm) (Accessed 05/05/2007). In Sumerian culture, sets of pictures were initially used to represent concepts and, eventually, sounds. It was only at a later stage that the written version of language emerges. During ancient times, concepts were at first represented by sets of pictures. Over the centuries there have been many cultures with their own unique symbols and alphabets but none has been so striking as that of the Egyptians with their hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphics were used as a written language. Each of the symbols stood for a sound; which means that hieroglyphics were used phonetically (<http://www.uponreflection.co.uk/hieroglyphics/>) (Accessed 05/05/2007).

Of the many ancient cultures with their unique symbols and alphabets, Egyptian hieroglyphics, as a written language, was the most advanced. With hieroglyphics each and every sound was represented by its unique symbol. This is not so in written English, where spelling does not always reflect pronunciation.

An interesting reflection on the emergence of writing systems is that of Finegan (2004:419), who writes:

Long before we developed writing, humans produced graphic representations of the objects surrounding us. The Prehistoric records in the cave paintings of Spain, France, and the Sahara Desert, which are between 12,000 and 40,000 years old, bear witness to an age-old fascination with animals, hunters, and deities. In that they represent concepts rather than words, these paintings differ from writing. They are representations of real-life objects, not of the words that represent those objects. Writing, by contrast, is a system of visual symbols representing audible symbols. Of course, the drawings and paintings produced by prehistoric people contained the seeds of writing. People would at first have communicated by using drawings. In time, certain stylized representations of objects such as the sun would have come to be associated with the words for those objects.

It has been mentioned that writing started with the drawing of pictures and several linguists have expressed their views regarding this form of expression. For instance, Diringer (1977:13) states that “picture-writing was used when ancient man first essayed to scratch, draw or paint schematic figures of objects on cave walls, because of the urge to record important events or to communicate ideas.” It is evident that this system of writing played an important role in communicating ideas as well as in preserving important events for the future. Accordingly Fromkin and Rodman (1978:357) observe that “it is widely believed that the early drawings made by ancient humans were the seeds out of which writing developed.” Akmajian, Demers, Farmer and Harnish (1992:467) agree as follows:

Systematic writing developed in the Near East and was originally pictographic or ideographic. Pictographs represent objects and are thus iconic, whereas ideographs represent ideas or sets of related ideas and are thus symbolic. The individual symbols come to be associated with certain words in a standardised fashion, the writing system is said to be logographic.

These linguists emphasise the importance of language, showing that where there are people, there is language for communication as human life cannot be without communication.

Finegan and Besnier, (1989:368) in comparing a newer Chinese writing system with that of the ancient Near East observe that:

Around four hundred years ago, a new writing system was developed in China that used symbols to represent words, not syllables. Such a logographic writing system differed fundamentally from the Sumerian-Akkadian syllabic system. Partly for this reason, it is commonly believed that the Chinese did not borrow the idea of writing from the Mesopotamians but developed it on their own.

It is clear that across the world there are different kinds of writing systems. As Finegan (2004:412-422) puts it:

The writing systems that developed in ancient Mesopotamia, India, and China were fundamentally different from the system now used in Western societies. Ours is an alphabetic system based on the premise that one graphic symbol (a letter) should correspond to one significant sound in the language (a phoneme). The writing systems originally developed in the Middle East and Asia were based on a relationship, not between graphs and individual sounds, but between graphs and words or graphs and syllables. All types of writing, alphabetic, syllabic, and word writing are still in use today.

One of the different writing systems then is that known as the syllabic writing system. Different scholars have expressed views about the syllable. Abercrombie (1974:34-35) notes that:



Writers on linguistics have nevertheless not found it easy to say what a syllable is, and there have been many arguments about how it should be defined. The syllable is essentially a movement, and one which in most cases, is an audible movement. It is not necessarily always accompanied by sound, however, and it is possible for a chest-pulse to take place quite silently, producing an inaudible syllable.

It is not easy to define what a syllable is. Different writers have defined it differently. One such definition is provided by Finegan (2004:422-423):

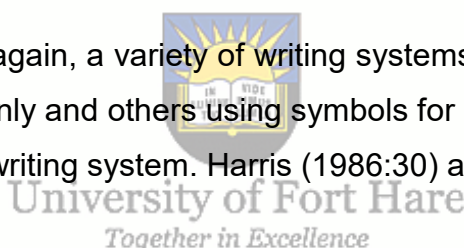
When the dwellers of the ancient Middle East and Asia began developing their writing systems, they had at their disposal the earlier pictograms, which were symbols for objects and concepts. Rather than create an entirely new system of symbols, the inventors of writing modified these pictograms and used them to develop writing systems. Their shapes gradually became more and more stylized in the process of becoming written symbols. The written symbols that the Sumerians and Akkadians had developed

at that stage are called cuneiform symbols. Cuneiform writing is thus a syllabic writing system, in which graphic symbols represent whole syllables, not individual sounds.(my emphasis: Z.W. Saul)

Another writing system is the alphabetic writing system originating with the Greek alphabet. This system Finegan (2004:433-434) describes as follows:

An alphabet is a set of graphic symbols, each symbol of which represents a distinctive sound. Alphabetic writing thus differs from syllabic writing (whose graphs represent syllables) and from logographic writing (whose graphs represent words). The claim that credits the Greeks with inventing the first true alphabet rests on one interpretation of how to evaluate the so-called consonantal scripts, which came into use in about 1700 B.C. Consonantal scripts are writing systems that represent only the consonants, not the vowels, of a language, and it was just such a script that the Greeks borrowed from the Phoenicians. The Roman alphabet is not the only alphabet currently in use. The Greeks still use an alphabet of their own, and so do the Russians, Ukrainian, Bulgarians, and Serbs.

This quotation suggests, again, a variety of writing systems in the world. Some using symbols for consonants only and others using symbols for both vowel and consonant sounds as in the Roman writing system. Harris (1986:30) agrees:



The various types of signs used in the writing systems of the world are commonly classified as (i) alphabetic, (ii) syllabic, (iii) logographic, (iv) pictographic, and (v) ideographic. For people educated in the Western tradition, the most familiar of these is the first. The form of alphabet most widely used at the present day is the English alphabet, comprising twenty-six letters, each of which has a name and an allotted place in a conventional sequence known as 'alphabetical order.' Each of these twenty-six letters has two forms, one called 'capital' letter and the other the 'small' letter.

Each of the letters in some alphabetic writing systems may take one of two forms, namely the capital letter form and the small letter form as in the English alphabet, as follows:

A a
B b
C c
D d

E e
F f
G g
H h
I i
J j
K k
L l
M m
N n
O o
P p
Q q
R r
S s
T t
U u
V v
W w
X x
Y y
Z z

Although Fromkin and Rodman (1978:57) maintain that the alphabetic spelling system reflects the pronunciations of words it is often the case that the sounds of the words in a language are rather unsystematically represented by orthography, that is, by spelling.

If that be so complete accuracy in the spelling of a language, would require some other orthographic system to complement the present writing system. This matter will receive further attention during the course of this study.

Towards the end of the 19th century, efforts were made to develop an orthographic system that could be recognised internationally. Lyons (1981:69), describes these as follows:

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, by which time articulatory phonetics was beginning to make real progress in the Western world, scholars began to feel the need for a standardised and internationally acceptable system of phonetic transcription. Although there was, and still is, much to be said for non-alphabetic systems of representation, it is the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), developed and promulgated by the International Phonetic Association, since 1888,

which, with or without minor modifications, that is now most widely used by linguists. The basic principle upon which the IPA is constructed is that of having a different letter for each distinguishable speech-sound. Since there is in fact no limit to the number of distinguishable speech-sounds that can be produced by the human speech organs, this principle cannot be consistently applied. The IPA, therefore, provides its users with a set of diacritics of various kinds which can be added to the letter-symbols in order to make finer distinctions than the letters alone to make accuracy possible.

Alphabetic refinements needed along with the alphabetic writing system to ensure full accuracy in the writing of a language based on the Roman alphabet, are set out by Mtuze *et al.* (1987:42) as the IPA chart of consonants:



Chart 1

Manner of Articulation	Place of Articulation
------------------------	-----------------------

	Bila- bial	Denti- labial	Alveo- lar	Pre- palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Lateral
Explosives: Voiceless Ejective Voiceless Aspirated Voiced	p' p ^h b		t' t ^h d			k' k ^h g		
Implosive: voiced	ɓ							
Fricatives: Voiceless Voiced		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ		x ɣ	h ɦ	ɬ ɮ
Affricates: Voiceless ejective Voiceless Aspirated Voiced			ts' ts ^h dz	tʃ' tʃ ^h dʒ		kx'		tɬ' tɬ
Nasals: Plain Breathy voiced nasals	m mɦ	ɱ	n nɦ		ɲ	ŋ		
Liquids: Voiced Breathy voiced lateral			l lɦ					
Vibrant: Voiced			r					
Semi-vowels: Voiced Murmured					j jɦ	w wɦ		
Nasal affricate compounds: Voiceless Compound Voiced compound			nts' ndz	ɲtʃ' ɲdʒ				ntɬ' ndɮ

Finch (1998:63) too argues for alphabetic refinement:

The alphabetic symbols that have to be used in the writing of language are the ones which enable each and every sound of speech to be represented by its writing symbol. The general point we need to bear in mind is that any alphabet has to decide not only how to represent sound but also how much of it to represent. And this will depend on the use for which it is intended. ... No alphabet, however refined, could discriminate the language use of every individual, and it is worth asking ourselves what would its use be were it possible. The conventional alphabet can only serve as an appropriate means of representing the actual sounds of speech. Arguably, it makes the best of a bad job, but there's no way it can cope with the shifting, manifestly variable world of sound. As linguists, however, we need a far more sensitive and extensive alphabet, one capable of representing the individual sound shape of each word with a greater degree of accuracy.

Indeed, a much higher degree of accuracy regarding the orthographic representation of sounds and sound combinations may be achieved by means of the use of certain IPA symbols in combination with a conventional, alphabetical system of writing. This matter will receive further attention in the chapters that follow.



2.3 General requirements of a good orthography

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By general requirements is meant - all that is needed in the construction of a good orthography of any language. The theories that have been used in the study of this phenomenon are those of De Saussure along with those of other linguists such as Pei, Diringer and Veltman.

2.3.1 The theory of De Saussure

Ferdinand de Saussure was born on 26 November 1857. He was a Swiss linguist and his ideas served as a basis for many significant developments in the 20th century. He is widely considered to be one of the fathers of 20th century linguistics. In 1906 De Saussure began teaching the Course of General Linguistics that would consume the greater part of his attention until his death in 1913. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) is generally recognized as the creator of the modern theory of structuralism. His best-known book, *A Course in General Linguistics*, was published posthumously in 1916. The publication transformed 19th century comparative and historical philology

effectively into 20th century contemporary linguistics
(<http://www.answers.com/topic/ferdinand-de-saussure> (Accessed 16/05/2007)).

De Saussure (1964:23-24) is of the opinion that:

Language and writing are two distinct systems of signs; the second exists for the sole purpose of representing the first. The linguistic object is not both the written and the spoken forms of words; the spoken forms alone constitute the object. But the spoken word is so intimately bound to its written image that the latter manages to usurp the main role. People attach even more importance to the written image of a vocal sign than to the sign itself.

There is indeed a fundamental difference between oral and written language.

Language does have a definite and stable oral tradition that is independent of writing, but today the influence of the written form tends to make us overlook this. The first linguists tended to confuse language with its written form. Scholars still tend to do so because language appears to be governed by a code which consists of a written set of strict orthographic rules; and that is why writing acquires primary importance. The result is that people tend to forget that they learned to speak before they learned to write, and the natural sequence is reversed (De Saussure, 1964:24-25).

According to De Saussure, although language is independent of writing, this is forgotten because of the influence of the written form. Language in the form of speech enables one to function successfully even without being able to write. However, where there is no language there can't be any writing. According to De Saussure (1964: 25-26) there are only two systems of writing. These systems are the ideographic system and the phonetic system. In an ideographic system each word is represented by a single sign that is unrelated to the sounds of the word itself. The phonetic system tries to reproduce the succession of sounds that make up a word. Phonetic systems are sometimes syllabic, sometimes alphabetic, i.e. based on the irreducible elements used in speaking. Moreover, ideographic systems freely become mixtures when certain ideograms lose their original value and become symbols of isolated sounds.

De Saussure (1964:25-26) claims that the difference between the ideographic system and the phonetic system is that, in an ideographic system, the sign which has represented each word is not related to the sounds of the word at all, whereas in a phonetic system the sounds that make up a word are reproduced. De Saussure, (1964:27-28) maintains that there is a discrepancy between writing and pronunciation and there are reasons for this discrepancy. First, language is constantly evolving, whereas writing tends to remain stable. The result is that a point is reached where writing no longer corresponds to what it is supposed to record. A transcription that is accurate at a particular moment may be absurd a century later. It suggests that people may change their graphic symbols to conform with changes in pronunciation and then relinquish the effort. Another reason for discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation is this: if an alphabet is borrowed from another language, its resources may not be appropriate for their new function; expedients will have to be found; e.g. the use of two letters to designate a single sound. Another reason is the influence of etymology (science of the origin and history of words) which helps to widen the gap between spelling and pronunciation. The discrepancy of etymology has been especially strong during certain periods (e.g. the Renaissance).

One of the reasons for the discrepancy that exists between writing and pronunciation is that language is developmental in nature, whereas writing is static (De Saussure, 1964). This results in a lack of correspondence between the two. Another reason for discrepancy between the two is the borrowing of an alphabet from another language. Furthermore, with regard to the results of the discrepancy, De Saussure, (1964:29-32) believes that:

To classify the inconsistencies of writing would take too long. One salient disadvantage is the multiplicity of symbols that stand for the same sound. Being unstable and striving always for regularity, writing may vacillate at times; the result is fluctuating orthographies that stem from efforts to record sounds at different periods. Another result is that the less writing represents what it is supposed to represent, the stronger the tendency to use it as a basis becomes. Whoever says that a certain letter must be pronounced a certain way is mistaking the written image of a sound for the sound itself. False notions about the relationship between sound and graphic symbols appear even in grammatical rules. The pronunciation of a word is determined not by its spelling, but by its history. The form of a word at a particular

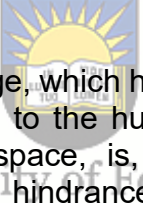
moment stands for a moment in its enforced evolution. Each step is determined by the preceding step. Mispronunciations due to spelling will probably appear more frequently as time goes on, and the number of letters pronounced by speakers will probably increase.

The main idea that is brought forward by this linguist is that one of the causes of inconsistency in writing is the use of different symbols for the representation of one and the same sound. It suggests that for writing to become consistent, each and every sound should be represented by its own unique symbol.

This discussion of De Saussure is now followed by a discussion of a set of selected theories from other linguists.

2.3.2 The theories of other linguists

Of written language, Pei (1965:24) observes that:



The written form of the language, which has been, is, and will be of immense practical importance to the human race in transmitting meanings across time and space, is, from the standpoint of linguistics, both a help and a hindrance. It is a help so far as it gives us partial access to speech forms that have disappeared from the world's scene. It is a hindrance because it does not always faithfully portray such speech forms and often proves to be misleading. Writing is of two main varieties: the pictographic-ideographic or logographic (like the Chinese), where there is no link with the spoken sounds, and the written symbol is directly tied to the thought-concept; and the syllabic-alphabetic, where the written form tends to portray the sounds of the spoken language, thereby setting itself up as a symbol of a symbol.

Without any doubt, it is important to note that writing is very important because life without it is not complete and this is why linguists tried by all means to introduce different writing systems. With regard to writing systems, Jensen (1969:24) concurs with Pei, saying:

If we acknowledge the essential characteristics of writing in the true sense to be twofold, namely 1. its production by the act of drawing, painting or scratching on a durable writing-material, and 2. the purpose of communicating (to others or, as an aid to the memory, to

the writer himself), then we may describe those manifestations resembling writing in which one of the two characteristics is missing or is scarcely discernible as first steps towards writing. If the first characteristic is absent but the purpose of communication is fulfilled we can, if we wish to retain the word 'writing' in its wider sense, speak of object-writing; if on the other hand the second characteristic is missing while the first is present, it is purely a matter of pictures, arising from the playful or artistic urge, or it is a question of magico-religious symbols.

It is known that each and every modern language has its own orthography. Various linguists have expressed themselves about the concept of orthography. For instance, Diringer (1962:13) is of the opinion that "orthography is the graphic counterpart of speech, the "fixing" of spoken language in a permanent or semi-permanent form." It means that, orthography and speech go hand in hand, that is, they are always together. In other words, whilst speech can only be heard but not seen, it can become visible in the form of orthography.

Doughty, P.S., Doughty, A. and Doughty, P. (1971:69) are of the opinion that "the relationship between speech and writing is much more complex than most people realise, because their view of speech tends to be dominated by their view of the grammatical patterns of the written language." The relationship between speech and writing therefore is not as easy to understand as most people think, because they simply compare the two by just thinking about the grammatical patterns of the written language.

Other linguists who have expressed themselves about orthography are Godman and Veltman (1990:30-31) who state that:

Orthographies are ways in which scripts, e.g. Roman, Arabic, Cyrillic are organised to give rise to individual spellings. It is normally understood that only scripts which are organised according to phonographic principles, that is, on the basis of sound-written symbol relationships, may have 'orthographies' and 'spellings.'

What has been stated by the above linguists is attested to by Sterling and Robson (1990:33), who say:

Scripts are organised in terms of orthographic principles, which relate graphemes (including devices of the apostrophe, punctuation and letter-case) or characters to one or more linguistic components.

It is also well to note the remarks made in *Wikipedia* about orthography:

The orthography of a language specifies the correct way of using a specific writing system to write the language. It is derived from the Greek *orthos* ("correct") and *graphein* ("to write"). Orthography describes or defines the set of symbols (graphemes and diacritics) used, and the rules about how to write these symbols. Depending on the nature of a writing system, the rules may include punctuation, spelling and capitalisation. While "orthography" colloquially is often used synonymously with spelling, spelling is only part of orthography. An orthography may be described as "efficient" if it has one grapheme per phoneme (distinctive speech sound) and *vice versa*. An orthography may also have varying degrees of efficiency for reading or writing. For example, diverse letter, digraph, and diacritic shapes contribute to diverse word shapes, which aid fluent reading, while heavy use of apostrophes or diacritics makes writing slow. These are all considerations in the design of a writing system.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthography>) (Accessed 05/05/2007)

So it becomes clear that the function of the orthography of a language is to provide guidelines for the writing of that particular language. Orthography describes the set of symbols that has to be used for the representation of speech-sounds in accordance with the rules of the writing of a particular language. Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:112) put it as follows:

It is not infrequent to hear people speaking of "orthography and spelling rules." This gives the impression that the term, orthography, whatever it means, excludes matters of spelling. It is suggested that, for the purposes of the isiXhosa document, the following brief but complete and profound definition of the concept, orthography, be adopted. It comes from Webster's comprehensive reference dictionary and encyclopaedia (1954:367): "The art of spelling of individual words and the writing of groups of words correctly."

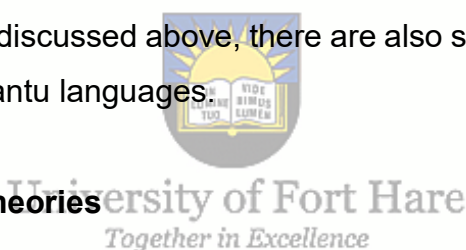
It is evident from the statements of these scholars that the concepts of orthography and spelling are often treated as synonymous although spelling only represents a part of orthography. This difference between these two concepts is derived from the

definition of the word orthography, which is defined above as the art of spelling of individual words and the writing of groups of words correctly. Clearly, the term “orthography” not only applies for the writing of single words, but also the way in which groups of words are written as a phrase or as a sentence, including word division, hyphenation and use of apostrophe.

Murray (1909:214) deviates to some extent from this position as he defines orthography as “correct or proper spelling; spelling according to accepted usage, the way in which words are conventionally written.” It is clear that Murray regards the term orthography as being synonymous with the spelling of words. However for Tyolwana *et al.* the term “orthography” does not only apply to the spelling of words but also to other aspects such as mentioned above. It is clear therefore that there are different interpretations of the term “orthography.” For the purposes of this study however the interpretation of Tyolwana *et al.* as presented above, will be recognised.

In addition to the theories discussed above, there are also some theories which relate more specifically to the Bantu languages.

2.3.3 Bantu language theories



In this section, attention will be given to the historical development of the orthographies of the Nguni languages, including isiXhosa, isiZulu and isiNdebele. For obvious reasons the main emphasis will be on the historical development of isiXhosa orthography. The views of recognised scholars in the field of Bantu linguistics on the development of an accurate orthography such as those of Meinhof, Doke and Dyubhele will also be presented here.

Notable in the historical development of isiXhosa orthography, is the contribution of John Bennie, who came from Scotland in 1821 as one of the first two missionaries sent to South Africa by the Glasgow Missionary Society. From the commencement of his missionary career, Bennie was planning the provision of literature for the Bantu. One of his tasks, when he settled at “Chumie” Mission station, was to devise an orthography for the language being spoken where he was. He set himself to master isiXhosa, and before a year was out he was able to report that the attainment of his

goal, namely to devise an orthography for this language, would certainly be a most difficult task. He proceeded to give specimens of the language and to make observations on the sounds and orthography of Xhosa, as adopted by the missionaries. In September 1823 Rev. John Ross, a new missionary of the Glasgow Society, arrived in Cape Town. Ross had with him a small printing press, with a quantity of type, paper and ink. Arriving at “Chumie” on December 16th, the press was got in order on the 17th; on the 18th the Roman alphabet was set up; on the 19th fifty copies were printed; and on the 20th Bennie recorded that a new era had commenced in the history of the Xhosa-speaking people. From the time of the setting-up of the press, Bennie, Brownlee, Thomson and Ross bent their minds to the production of literature, including the Scriptures. In the Public Library at Cape Town may be seen a small booklet printed by the press in 1824. It contains the alphabet, spelling lists of two, three, four, five, six and seven letters followed by groups of sentences (Shepherd, 1955:26-28).

It is clear that up to this period, there was no such thing as written isiXhosa. The missionaries from Europe had to somehow reduce this language to writing out of the blue, and on their own. This was a very great challenge to them as this was their first contact with an African language and so it is to be expected that their design of an isiXhosa orthography would be far from perfect.

Unfortunately, however, their orthography was never standardized and no rules were formulated, so that in all the texts published in isiXhosa before the mid-1930's word-division was inconsistent. Even in the various versions of the Bible, consistency was lacking, for instance, prefixes were written either conjunctively with the nominal stem, or disjunctively. At the beginning of the 1930's a serious scientific attempt was made by Professor C.M. Doke and Dr W.G. Bennie to bring order into isiXhosa spelling and the so-called New Orthography was devised and introduced in 1935. This orthography remained in vogue for twenty years, but proved to be impracticable mainly, because of the three non-Roman symbols [ǀ], [ǃ], and [ǂ] for the implosive /b/, the velar fricative and the voiceless palatal fricative and also because of the unnecessarily complicated rules governing word-division. The Xhosa community never accepted this orthography, the Cape African Teacher's Association made representations to the Cape Education Department to simplify it, the Xhosa

newspapers, Imvo zabaNtsundu and Umthunywa rejected it. The Bible was transliterated into this New Orthography only towards the end of the twenty-year period, and the production of Xhosa literature was hampered because of the insuperable difficulty presented by the three exotic symbols mentioned above which were installed by only two presses, namely Lovedale in the Eastern Cape and Morija in what was then Basutoland (now Lesotho).

In 1948 the Nationalist Party came into power and began to implement its Native Education policy. It was only in 1954 that it became possible to rationalize and unify the orthographies of isiXhosa and isiZulu. IsiXhosa orthography then reverted to the use of the 26 letters of the Roman alphabet, without any alien symbols. After the spelling rules were formulated in 1955 and revised in 1969, it became necessary to make provision for the orthographic representation of new speech sounds that formed part of words adopted from English. In isiXhosa one of these sounds is the voiced pre-palatal fricative which is represented by [3] /zh/ as in */ithelevizhini/* (G.Dic. of XH. Vol. 3, 1989:xxxiii-xxxiv). Unfortunately this development was not successful, since it did not resolve all the challenges that isiXhosa orthography faced then and still today. This matter will receive further attention during the course of the study.



Concerning the historical development of the isiZulu orthography, Gerard (1971:181) claims that the development of isiZulu literature (and therefore also of isiZulu orthography) only took place some time after the development of isiXhosa and seSotho orthography. This may be ascribed to the establishment of the Zulu nation during the early decades of the 19th century during the reign of King Chaka. It was only after matters had been stabilised at the political level, that commencement could be made with the development of a Zulu orthography.

The isiZulu language was reduced to writing soon after the arrival of the first European settlers in the current KwaZulu-Natal. The first publication in Zulu was an extract from the Scriptures that appeared in 1846. This was followed in 1855 by Bishop John Colenso's Elementary Grammar of the Zulu Kafir Language (Gerard, 1971:182). These publications were intended, not for Zulu speakers, but for missionaries who wanted to learn the Zulu language.

Bryant's Zulu-English Dictionary appeared in 1905. Although this was an outstanding lexicographical work, it soon went out of print and the need arose for a more advanced dictionary of the Zulu language that would also provide more comprehensive guidelines for the standardisation of Zulu orthography. This gave rise to the publication of the Zulu-English Dictionary (Doke and Vilakazi) in 1948. For the first time a proper set of guidelines for Zulu orthography was made available to users of the language. The compilers of this dictionary based their work on Bryant's work, although advantage was also taken of the lists provided by Carl Meinhof in his Introduction to the Phonology of the Bantu languages and other publications from this period (Doke and Vilakazi, 1972:x-xi).

The orthography that is employed in Doke and Vilakazi's Zulu-English Dictionary is that which was agreed upon between the Inter-University Committee on African Studies and the Natal Native Education Department. It provides valuable guidance for among other things, the spelling of borrowed words as well as for hyphen usage in the case of compound words. Although stress is not generally indicated in the dictionary, exceptions have been made in the case of ideophones, where stress marking does occur. At the same time, ideophones with abnormally long vowels are indicated by a doubling of such vowel sounds, eg: /zwii/ (an overpowering noise). The dictionary also provides clear guidance on the use of capitals, including the capitalising of the initial letter of the stem of words indicating proper names, eg: /amaNgesil/. A complex method of tone marking was used in the dictionary and the authors have expressed the wish that a simpler method be worked out and used in Zulu publications in the future (Doke and Vilakazi, 1972:x-xi).

Concerning the historical development of the orthography of isiNdebele, the first Ndebele publications appeared in 1863 after three years of strenuous work to produce the Ndebele alphabet. The missionaries Thomas Morgan Thomas, John S. Moffat and William Sykes of the London Missionary Society based at Inyathi Mission (in the present Zimbabwe) did this work. Their linguistic training or competence in Ndebele cannot be established. However, it is known that they already had Zulu texts with them when they got to the Ndebele. Maybe it is an overstatement to claim that the missionaries could have simultaneously learnt a language and pioneered in the writing of it. This could only be so if these missionaries were already fluent in Zulu. It would

seem that the missionaries were conversant with Zulu since, by 1866 four books were already printed. These early missionaries decided to base their educational work, even at that early date, on Ndebele and not on Zulu since Ndebele had already diverged, particularly in its lexicon, from the parent language. Because of the assumption that Ndebele was markedly different from Zulu, new symbols were introduced for phonemes already represented in the Zulu orthography (Hadebe, 2002:53-54).

Apart from creating a different orthography for Ndebele, that is, one that is different from that of Zulu, the missionaries could not agree on certain symbols to represent some Ndebele phonemes. Some aspects of the original Ndebele alphabet were determined by majority opinion rather than by any clearly defined linguistic principle. The Sykes and Moffat version became the accepted Ndebele writing system and Thomas produced his own version. The Sykes/Moffat alphabet was officially adopted in April 1862. Thomas could not accept some of the symbols proposed by Sykes and Moffat and he therefore produced his own version of the alphabet. By October 1860, Thomas had even written an elementary school book in his orthography. However, missionaries at Kuruman, in South Africa, refused to print it because it was believed to be too early then for the publication of any written material in Ndebele. It was argued that the missionaries at Inyathi, i.e. Sykes, Moffat and Thomas had had too little time by then to have mastered Ndebele sufficiently to be able to write it down. The other reason for turning down Thomas's manuscript was the disagreement between the three missionaries at Inyathi Mission about the spelling to be used. The printers at Kuruman would only print Ndebele manuscripts that had been written in an agreed alphabet in order to avoid unnecessary changes in the near future. Eventually the Sykes/Moffat alphabet was officially adopted (Hadebe, 2002:55).

Controversy and disagreement over the Ndebele alphabet were not confined to the pioneers of the Ndebele writing system, but involved other interested parties as well. As early as 1870, criticism of the alphabet had begun to appear. J.B. Thomas, arriving at Inyathi Mission in 1870, expressed dissatisfaction with the alphabet. Due to criticism and perhaps the desire to have an acceptable Ndebele alphabet, changes were made. Consequently Ndebele material written as early as 1900 showed some modifications and differed from that produced in 1863. During the 1930s there were further changes in the spelling of Ndebele, culminating in the orthographic reforms of 1953-6 which set

out that /h/ should represent aspiration. There was a notable change in the marking of sounds like /p, b, t / by digraphs /ph/ , /bh/ and /th/ respectively. After the reforms of the 1950s, the Ndebele writing system also adopted a more conjunctive approach to word division. This transition has left some parts of speech written as independent units that can be treated orthographically as non-words. It is those speech forms that in writing are conjoined to words that are problematic in Ndebele word division (Hadebe, 2002:56 & 58).

Since the publication of Hadebe's book in 2006 on the standardisation of the Ndebele Language through dictionary making, there is no other known work about Ndebele orthography. Ndebele orthography as modified in the 1950's still stands. One of the possible reasons for lack of research in this area is that Zimbabwe has been experiencing various socio-economic challenges over the past three decades, deflecting attention away from linguistic research. It is hoped that in time, further research will be carried out in this field of study.

The pioneering missionaries clearly faced insurmountable hurdles in their attempt to reduce these languages into writing for the first time, as these were not their mother tongue. Given that these Nguni languages were first reduced into writing by men who could not even speak them well, their orthographies are in fact surprisingly better than could have been expected. The missionaries provided a great service to speakers of the Nguni languages by their efforts.

Over the years, a number of eminent scholars have contributed to the development of the theories on the art of writing with specific reference to the orthography of the Bantu languages. It is of major importance to note that the first memorandum issued by the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures was devoted to Practical Orthography because of its diversity of practice. To a native speaker of a particular language, what is of great importance is the urgency of the presentation of the written language in a way that will be logically satisfactory. In the past, as in the present, lack of uniformity in the writing of these languages continues to frustrate effective written communication (James, 1927:125).

To have a language with a consistently clear written form is universally desired. It is important to have a language whose form of writing clearly depicts the different spoken sounds for the production of an acceptable meaning. Meinhof (1928:233) agrees:

There are two requisites for a practical orthography in African as well as in other languages - simplicity and clearness. The orthography must be simple because it is not intended only for scholars, but chiefly for school children and people of moderate education. As a basis for the orthography we take the Latin alphabet. As, however, many African languages contain sounds which cannot be written by means of this alphabet, it is either necessary to give the letters of the Latin alphabet a new significance or to introduce new symbols.

There is nothing wrong with the introduction of new symbols in one's language if they will enable that language to have a consistent and accurate orthography, no matter how alien those symbols are. It is ideal for each and every language to have equal status with other written languages.

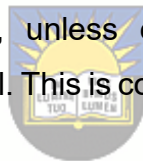
Doke (1939:308) mentions the fact that the translation of the Bible into the major Bantu languages has had a positive effect on the development of these languages. According to Doke the speakers of these languages are now able to use them in correspondence, etc. However these languages cannot remain static, they must develop through the acquisition of new vocabulary, including the borrowing of foreign vocabulary from European languages.

Inevitably the introduction of new words into African languages will invariably bring with it the introduction of new sounds that are foreign to these languages. In consequence, the orthography of these languages needs to be revised and updated on a regular basis to make provision for the standardisation of the spelling of these new sounds. This matter will receive further attention during the course of the study.

In the past the speakers of the Bantu languages showed no interest in the development of this orthography. For written language the focus was simply on one language, namely English. Only more recently the orthography of all these languages had to be developed and so as Tucker (1949: 200-201, 211) explains:

For years now, the question of orthography in the South African Bantu languages has kept the authorities busy. It flares up periodically in different parts of the country, and local committees are called from time to time to deal with the conflagration. In the past, unfortunately, these committees have too often concerned themselves with the problems of one language only, and apparently ignored both the effect their decisions would have on literature exchange and the attempts of previous committees to solve similar problems in related languages. Thus we have Zulu and Xhosa, very closely related languages, with considerable orthographical differences. The Nguni languages are seven-vowel languages, but the mid vowels *e* and *o* belong to the semi-open phonemes respectively. Therefore only five vowel letters are necessary, obviously *a, e, i, o, u*. The early Nguni orthographists were more phonetically accurate than the present-day writers, when they noticed the breathiness present in both the unvoiced and voiced sounds.

Fortunately, the early Nguni orthographists were good in phonetics, and had no difficulty whatsoever in detecting the problem areas in the representation of sounds by their unique symbol. Accuracy in the spelling of African languages can never be reached, unless each and every sound is represented by its own unique symbol. This is confirmed by statements such as the following:



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It is important to state briefly, that by uniform orthography we mean that a given character or letter have but one and the same value ascribed to it, and that a given sound which is common to all the dialects, be represented uniformly and universally by one and the same character in all said dialects; or in other words, that one and the same character be employed to represent one and the same sound whenever that sound exists; and that one and the same peculiar sound, or a sound which is not common to all the dialects, be always employed to represent that same peculiar or limited sound, whenever it exists among any of the tribes.

(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3217935>) (Accessed 15/06/2007).

This observation clearly confirms the principle that each sound in a given language must be represented by its own unique symbol in written form. The fact that the Nguni languages have seven vowels, whilst only five symbols are used to represent them graphically, reflects contravention of this universally accepted principle. The standardisation of these languages is compromised by this shortcoming. This matter too will receive thorough attention during the course of the study.

In addition to this anomaly, it is evident that isiXhosa orthography also reveals several other shortcomings. Dyubhele (2001:1) for instance, is of the view that the orthographic development of isiXhosa has been neglected over the years. According to him the spelling of the language is characterised by uncertainty, confusion and the presence of inconsistencies. He puts it as follows:

Some problems emanate from the orthographical rules which are, in some cases not consistent. Even those isiXhosa speakers who are supposed to be well-versed with the correct system of writing, seem to be uncertain as to which rule to apply, and when. Some problems of inconsistencies are found in various materials written in isiXhosa especially manuscripts, dictionaries, the constitution and the electronic media and they relate to capitalisation, hyphenation, and the spelling of isiXhosa aspirated sounds.

The problems of inconsistency outlined here, may be found in various materials written in isiXhosa; hence the researcher will use a set of specimen documents written in isiXhosa to determine the accuracy of the orthography.



The problems so identified by Dyubhele have also been pointed out by other researchers in this field. Tyolwana, Jaftha, Mini, Mtuze, Tshabe, Makeleni, Saule, Kiva, Gxilishe, Satyo, Mkonto, Fanie and Nabe (2005:6) for instance, state that:

There is a need for the revision of the rules and principles of the writing of isiXhosa in the booklet entitled *Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3* which was printed in 1980. Despite its comprehensiveness and adequacy for its time, there has been a need for a long time for the said Standard Orthography to be updated and adapted, and gaps to be filled. This was and still is necessary in view of new developments in the language isiXhosa, and because of evidence, in many recent writings, of the fact that many authors must have forgotten about, or are ignorant of, the existence of this high quality standardized work.

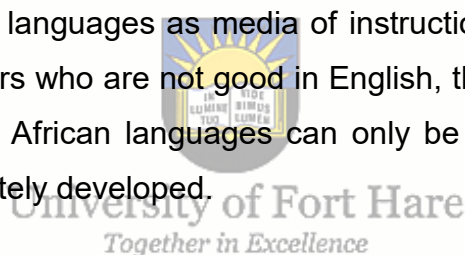
These linguists emphasise the need to improve the orthography of isiXhosa in order for it to be written according to the requirements of the present time. This shows that language is not static, it is developing. It has to move with the times. According to the above statement, it seems as if some of the authors of isiXhosa reading materials are

not aware of the present need for the standardisation of its orthography, as a result they appear to be behind schedule.

The above views with regard to the lack of standardisation of isiXhosa are also relevant to determine whether the African languages can be used successfully as media of instruction up to tertiary level or not. In trying to answer this question, Mutasa (2002:243-244) states that “African languages are deemed inadequate as languages of tuition for other subjects because of perceived linguistic deficiencies.”

Mutasa ascribes this inadequacy to a lack of terminology and in particular specialised terminology that is pertinent to the social economic and social domains. However, based on what has been said above by Dyubhele and others, this inadequacy should not be attributed to terminological constraints only but equally to lack of standardisation of the orthography of the language.

The idea of using African languages as media of instruction even at tertiary level is attractive, because learners who are not good in English, the language mainly in use at present, suffer unduly. African languages can only be used successfully if their orthographies are adequately developed.



A discussion of the specific requirements of a good orthography is therefore necessary.

2.4 Specific requirements of a good orthography

By ‘specific requirements’ is meant the characteristics or principles of a good orthography required for effective writing in a certain language. In this section the individual characteristics of a good orthography as described in detail by several linguists will be reviewed.

2.4.1 Description of the general characteristics of a good orthography

Different linguists have described the general requirements of a good orthography, among them is Smalley (1963) who describes the specific characteristics of a good orthography. According to Smalley (1963:24-25) a good writing system is one where clear principles have been developed regarding the following:

- (i) Writing of capital letters
- (ii) Indication of intonation and other important aspects of speech
- (iii) Alphabetic systems where ideally each phoneme is independently represented by a different symbol
- (iv) Representation of phonemes by the alphabet
- (v) At syllabic level, where each syllable, usually a group of one or two consonants followed by one or two vowels with or without final consonants, is represented by an individual symbol
- (vi) The usage of the apostrophe
- (vii) A writing system which is able to accommodate more than one dialect
- (viii) Usage of diacritic marks
- (ix) Representation of vowels by diacritic marks above the vowel and below in the case of consonants to characterize tone (Smalley seems to be of the opinion that all vowels in a language should be accompanied by diacritic marks. This however, does not apply to isiXhosa, where some vowels will have diacritic marks but not others).

Much earlier Murray (1909:214) outlined the following aspects for spelling:

- * Letters / symbols aspect
- * Phonetic / phonological aspect, i.e. similarities between the letters of the alphabet and the combinations thereof used in the written form on the one hand, and on the other the phonetic symbols used to represent the pronunciation of the sounds of a language
- * The grammatical/syntactical aspects reflected in the kind of word-division and morpheme combinations peculiar to a language
- * The various distinctions of meaning effected solely or partly by morpheme

combinations or disjunctions

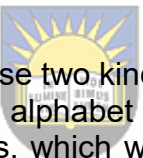
- * Hyphenation of compounds or lack of it, conditioned by peculiar formatives forming the parts of the compounds concerned.

What follows are individual descriptions of the various aspects of a good orthography by different linguists.

2.4.2 Individual characteristics of a good orthography

In this section, the specific characteristics of a good orthography (eg.: capitalisation, tone, etc.) are dealt with one by one.

In all the languages of the world that are based on the Roman alphabet system, a combination of capital letters and small letters is used. Moorhouse (1953:139-140) states the following with reference to the usage of **upper casing** versus **lower casing**:



In our writing and printing we use two kinds of letters, the capital and the small. All the letters of the alphabet that we have studied up to now have been formal capitals, which were for long the sole script used in writing Greek and Latin; not only on inscriptions and official documents, but also in literary works. But for quick and easy writing with a pen, or stylus, on papyrus, parchment, or wax, there developed what is called the cursive style in which the writing is done more continuously, with less lifting of the pen; and it is ultimately from this that our small letters derive.

The use of capital letters depends on the requirements of a particular language. In other words, capitalisation can be used differently in different languages. But at present, in the orthography of isiXhosa there is still inconsistency as far as capitalisation is concerned. This matter will receive further attention in Chapter 5 of this study.

The Bantu languages are generally known as “tone languages.” This means that tone plays a very important role in these languages and therefore the correct demarcation of the term is of utmost importance in the writing of these languages.

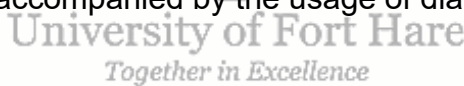
As Sloat, Taylor and Hoard (1978:76) rightly observe:

Pitch differences that extend over phonetic units larger than the syllables are called intonations. One of the primary functions of intonation is demarcative. By means of intonation, syllables are grouped into phrases, and phrases into sentences. Intonation is what welds strings of syllables or groups of phrases together.

Whilst the observations of Sloat *et al.* above only make provision for the concept of intonation, Dik's observation is more inclusive, since it makes provision for the concepts of intonation as well as tone. Dik (1989:384) says:

Whereas tone and accent characterize designated syllables or constituents, intonation stretches across the whole linguistic expression. The pattern created by the distribution of tones and accents is necessarily part of the intonation. On the other hand, the intonation has certain "holistic" features which are independent of the tonal and accentual structure.

One may say that, in the writing of isiXhosa, it is not easy to find examples of both intonation and stress. This language is said to be tonal because in its spelling there are words which are spelled the same although they differ in tone. In the writing of this language, tone has to be accompanied by the usage of diacritics.



Although it is stated above that there is a relationship between tone, accent and intonation, Sloat *et al.* (1978:73-74) are of the opinion that:

The function of tone is quite different from that of stress. Tones do not mark the beginning and ending of words, nor do they even indicate to the speaker how many words there are in an utterance. The highest pitch may occur on more than one syllable of a word. Languages in which the majority of syllables maintain the same level or register are called register tone languages. In many languages, however, the pitch may rise or fall, so that a syllable that begins on a low tone may end on a high tone, or the reverse. Register tones, falling and rising tones are called simple tones. In addition to simple tones, some languages have complex tones, which both rise and fall in a single syllable. Complex tones may begin with low or mid pitch, rise to a higher pitch and then fall; or they may begin with a mid or high pitch, fall to a lower pitch and then rise. Languages with a predominance of such tones are called contour tone languages.

Sloat *et al.* proceed to describe the following types of tones:

- (a) Register tone languages are described as languages in which the majority of syllables maintain the same level or register.
- (b) Simple tones are register tones, falling and rising tones.
- (c) Complex tones are tones which both rise and fall in a single syllable and may also begin with a mid or high pitch, fall to a lower pitch and then rise.
- (d) Contour tone languages are languages with a predominance of complex tones.

Fromkin and Rodman (1998:241) complement these observations as follows:

In some tone languages the pitch of each tone is level; in others, the direction of the pitch (whether it glides from high to low or from low to high) is important. Tones that glide are called contour tones; tones that do not are called level or register tones. In a tone language, it is not the absolute pitch of the syllables that is important but the relations among the pitches of different syllables. After all, some individual speakers have pitched voices, others have low-pitched, and others medium-pitched. In many tone languages we find a falling-off of the pitch, a continual downdrift of the tones. The lowering of the pitch is called downdrift.

Again, about tone, Dik (1989:380) is of the opinion that:

The feature tone is confined to so-called "tone languages." In such languages, each syllable is characterized by an intrinsic "pitch profile," which in many cases is distinctive for the lexical identity of predicates. These tone differences then play the same role as distinctive differences between segmental phonemes. For that reason, such distinctive tones are often called "tonemes." Tonemes can be distinguished into level tones (e.g. High, Low, Mid) and contour tones, in which there is a change in pitch level; contour tones may be simple (e.g. a Rise, a Fall) or complex (e.g. a Rise-Fall, or (a Fall-Rise).

The above-mentioned linguists differ in their views about contour tones. On the one hand, Sloat, Taylor and Hoard (1978) and Dik (1989) are of the opinion that languages with a predominance of simple tones and complex tones are to be called contour tone languages. On the other hand, Fromkin and Rodman (1998) believe that contour tones are tones that glide. Tucker (1964:594) however, is of the opinion that:

African languages may be divided into two kinds from the tonal point of view. There are those in which orthographically recognizable morphological elements are relatively few, but where tonal values are so important that any written passage is meaningless without tonal reference, i.e. languages with a tonal system reminiscent of Chinese. There are those that have an apparently full complement of orthographically recognizable morphemes, and where the native speakers themselves have little or no difficulty in reading unmarked scripts - the content of meaning almost invariably giving the tonal clue - so that the study of tone has come to be regarded, even by responsible investigators, as an 'extra.'

Yet another linguist, Bird (1998:2- 3), believes that:

The omission of tonal distinction from the orthography of many tone languages is a barrier to fluent reading. Williamson states that 'if a language is a tone language, then we need some method for indicating the tones so as to distinguish different words' (Williamson 1984:7f). Together with the assumption that tone should be marked in tone languages, are the concomitant assumptions that tone should be marked phonemically and diacritically. Phonemic tone marking involves identifying the inventory of tonemes - according to some variety of phonemic theory - and assigning a grapheme to each. The second assumption is that tone should be marked diacritically (Williamson 1984:41, Pike 1948:38). If tone has no function in the language, or if the tone system is shallow, then no special treatment is required over and above the traditional phonemic one, resulting in zero marking and shallow marking respectively.

Bird's observations tie in directly with earlier observations made by Roux (1995). Roux (1995:198) states that:

The tonal studies in isiXhosa boast an impressive list of prominent scholars who have been operative in this field over a long period of time. In explicating the various tonal types and their graphic representation in *The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa*, Pahl (1989) recognizes the usual three tones, H (igh), L (ow) and F (alling), as well as a fourth tone: Where necessary a fourth, namely a grammatical tone mark /□ / may be used to indicate an intermediate tone or mid-tone.

This suggests that the usage of tone markings in the writing of certain words in isiXhosa is very important, as it will prevent confusion in pronunciation as well as meaning.

Hermanson (2001:112) argues that isiXhosa is a tonal language. The meaning of Psalm 8:2a in the new translation “*nditsho abantwana kwaneentsana ziyakubonga*” (even the children and infants praise you) is clear, no matter how badly it is read. He further states that one wonders how many Xhosa worshippers have been shocked by hearing the words in the old translation “*Emlonyeni wabantwana nabanyayo useke amandla*” (From the mouths of babes and sucklings you have founded strength) being read with the wrong intonation as *Emlonyeni wabantwana nabanyayo useke amandla* (Out of the mouths of babes and those who defacate you have founded strength).

The writer demonstrates that it is necessary for isiXhosa to be treated as a tonal language as there are times when certain words can be pronounced incorrectly if tonal markings are not used. Such incorrect pronunciation may result in a meaning so different as to embarrass the reader.



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Like most Bantu languages, Xhosa is a tonal language, that is, the same sequence of consonants and vowels can have different meanings when said with a rising or falling or high or low intonation. One of the most distinctive features of the language is the prominence of click consonants; “Xhosa,” the name of the language itself, begins with a click. Xhosa is written using a Latin alphabet-based system. Three letters are used to indicate the basic clicks: c for dental clicks, x for lateral clicks, and q for alveolar clicks. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xhosa_language) (Accessed 15/06/2007).

The consensus appears to be that isiXhosa is really a tonal language which is written using a Latin alphabet-based system. Martinet (1964:77) also argues that in a ‘tone language’ a word is not perfectly identified until the tones have been established in addition to the phonemes. He also emphasises the importance of the usage of tone markings in a tonal language above the phonemes in order for its words to become indubitably clear.

Diacritics, are mainly used with the Latin alphabet to change the sound value of the letter to which they are added. In orthography, a letter modified by a diacritic may be treated either as a new, distinct letter, or as a letter-diacritic combination. This varies from language to language and in some cases, even from case to case within a particular language (<http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Diacritic>) (Accessed 15/06/2007).

As isiXhosa is one of the languages whose written form is based on the Latin alphabet, the only visible diacritic is the usage of the symbol /h/ which indicates aspirated sounds in the writing of words such as *iphepha* (paper), *phaphama* (be watchful), etc. But again, this same symbol in the writing of this language is also used in the writing of the partially voiced bilabial explosive /bh/ in words such as *bhabha* (fly), *bhubha* (die), etc. This can have serious consequences for the pronunciation of words in isiXhosa. This matter will receive further attention later on in the study.

The common use of the apostrophe is “to show the omission of letters in a contraction” (<http://grammar.about.com/od/punctuationandmechanics>). (Accessed 07/05/2007). This study investigates the use of the apostrophe in isiXhosa in instances where a vowel has been omitted from the spelling of a word. Generally, in written isiXhosa, the apostrophe is used whenever a vowel has been omitted as in the following examples: *Ndifun'ukuhamba* (I want to go), *ufun'inyama* (he/she wants meat), etc. This study will recommend additional usage of the apostrophe in the context of borrowed words.

Various linguists have commented on **word division** in Bantu languages. Guthrie (1970:5), one of these, observes:

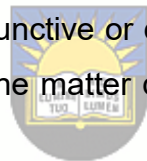
Nearly all the earliest writers on Bantu languages used the system of word division which appeared to them to be the most natural, consequently few of them thought it necessary even to explain the reasons that had influenced them in developing such a system. Before long, it became clear that quite different types of word-division were being practised, sometimes for one and the same language. There can be little doubt that this situation has given rise to more disagreement among workers in Bantu languages than any other single problem. Broadly speaking, there have been two different opinions, known as the conjunctivists and the disjunctivists;

and the fact that these two points of view are irreconcilable has led to much arguing which has all too often proved fruitless.

Wilkes (1985:148) who has also studied word division in Bantu languages comments as follows:

One of the most complicated problems encountered in the writing systems of the South African Bantu Languages is that of word division. Whilst work done by the various language boards has succeeded in bringing much needed certainty in this field, there are nevertheless still many instances in these languages where words and morphemes are written in what seems to be an inconsistent way, thus unnecessarily complicating the writing of these languages. The question is: Why are these forms not written in a consistent manner, that is, either disjunctively or conjunctively as is the case with most of the other words and morphemes in these languages?

In short, Wilkes too finds word division in the writing of African languages to be a problem which has not been fully solved yet. By asking why the writing of these languages should not be either conjunctive or disjunctive, so as to be consistent, he offers no solution to this problem. The matter does call for further discussion during the course of this study.



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As Jones *et al.* (2005:5-6) have focussed on **hyphenation** in isiXhosa, they have this to say about it:

As regards hyphenation, the Department of Bantu Education (1976) states that a hyphen may be used optionally in compound words and duplicated stems, e.g. *umhlalingaphambili* (chairperson) and *phinda-phinda* or *phindaphinda* 'repeat.' Hyphens are also inserted when prefixing concords to figures, for example, *igumbi lesi-4* 'room number 4' and *iphepha lesi-A3* 'A3 paper.' There were many instances in the word lists of inconsistent use of the hyphen as a result of the optionality. The Department of Bantu Education (1976) also recommends that hyphens be inserted between a similar terminative vowel of the concord and the initial vowel of the stem in borrowed terms, e.g. *i-inki* 'ink' and *ama-apile* 'apples.' In our approach it was decided to exclude the hyphen before abbreviations or initials, (e.g. *i-H.E.D.* should be written *iH. E.D.* and u-N Saule would be written as uN Saule), but to accept optionality in compounds and duplicated stems. This decision was based on the length of a word, as lengthy compounded and duplicated words could be difficult to read without the hyphen. In cases where identical

vowels are juxtaposed, and between a prefix and a numeral, the use of a hyphen was maintained.

Jones *et al.* emphasise the importance of a correct use of the hyphen in the writing of some isiXhosa words. Any writer must know how to write correctly in a language so as to respect the principles of its orthography. The use of the hyphen is prescribed in some words and prohibited in others. For instance, where there is a juxtaposition of two similar vowels in the writing of a word, especially that of a borrowed word, it is compulsory for the hyphen to be used between them in order for that particular word to be meaningful. This form of hyphen usage is said to be optional in the writing of the compound words of this language. This matter will be addressed during the course of the study.

Spelling too has drawn the attention of some linguists. With regard to the correct spelling of foreign words that are incorporated into isiXhosa, Batibo (1996:34) is of the opinion that:



Bantu languages have used various strategies or rules in adopting foreign consonant or vowel clusters to their languages. The vowel insertion rule involves the insertion of a vowel between two consonants or after a consonant in syllable final position. The vowel insertion rule is the rule most commonly used in Bantu languages when dealing with clusters from foreign languages. The quality of a vowel to be inserted will normally depend on the predominance of the adjacent segments in the assimilation process. The adjacent segments are the preceding consonant and the preceding vowel.

According to Batibo, the vowel insertion rule is most commonly used for the assimilation of foreign words into the Bantu languages. Van Huyssteen however, (whilst recognising the validity of this rule) also recognises the fact that the vowel insertion rule is not observed as strictly by modern speakers of these languages as it used to be. She (1997:181-182) says of vowel insertion in the Zulu language:

Hlongwane (1995) and Mthembu (1996) warn that the present orthography of African languages, does not reflect current trends of the phonology (and consequently the vocabulary) of these languages. Sounds which were previously uncommon have now become quite common. For instance, in Zulu traditional adoptives

have the open syllabic system of CV, e.g. *ikilasi* (class room). The modern adoptives rather conform to the CCV-pattern, e.g. *iklasi*. Other examples quoted from Hlongwane (1996:61) are *istradi* (street) instead of *isitaladi*, and *idrobha* (town, Afr. dorp) instead of *idolobha*.

Another aspect of the spelling of the language is homorganic articulation. Jokweni (1999:150) correctly observes that:

Homorganic articulation refers to sounds which are produced at the same place of articulation. Nasal-obstruent homorganic articulation therefore refers to an occurrence whereby an alveolar nasal acquires the same place of articulation as the consonant with which it is homorganically articulated. The process itself is, in derivational terms, accomplished by the application of rule(s), whether segmental or autosegmental, that assign to the underlying alveolar nasal (input) the same place of articulation.

The challenge here is to ensure that the orthography of isiXhosa is designed in such a manner that the reader will interpret homorganic sounds for what they are, and that he or she will not interpret them as two different sounds with distinct points of articulation.



About the development of grapheme-to-phoneme and phonological consonant-vowel (CV) structure, which are also part of the study of isiXhosa orthography, Louw (2005:72) states that:

A characteristic of Xhosa in terms of developing grapheme-to-phoneme (a process by which strings of phonemes are converted to strings of phones or allophones) is that there is a direct correlation between the orthographic representation and the phonetic representation of this language. In other words, the language is written as it is pronounced. The orthography complies with the phonological consonant-vowel (CV) structure of the language, where a consonant sound is always followed by a vowel sound and an orthographic consonant cluster never consists of more than five letters. The different combinations of consonants and vowels are therefore quite easy to predict.

Term creation and loaning in African Languages, also present certain challenges according to Mtintsilana and Morris (1988:112-113). They put it as follows:

The present explosion of term creation and loaning in the African languages, owing to political, commercial, and industrial developments in South Africa, has given rise to a situation where terminologists and other language practitioners are mainly collecting terms which are already in use. The Language Boards are the standardized bodies, but they can devote only a part of their time to terminology standardization. Moreover, many individuals who collect terms and compile lists do submit them to the Boards. The result is that there is much duplication and non-standardization. Apart from departmental lists there are few terminology lists for African languages and some are out of print. The situation is complicated further by the fact that formal training for terminologists is not available, with the result that terminologists tend to develop individual methodologies.

One of the aims of this study, in view of the foregoing discussion, is to undertake an extensive audit of the spelling of these new term creations and to establish whether the orthography used accurately represents how these terms are pronounced in daily life.

2.5 Conclusion



In this chapter some of the main theoretical perspectives on the development of the art of writing and of orthography were discussed. The historical background and the general as well as specific requirements of a good orthography were dealt with. It is mandatory for an academic study of this nature to align itself with a particular theoretical framework and the main theory that informs the writing of this research, is that of De Saussure. The theories of other linguists, as well as the characteristics or principles of a good writing system/orthography as outlined by the applied linguist, Smalley (1963), were also recognised.

It was acknowledged that all social animals communicate with each other, but only human beings have developed languages that can communicate highly advanced mental concepts. From the beginning of time, man has been able to communicate verbally with his fellow man, albeit with a slower delivery, a smaller vocabulary and a simpler grammar than the languages of today. It was found that language is a set of signals by which we communicate.

It was concluded that modern languages may exist in two forms, namely spoken and written. Written language, however, only emerged much later. The advent of a writing system seems to have coincided with the transition from hunter-gatherer societies to more permanent agrarian communities, where it became necessary to count one's property, whether it be animals or measures of grain. Writing therefore started by being pictographic or ideographic. The period when pictures were used for the representation of concepts was followed by the introduction of graphic symbols which also led to the introduction of orthographies for the individual European languages. These used an alphabetic system based on the premise that one graphic symbol (a letter) should correspond to one significant sound in the language (a phoneme) in order to achieve uniformity.

The historical development of isiXhosa orthography received brief attention in this chapter. It was pointed out that, subsequent to the arrival of the British missionaries in the Eastern Cape at the beginning of the 19th century, the European alphabet was introduced as the basis for the creation and development of an isiXhosa orthography. A printing press was installed at Lovedale near the present town of Alice, to facilitate the development of this new orthography. The development of other orthographies in the Nguni language group, such as isiZulu and isiNdebele, also received attention in this chapter.

In this chapter it was indicated that the theories of Ferdinand de Saussure would be used as the theoretical framework of this study. His ideas laid a foundation for many significant developments in the 20th century. He is widely considered to be one of the fathers of 20th century linguistics, and his ideas have had a monumental impact throughout the humanities and social sciences. It was pointed out that De Saussure maintains that there is a discrepancy between writing and pronunciation. There are reasons for this discrepancy. First, language is constantly evolving, whereas writing tends to remain static. The result is that a point is reached where writing no longer corresponds to what it is supposed to record. A transcription that is accurate at a particular moment could be absurd a century later. This linguist is also of the opinion that one of the causes of inconsistency in writing is the usage of different symbols for the representation of one and the same sound. For writing to become consistent, each and every sound should be represented by its own unique symbol.

The theories of other linguists were also taken into consideration in this chapter. This includes leaders in this field such as Pei and Derringer. The latter is of the opinion that orthography is the graphic counterpart of speech, the “fixing” of spoken language in a permanent or semi-permanent form.

In this chapter, cognisance was also taken of the concerns of isiXhosa linguists such as Tyolwana, Jafta, Mini, Mtuze, Tshabe, Makeleni, Saule, Kiva, Gxilishe, Satyo, Mkonto, Fanie and Nabe, who are of the opinion that it is not infrequent to hear people speaking of “orthography and spelling rules.” This gives the impression that the term *orthography*, whatever it means, excludes matters of spelling. These linguists suggest that the following definition of the concept *orthography* be adopted : “the art of spelling of individual words and the writing of groups of words correctly.”

In this chapter an attempt was made to provide a description of the individual characteristics of a good orthography. Reference was made to the German linguist, Karl Meinhof, who stated that an orthography should be simple and clear enough for a reader not to experience any problems when reading. The reason for its simplicity is that it is not intended only for scholars, but chiefly for school children and people of moderate education. He also states that since many African languages contain sounds which cannot be written by means of the Latin alphabet, it is necessary for new symbols to be introduced. The applied linguist, Smalley (1963) also provided an excellent description of the specific individual characteristics of a good orthography. According to him, a good writing system is one where clear principles have been developed regarding the writing of capital letters, apostrophe usage and the use of diacritics.

In the latter part of this chapter, the theoretical characteristics of some of the elements of a modern orthographic system were attended to. This included a discussion of elements such as spelling, capitalisation, hyphenation, etc. The views of general linguists as well as those of Bantu linguists were taken into consideration. This discussion will serve as a basis for an in-depth analysis of isiXhosa orthography later on in this study.

By a uniform orthography is meant that a given character or letter should have but one and the same value ascribed to it, and that a given sound which is common to all the dialects, be represented uniformly and universally by one and the same character in all said dialects. The isiXhosa linguist, Dyubhele, however, refers to the sad neglect of the orthography of isiXhosa as if to its speakers all is well, although the conventional spelling of this language is characterised by uncertainty, confusion and inconsistencies. Although there are formal orthographical rules, these rules appear to be inconsistent and this causes the isiXhosa speakers to be uncertain as to which rule to apply, and when. In the chapter that follows, these problems of inconsistency as found in the various materials written in isiXhosa will receive attention.



CHAPTER 3

TOWARDS THE STANDARDISATION OF THE SPELLING OF AUTHENTIC ISIXHOSA WORDS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the orthographical features of some written documents in isiXhosa will be observed and analysed. The investigation of these documents focus on how certain sounds are represented by means of symbols (spelling). The texts selected for analysis of orthographical features have all been published since 2000. They are as follows: Ngewu (2000): Lwaphel'uluntu Ngugawulayo (drama), Nzo (2002): Nosel'eyojile Akakayityi (short stories), Mdlokolo (2004): Amasuntswana (short stories), Mkonto (2004): Masabelane (short stories), Mtumane (2004): Kungathintelwa Njani Ukufa Kwabakhwetha? (novel), Madolo (2005): Ukufa Kusembizeni (short stories), Marwanqa (2006): Umphako (short stories), Marwanqa (2006): Masincokole (short stories), Magona (2006): Incwadi Yezincoko (essays), Mbontsi (2006): Amathontsi (essays), Ngcelwane (2006): Ndenzeni (novel) and Saule (2006): Vuleka Mhlaba (novel).



These texts were selected because they are written by prominent isiXhosa authors. Most have been, or are still being used as prescribed works in schools. They have also been selected for their topicality since they deal with important issues like, for instance, the HIV / AIDS pandemic.

In addition to these literary texts, some selected publications by government departments will be analysed for orthographic features as well. These publications by Government departments are the followig: a combined teacher manual entitled: Inkcazelo Yekharityhulam Yesizwe Amabanga E-10-12, which was produced by the Department of Education (2006) (abbreviated as Dept. of Ed. 2006), a booklet: Isifo Ugawulayo Nentsholongwane Yaso, which was produced by the Department of Health (2007) (abbreviated as Dept. of Health), a book entitled: Ucwangciso Lophumezo: Isakhelo Somgaqonkqubo Wesizwe Weelwimi UQulunqo lokuGqibela (2003), which was produced by the Department of Arts and Culture (2003) (abbreviated as Dept. of

Arts & Cul.) as well as a book entitled: Inkqubo Ecwangciselwe Unyaka Ka-2007, Iphulo Lesizwe Lobambiswano Lokwakha Ubomi Obungcono Kumntu Wonke (2007), which was produced by the Department of Communication and Information (abbreviated as Dept. of Com. & Info.). These texts were selected because of their relevance for and frequent use by members of the general public. They have also been selected because they deal with important matters, such as the improvement of health (including the combating of HIV / AIDS), effective teaching as well as the profitable usage of agricultural resources.

The observation and analysis of these two kinds of texts will be supplemented by an analysis of the orthographic features of selected translated texts, such as for example, the isiXhosa version of the International Rugby Board Laws of Rugby (2007) (abbreviated as IRB Laws of Rugby). This translation was completed as recently as 2007 and is currently being used by thousands of players as well as match officials across the country. Some newspapers and magazines currently in circulation in isiXhosa will also be examined to determine the adequacy of their orthography. The newspapers which will be used are widely read in the Eastern Cape. They deal with a variety of topics, such as current events, social matters, political developments, etc. Included are newspapers such as the Eastern Cape Voice Your Voice To The People (abbreviated as E.C.V.), Isigidimi, iDike-lethu, as well as the magazine: Bona. Some dictionaries of isiXhosa will also be consulted to evaluate their adherence to orthographic principles. The dictionaries selected are officially recognised and were compiled by professional lexicographers in the various fields. They include The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Volume 3 (1989)¹ (abbreviated as G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3), The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Volume 2 (2003) (abbreviated as G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2), The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Volume 1 (2006) (abbreviated as G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 1), Xhosa-English, English-Xhosa Biological Equivalent Dictionary Volume 1 (2006) (abbreviated as Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1) and Isigama seSosiyojiji (2005).

¹ Although Vol.3 was published before 2000, it is included in this investigation, since it forms part of a trilogy, the remainder of which was published after 2000.

Finally, the updated isiXhosa Orthography as compiled by the PanSALB (2008) is also analysed. This publication is a revision of isiXhosa orthography based upon the publication: “Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3” which was completed in 1980. The PanSALB publication deals with matters such as spelling, word division, etc.

This investigation will proceed on the basis of the identification of orthographic anomalies that might be observed in the different documents. This will be of great assistance in realising the aim of this chapter, which is to analyse the current state of isiXhosa orthography. It is evident that the various publications referred to above were issued by recognised publishing houses. Some of the literary texts, for instance, were published by well-known companies such as Bard Publishers and The Lovedale Press. It is procedural for government publications to be submitted to the State Language Services Unit prior to publication. In light of these considerations, it may rightfully be assumed that all these texts have been submitted to a rigorous process of proof-reading, editing and orthographic vetting prior to publication. The extent to which these processes have indeed served to keep orthographic inconsistencies limited, will be investigated in the paragraphs below.



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The aim of this chapter is to note and analyse the various anomalies and inconsistencies in the spelling of isiXhosa words as identified in the selected texts. The spelling of authentic isiXhosa words, including instances of vowel doubling, the use of aspirated versus non-aspirated sounds and consonant combinations with a single point of articulation will be considered.

The recommended format for the spelling of these lexical items will be determined scientifically in terms of the linguistic properties and unique phonetic features of isiXhosa, as a language belonging to the Bantu language family. Discussion of the spelling of isiXhosa words will be preceded by an exposition of the sound structure of isiXhosa. Pertinent matters will be dealt with in this section, so as to establish a framework for a discussion of the spelling of isiXhosa words later on in this chapter.

The ultimate aim of this chapter is to suggest a recommended spelling format for each and every word of isiXhosa in terms of the theoretical principles that were identified in

Chapter 2. The requirement is that each recommendation will be linguistically justified. It is envisaged that this will contribute towards a more effective, scientifically-motivated and accurate standardisation of isiXhosa terminology by the official organs of the Government, as well as by lexicographers and linguists within the academic environment and the language practice industry.

3.2 General theory on the sound structure of isiXhosa

It is of great importance to define the relationship between a sound and a symbol, as in the history of writing sounds were represented by means of pictures at a certain stage.

Hornby, Cowie and Windsor (1974:829) define a sound as “something which is or can be heard”, e.g. a vowel and a consonant. A sound is heard not seen and language sounds manifest themselves in the form of vowels and consonants. Vowels and consonants are represented by means of graphic symbols or letters to make them visible. A particular sound can be represented only by means of a single written symbol or by a combination of symbols. As Deringer (1977:12) has put it: “the writing with which we are familiar is the alphabetic system, that which, generally speaking, represents a spoken sound by a mark or symbol or letter.” Whilst Deringer’s observation is correct it must also be kept in mind that in some instances a single sound may be represented by more than one letter. For instance, in isiXhosa the sound [ɬ] may be represented by the letters /hl/.

The familiar alphabetic system used in the orthography of isiXhosa consists of a graphic representation of vowels and consonants. In other words, the spelling of isiXhosa is derived from vowels and consonants. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2011:195) agree as follows:

The sounds of all languages fall into two classes: consonants and vowels. Consonants are produced with some restriction or closure in the vocal tract that impedes the flow of air from the lungs. In phonetics, the terms consonant and vowel refer to types of sounds, not to the letters that represent them. In speaking of the alphabet, we may call “a” a vowel and “c” a consonant, but that only means that we use the

letter “a” to represent vowel sounds and the letter “c” to represent consonant sounds.



3.3 Vowels and consonants

Fromkin and Rodman (1988:47) state that: “every language of the world contains the two basic classes of speech sounds often referred to by the cover terms consonants and vowels.”

It has been noticed that in the writing of isiXhosa it is not easy to distinguish vowels from consonants, as the majority of word syllables in this language consist of combined consonants and vowels. This will call for a discussion of syllables ending in a consonant. First, however, a theoretical discussion of vowels only requires our attention.

3.3.1 Vowels

Yule (1996:40) maintains that “while the consonant sounds are mostly articulated via closure or obstruction in the vocal tract, vowel sounds are produced with relatively free flow of air.” Finegan (2008:89) agrees that “vowel sounds are produced by passing air through different shapes of the mouth, with different positions of the tongue and of the lips, and with the air stream relatively unobstructed by narrow passages except at the glottis.”

A vowel is a letter of the alphabet, such as /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/ that represents a vowel (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/vowel>). (Accessed 05/06/2008). This means that vowel sounds are represented by means of graphic symbols or letters in order to be visible.

Fromkin and Rodman (1988:47) add that “vowels usually constitute the main core or nucleus of syllables. Vowels, like glides, are [- consonantal] and [+sonorant]. They differ from glides because they constitute syllable peaks; so vowels are [+syllabic], whereas glides are [-syllabic].” It has been observed that vowels represent a fundamental component of language, because when a child is taught how to write this language, first of all, he / she has to know these vowels.

Hartley (1986:139) observes that “the speech organ primarily responsible for the changes in quality of vowel sounds is the tongue, but the position of the lips is also an influential factor. For an adequate description of a vowel, therefore, four items of information need to be specified:

- a) whether it is voiced or unvoiced;
- b) whether it is oral or nasalised;
- c) the position of the tongue; and
- d) the position of the lips.”

Sloat *et al.* (1978:10) explain that “vowels are speech sounds made by shaping the oral cavity while allowing free passage of air from the lungs.” When vowels are articulated, air moves out freely from the lungs through the oral cavity and not through the nasal cavity. Finegan and Besnier (1989:47) are also of the opinion that “vowel sounds differ from consonant sounds in that they are produced not by blocking air in its passage from the lungs but by passing air through different shapes of the mouth and different positions of the tongue and lips unobstructed by narrow passages.” Yet again Winkler (2007:73) claims that “vowels differ from consonants in that the airstream is never blocked or even seriously constricted by any of the articulators. In addition, unlike most consonants, they can stand alone.”

The discussion below seeks to assess the degree of accuracy achieved in the assignment of alphabetic symbols to the various isiXhosa vowel sounds (also known as standardisation of spelling), as part of the overall investigation into the present state of isiXhosa orthography. The various vowel categories will now receive individual attention in the paragraphs below. Examples from the body of selected isiXhosa texts mentioned above will be used to illustrate how alphabetical symbols have been assigned to these sounds, in order to evaluate the accuracy thereof.

In isiXhosa speech, there are seven distinct vowels, but in writing, these are represented by only five symbols */i/, /e/, /a/, /o/, /u/*. The symbols *e* and *o* each represents two distinct vowels. Each vowel is named by the position taken by the tongue in its pronunciation. A front vowel is produced by raising the front or back of the tongue towards the roof of the mouth, and a back vowel by raising the back of the

tongue towards the roof of the mouth. A *close* vowel is produced by raising the front or back of the tongue and bringing it close to the roof of the mouth, and an *open* vowel is produced by lowering the tongue to the floor of the mouth. A *semi-close mid* vowel is produced by raising the front or back of the tongue so as to bring it closer to the *close front* or to the *close back* vowel than to the *open* vowel, and a *semi-open mid* vowel is produced by raising the front or back of the tongue so that it remains closer to the open vowel than to the *close* vowels (Jordan, 1966:6).

In the paragraph above Jordan has clearly illustrated that isiXhosa speech consists out of seven distinct vowels, but only five symbols are used to represent these vowels. The texts under discussion will now be examined to determine the relevancy of Jordan's observations to these texts.

3.3.1.1 Discussion of individual vowels

3.3.1.1.1 The high front vowel [i]



Westermann and Ward (1964:33) maintain that “every language contains a vowel of the *i*- type (Card. No. 1); this can be more or less close: in African languages it is usually closer than the English *i* in *see*, resembling the *i* in French *si*, and in German *sie*.” The high vowel [i] is said to be a front vowel, because the constriction is toward the front of the mouth (Langacker, 1973:148).

According to Finlayson *et al.* (1991:49) vowel no. 1 [i] “is a high front vowel pronounced with lipspreading.” The (publication of Finlayson *et al.* was completed in 1991. This publication consists of a description of the phonetic features of isiXhosa. Their descriptions of isiXhosa vowels and consonants will be used as a basis for this study into the standardisation of the spelling of isiXhosa).

Jurafsky and Martin (2000:100-101) state that “the two most relevant parameters for vowels are what is called vowel height, which correlates roughly with the location of the highest part of the tongue, and the shape of the lips (rounded or not). In the vowel [i], for example, the highest point of the tongue is toward the front of the mouth.”

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[i] becomes /i/, as in the following examples :

esi (PanSALB, 2008:25).

(this one)

Unesifo se-Alzemiya (Sibula, 2005:2)

(He has Alzheimer's disease)

Umbone ehamba esitratweni (Bona, July 2008:5)

(She saw him walking in the street.)

3.3.1.1.2 The mid-high vowel [e]

The vowel [e], always designates a tense mid front vowel when it is used in contrast to [ɛ], but when it is not contrasted with [ɛ], [e] may be either tense or lax (Langacker, 1972:xiii-xiv). Finlayson *et al.* (1991:50) also state that vowel no. 2 [e] "is a mid-high front vowel pronounced with moderate lip spreading."

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[e] becomes /e/, as in the following examples:

esi (PanSALB, 2008:25).

(this one)

Umbone ehamba esitratweni (Bona, 2008:5)

(She saw him walking in the street.)

Unesifo se-Alzemiya (Sibula, 2005:2)

(He has Alzheimer's disease.)

3.3.1.1.3 The mid-low vowel [ɛ]

Vowel no. 3 which is [ɛ], "is a mid-low front vowel pronounced with a little lipspreading (Finlayson *et al.* 1991:50). " Radford, Atkinson, Britain and Spencer (2009:28) also maintain that "the vowels [ɛ ɔ] are mid open vowels."

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel [ɛ] is as follows:

[ɛ] becomes /e/, as in the following examples:

esaa (PanSALB, 2008:25).

(that one)

Eli lizwe lize zizaphula-mthetho (Isigidimi, July 2008:28)

(This country is full of criminals.)

Wayethwele ikepsi entloko (Bona, September 2009:110)

(He was wearing a cap on the head.)

3.3.1.1.4 The low vowel [a]

Westermann and Ward (1964:34) state that "most African languages have only one *a* vowel. This is an open sound: in some languages it lies nearer to the front *a* (Card. No. 4) and in others it is nearer to the back *a* (Card. No. 5). The *a* of African languages often resembles the Italian *a* in *famiglia* and the German *a* in *Vater* : it is rarely like the English *a* in *man*."

According to Finlayson *et al.* (1991:51) vowel no. 4 [a] "is a low central vowel pronounced with no lipspreading." There is however no evidence showing that this sound is found in isiXhosa.

In isiXhosa there is only one /a/ sound.

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[a] becomes /a/, as in the following examples:

esaa (PanSALB, 2008:25).

(that one)

Le yindoda yomnyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16)

(This is a man of the year 1965.)

Le ntombi yazalwa ngowe 1976 (Mdlokolo, 2004:42)

(This girl was born in 1976.)

3.3.1.1.5 The mid-low vowel [ɔ]



According to Westermann and Ward (1964:35) “a large number of African languages contain what strikes the ear as two o-sounds. Like e and ε, one is closed and the other open: the exact quality of o and ɔ must be discovered for each particular language. ɔ is generally near to Card. No. 6, similar to the German vowel in *Gott*, not quite so open as the English vowel in *not*, but somewhat like that in *caught*.”

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[ɔ] becomes /o/, as in the following examples:

oo (PanSALB, 2008:34)

(that one)

Ukhuphe ifowuni wacofa ... (Saule, 2006:89)

(He took out the phone and dialed...)

lidolophu zeli phondo leMpuma-Koloni azicocekanga (Madolo, 2005:45)
(The towns of the Eastern Cape Province are not clean.)

3.3.1.1.6 The mid-high vowel [o]

The vowel [o], which is known as vowel No. 6, is a mid-high back vowel pronounced with moderate liprounding (Finlayson *et al.*, 1991:52). Fromkin *et al.* (2011:207) also maintain that “the vowel [o] is a mid vowel, produced by raising the tongue to a position midway between the high and low vowels.”

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[o] becomes /o/, as in the following examples:

olu (PanSALB, 2008:34).
(this one)



Kungokunjalo nakwinenekazi lokuqala... (Mkonto, 2004:11)
(It is also the same to the first lady...)

Kaloku ngoLwesine kule veki iphelileyo... (Ngewu, 2000:67)
(On Thursday, next week...)

3.3.1.1.7 The high back vowel [u]

Langacker (1973:148) believes that “[u] is articulated with tongue raised to constrict the vocal tract slightly at some point, though the constriction is not enough to cause any noticeable turbulence in the passing through.”

The alphabetic symbol that has been assigned to this vowel is as follows:

[u] becomes /u/, as in the following examples:

olu (PanSALB, 2008:34).

(this one)

Kwakyintsasa yoLwesibini ... (Mdlokolo, 2004:51)

(It was on a Tuesday morning ...)

Kaloku ngoLwesine kule veki iphelileyo (Ngewu, 2000:67)

(On Thursday, last week.)

There are anomalies with regard to the spelling of vowels no. 3 and 5 in the publications under discussion, since the same alphabetic symbol has been assigned to vowel sounds [ɛ] and [e] as well as to vowel sounds [ɔ] and [o], as shown above.

This observation of the vowel system of isiXhosa partially agrees with the views of Doke (1967:92) who maintains that the Nguni languages employ a seven-vowel system, viz.[i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, and u]. In the paragraph above, it was mentioned that Jordan also identifies seven vowel sounds in isiXhosa which serves to corroborate the findings of Doke. Doke however, maintains that [e] and [ɛ], [o] and [ɔ] respectively are merely circumstantial variants of single vowel-phonemes and he therefore comes to the conclusion that five vowel symbols are all that are necessary in a practical orthography. This viewpoint cannot be condoned, as shown above, since it leads to significant anomalies in the standardisation of the language so that all the sounds of the language are not represented with equal degrees of accuracy in writing. These anomalies will receive more attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

Under certain circumstances vowel symbols have to be doubled or have to be hyphenated in the writing of this language.

3.3.1.2 Vowel doubling

In some instances, identical vowel symbols are written next to one another in isiXhosa words. This tendency is referred to as “vowel doubling”. The fact that two vowels appear next to one another in a written text does not however, indicate that they should be pronounced as two distinct sounds. What amounts to vowel doubling

in the written format, comes down to vowel lengthening in the spoken format. Bennie (1953:5) describes this phenomenon as follows:

A vowel symbol is to be doubled to represent a long vowel sound, but this usage is to be limited to instances where confusion is likely to arise; it is, however, to be consistently employed in all cases of the same word. Thus we shall write *inkosi*, chief, and *iinkosi*, chiefs; *nalo* (ihafē), and it (the horse), and *naalo* (ihafē), there it (the horse) is; *umphunga*, steam, gas, and *umphuunga*, lung; *ulusu*, skin, and *uluusu*, stomach.

According to the Bennie, the doubling of vowels occurs:

- i. in the writing of plurals
- ii. in a demonstrative pointing to something yonder
- iii. in differentiating meaning

In Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:11) it is also stated that:

“the vowel is doubled in the contracted mediate demonstrative *loo* which occurs in classes 1, 2, and 5 singular and in classes 2 and 3 plural, e.g. *loo* mntu (that person), *loo* ndawo (that place) etc. It is also doubled in the final syllable of the remote demonstrative when contracted, e.g. – *laa* mntu (that person), *laa* madoda (those men) etc. The plural of class 1a is indicated by the double vowel *oo*- : *oobawo* (fathers), *oonyana* (sons) etc. Where –z- is dropped in the plural prefixes *izin*-, *izim*-, of classes 5 and 6, a double vowel is used: *iintaba* < *i(z)intaba* (mountains), *iintsana* < *i(z)intsana* (babies) etc.”

From the above it is clear that both Bennie and the authors of Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:11) favour the use of vowel doubling in the writing of certain categories of plurals as well as certain categories of demonstratives. Bennie, however, also favours the use of vowel doubling to indicate differentiation in meaning, while Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:11) does not mention that possibility.

This study will argue that each and every sound in the language should be represented by its own unique symbol or set of symbols. Therefore Bennie's proposal that vowel doubling should also be used for the differentiation of meaning is endorsed by the present author.

Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:121-123) are likewise of the opinion that there are some vowels in isiXhosa which are of necessity written as double, as in the following examples:

In the shortened form of the second position demonstrative *lowo*, of classes 1, 3, and *leyo* of classes 4 and 9 as in the following examples: *loo mntu* (that person), *loo ntombi* (that girl), etc.

In the final syllable of the shortened third position demonstrative of all noun classes, e.g. *abaa bantu* (those people), *okwaa kutya* (that food), etc.

In the prefix of class 2(a) which is the plural form of class 1 (a), e.g. *oobawo* (fathers), *oomama* (mothers), etc.

In the vocative form of class 2(a), e.g. *boobawo* (you fathers), *bootata* (you fathers), etc.

In the prefix of class 10, e.g. *iintaba* (mountains), *iigusha* (sheep), etc. When the copulative and other prefixes are attached to the noun before the prefix to form other parts of speech, e.g. *ziinkomo* (it is cattle), *neenkomo* (and cattle), etc.

When the verb with the stem *-thi* is used before ideophones and is then shortened, e.g. *zii tshoni* (they disappear)

If an ideophone is pronounced long, and has thus a long vowel, e.g. *zithe saa* (they are scattered), etc.

Simply stated, the doubling of vowel symbols in the writing of isiXhosa is mainly to denote plural form and for demonstratives pointing to something yonder (over there).

Of the selected isiXhosa texts some adhere to these principles. Examples found in these texts concerning the spelling of the prefix in the plural form are:

I-ofisi leyo yophinda ihlolwe emva *kweenyanga* ezintathu (Nzo, 2002:14).
(That office will be inspected again after three months)

Akufi *oonoteksi* bodwa (Mkonto, 2004:94).
(The taxi-drivers are not the only ones who die)

Iiapile ziluncedo empilweni (Dept. of Health, 2007:39).
(Apples give health)

Some texts deviate from these guidelines, as instanced by the following examples:

Ufike ngenjongo zokukhusela (E.C.V., 2008:10).

(He arrived with the aims of protecting)

Abantu baphindela kwindawo abahlala kuzo (iDike-lethu, 2008:2).

(People went back to their places of residence)

Oku kwenziwe ngendlela ezimbini (Bona, July 2008:25).

(This has been done in two ways)

Here we find no vowel doubling in the spelling of the prefix of class 10. Some isiXhosa authors tend not to adhere strictly to the spelling guidelines of the language. This matter will receive further attention in the final chapter of this study.

Exemplifying the use of vowel doubling in the writing of the demonstrative are the following:

Owu ntomb'am xa nikuloo ngxaki ilula noko loo nto,...(Mdlokolo, 2004:25)

(Oh my girl when you are in that problem, at least that thing is easy,...)

Loo nto ke iye yabonakalisa ukuba imoto uyiqhelile lo mntwana. (Madolo, 2005:5)

(That thing then has shown that this child is familiar with a car.)

Loo ndoda ithe ngenge imini yadlula ngesipani sayo kwintsimi yayo...(Nzo, 2002:1)

(That man one day has passed by his span of oxen in his mealiefield...)

Yilaa nja uBantu. (Saule, 2006:7)

(It's that dog Bantu.)

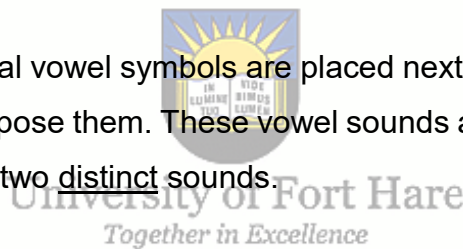
No examples of vowel doubling to differentiate between meanings were found in the selected texts.

Vowel doubling still remains the most effective method to denote clearly and unambiguously the plural form as well as the demonstrative (2nd distance) in a written text. This is in spite of the fact that it might confuse younger readers or foreign language learners of isiXhosa. However, too many authors seem not to adhere to the set guidelines. Therefore, measures need to be put in place for the education of isiXhosa authors and editors, since the doubling of vowel symbols to denote the plural form, or to denote something yonder, is what is to be encouraged for greater accuracy in the language.

Failure to double vowels may be due to the fact that in the spoken word there may not always be vowel lengthening. Here, the writing of the words follows the way the language is spoken. This suggests that the spoken language differs from the written language.

3.3.1.3 Hyphen usage in vowels which are juxtaposed

In some instances, identical vowel symbols are placed next to one another separated by a hyphen so as to juxtapose them. These vowel sounds are not pronounced as one lengthened sound, but as two distinct sounds.



Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:133) are also of the opinion that “a hyphen is used where two similar vowels, both of which are syllabic and are thus pronounced separately in speech, are juxtaposed: e.g. *i-inki* (ink), *ama-apile* (apples), etc.

In Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:37), it is stated that the hyphen is used to indicate a long drawn-out syllable, e.g. – *vi-i-i-tyo!* *si-i-i-!* etc. and to indicate a glottal stop between similar vowels, e.g. *i-inki* (ink), *ama-apile* (apples).

In these examples the hyphen is used to indicate a long drawn-out syllable as well as to indicate a glottal stop between similar vowels. This will inevitably result in confusion as to the pronunciation of these two categories of sounds. It is therefore recommended that the hyphen only be used to indicate a glottal stop between similar vowels. The hyphen should not be used between similar vowels to indicate long drawn-out

syllables. Therefore the term vi-i-i-tyo! should be written as viiityo!, while the term si-i-i-! should be written as siii!

The selected texts contain no instances of hyphenated juxtaposition of different vowel symbols. Such juxtaposition could have been effected in the following text:

Uziswe yiambhulensi (Saule, 2006:97)
(He was brought by an ambulance)

Ukudla iiorenji kunika impilo (Dept. of Health., 2007:39)
(To eat oranges gives health)

isialam (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol.1, 2006:16)
(a poor person)

Since there are no clear guidelines in this regard, it is recommended that whenever there is vowel juxtapositioning, a hyphen should be used. The above texts should rather be written as follows:

Uziswe yi-ambhulensi (sic) (Saule, 2006:97)
(He was brought by an ambulance)

Ukudla ii-orenji kunika impilo (Dept. of Health., 2007:39)
(To eat oranges gives health)

isi-alam (G.Dic. of Xh. Vol. 1, 2006:16)
(a poor person)

It is noteworthy that there are cases where the close succession of two vowels has to be avoided in the writing of this language. This will be discussed below.

3.3.1.4 The avoidance of hiatus

In some grammatical constructions in isiXhosa, two vowels may appear in close succession. This phenomenon is referred to as hiatus. Examples are:

ndaibona (inkomo), (I saw the beast) *asiafuni* (amasi)
(we do not want sour milk).

Various strategies may be used to avoid hiatus.

According to Bennie (1953:24), hiatus is prevented in one of the following five ways:

If both vowels are important to the meaning, which in other circumstances would be dropped, and are retained, if their retention prevents hiatus, e.g. we say *apha*, but we say *na-l-apha*, *///* being a relic and not an inserted letter;

A semivowel may be inserted to separate necessary vowels, representing the glide from one vowel to the other: */y/* appears before */i/*, and */w/* before */u/*, */a/* or */o/*. Examples are: *ndiyibona*, *asiwufuni*, *owoyisileyo*;

The first vowel may be replaced by the corresponding semivowel; so */i/* becomes the front semivowel */y/*, and */o/* or */u/* becomes the back semivowel */w/*. For example: (inkosi) *iafika* > *yafika*; (umfo) *uafika* > *wafika*; *intoana* > *intwana*; *endluini* > *endlwini*;

One of the vowels may be elided. In isiXhosa this is usually the first; thus in rapid speech we say, *ngamash'am*, *umf'omkhulu*, *komkhulu* (for *ko-omkhulu*);

The vowels may fuse and become one sound; if their sounds are far apart, the result is an intermediate vowel.

The rules for such fusion are always followed:

The commonest instances of fusion are those in which the first vowel is /a/, for the fusion of which the following rules apply:

/a/ with /a/ naturally forms /a/; thus *nga-amahashe* > *ngamahashe*.

With a front vowel, /e/ or /i/, the mid-front vowel /e/ is formed, e.g. *na-eyethu* > *neyethu*; *nga-elo* > *ngelo*.

With a back vowel, /o/ or /u/, the result is the mid-back vowel, /o/; e.g. *na-ozayo* > *nozayo*; *nga-uyise* > *ngoyise*."

With regard to insertion, it has been observed that there are times where the succession of one vowel by another has to be prevented by means of inserting a sound between them as in the following examples: *nga ekhaya* > *ngasekhaya* (near home), *nga emlanjeni* > *ngasemlanjeni* (by the river). What has been inserted between the two vowels is the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/.

However, in consonantalization, it has been noticed that the high vowels change into consonants which are called semi-vowels. In this language there are two high vowels and two semi-vowels. Since the high front close-vowel is similar to the palatal semi-vowel, it is possible for the high front vowel to become the palatal semi-vowel in the juxtapositioning of vowels as in the following examples: *intombi iafika* > *yafika* (the girl arrived), *inkabi iafa* > *yafa* (the ox died). Again, since the high back close-vowel is similar to the velar semi-vowel, this vowel can change into this semi-vowel as in the following examples: *umntu uafika* > *wafika* (a person arrived), *umthi uafa* > *wafa* (a tree died).

With vowel omission due to vowel juxtapositioning, the vowel which is omitted is the first one, as in the following examples:

inkomo enkulu > *inkom'enkulu* (big cow),
inja ebomvu > *inj'ebomvu* (red dog).

In the selected texts the following examples were found:

Lo mkhuba ufike noovukengceni bamakhankatha. (Mtumane, 2004:8)
(This bad habit has come with the unrecognised guardians.)

Ngunyana katatomncinci lo. (Nzo, 2002:21)
(It is the son of my father's younger brother this one.)

Wathi akubona libhekumoya u-Oyama wacela ukuya kugqibezela iiholide zehlobo kwaninakazi, eMthatha. (Madolo, 2005:50)
(When Oyama saw that things were bad, he requested to go and finish up summer holidays at his aunt, in Mthatha.)

Phuma mfondini, yizapha phandle! (Saule, 2006:159)
(Go out man, come here outside!)

Bennie, as noted above, observed that vowel coalescence is sometimes possible, as in the following examples:



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na abantu > *nabantu* (and people), *na izinto* > *nezinto* (and things).

Bennie's views follow those of Stewart (1888:1), who stated that 'there are four letters /s/, /ll/, /ml/, /nl/, which are used to prevent the too close connection of vowels when such vowels come together, as in the case of a prefix ending in a vowel, and a noun beginning with a vowel. For example:

nga-s-elwandle (by the sea)
nga-s-endleleni (in the road)
kwa-l-apha (even here)

As has been observed, a vowel represents the central part of the syllable. This matter will be discussed below.

3.3.1.5 The role played by a vowel in syllable formation

Abercrombie (1974:390) holds that “a vowel is the nucleus or central part of the syllable.”

In the writing of isiXhosa every syllable always contains a vowel. In the writing of this language a syllable may consist of a single vowel, or a combination of a consonant and a vowel. There are languages where a syllable may have no vowel. Examples of such languages are English and Afrikaans. For instance, in the writing of English the following spelling can be observed: /hy/mn/, /psa/lm/, etc. In the writing of Afrikaans the following words can be noticed: /skry/f/ (write), /vy/f/ (five) etc.

Jurafsky and Martin (2000:102) maintain that in most languages consonants and vowels combine to make a syllable. There is no complete agreed-upon definition of a syllable; roughly speaking a syllable is a vowel-like sound together with some of the surrounding consonants that are more closely associated with it.

Jurafsky and Martin agree that a syllable may be composed of the combination of a consonant and a vowel as in the writing of isiXhosa. Abercrombie (1967:34) notes that:

Most people seem to be able to say, without much difficulty, how many syllables are contained in a given word or utterance; and, with perhaps somewhat more difficulty, to say where each syllable begins and ends. Writing has to be based on an analysis of speech, and the majority of the systems of writing which mankind has from time to time invented are syllabic systems in which each written sign represents a single syllable.

That suggests that it is generally possible to determine how many syllables are contained in a given word, by identifying the vowels that are found in that word, while it is more challenging to tell where each syllable starts and ends. In written isiXhosa, it is not as difficult to identify a syllable, since it is definitely a syllabic writing system. Meinhof (1932:33) believes that:

Every syllable in Bantu consists of a consonant followed by a vowel. It is improbable that initial vowels occurred originally. The original consonant may have so completely disappeared, however, that it is

now impossible to discover what its nature was. If the first of two syllables loses its vowel, the consonants are juxtaposed and come into contact. In Bantu this only occurs when the first syllable consists of a nasal and a vowel. It is obvious that a nasal, which is itself so near to being a vowel, would be the most likely to lose its vowel.

Meinhof correctly emphasises the fact that in Bantu words, each and every syllable consists of a consonant and a vowel. It is not common for a syllable in a Bantu word to consist out of a consonant only. Some of the relevant examples will be shown below.

In written isiXhosa two consonant sounds are also always separated by a vowel. Each and every syllable in the writing of this language ends with a vowel, except when it ends with the bilabial nasal consonant [m] as in the following examples:

isonka sam
(my bread)

umntwana wam
(my child)

ubono
(vision)

Umlilo
(fire)



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In isiZulu, however, a Nguni language, each and every nasal sound is followed by a vowel, except when the nasal is in the form of a nasal compound. For instance:

umntwana wami
(my child)

umlilo
(fire)

umbila
(mealies)

Bennie (1953:26) has noted the working of these principles. He states:

Elision is common in Xhosa. Reference has already been made to the frequent elision of final vowels in rapid speech. Further, we find *u* omitted and *m* becoming syllabic, in the prefixes of such nouns as *umntu* (for *umuntu*) and *umlambo* (for *umulambo*), and in the stems of some verbs like *tyumza* (for *tyumuza*); cf. the passive *tyunyuzwa*), and *lumka* (for *lumuka*); cf. the passive *lunyukiswa*). It is held by some that there has been elision also in the prefixes of cl. 5), so that *inkomo* represents an older *inikomo*, and *izinto* an older *izinito*.

The analysis of the texts under discussion has shown that the vowel elision rule is applied satisfactorily by most of the authors.

It has also been observed that the functioning of the final vowel may be subject to the following conditions:

3.3.1.6 Vowel weakening

According to Bennie (1953:26) “it may be that a final vowel is not elided, but is so weakened that it is barely heard; or it may be softened to a mid-vowel. One constantly hears and reads *ndobuye* for *ndobuya* (ndive) (eventually I will be informed), and *wade* for *wada* (wafika) (eventually he/she arrived). This change is to be avoided, both in speech and in writing; the expressions should be used in their proper form.”

Fortunately, such changes were not found in the consulted isiXhosa texts and are less likely to occur in modern-day isiXhosa.

3.3.2 Consonants

The overall aim of this chapter is to discuss all the different sounds that are found in isiXhosa. In the paragraphs above the various vowel sounds were identified as well as the respective graphic symbols that represent each of these sounds. In this section the various consonant sounds found in isiXhosa will be identified and the various graphic symbols to represent these sounds will likewise be discussed. This discussion will be introduced with a definition of the term consonant, as well as an identification of the main categories of consonants.

Westermann and Ward (1964:45) maintain that “a consonant has been described as a sound in which the air passage is either stopped entirely at some point, or narrowed so as to give rise to audible friction. Consonants are classified according to the manner in which they are formed, i.e. according to the state of the air passage, and according to the organs which articulate them.” Accordingly, consonants are divided into stops and fricatives. In the articulation of stops, two articulators come together for a short period in order to stop the air current in the oral cavity and thereafter they separate to allow the trapped air to move out or in speedily. In the articulation of fricatives, the two articulators come nearer to each other, leaving just a narrow passage between them through which air current forces its way.

Consonants are said to be sounds produced by partially or completely blocking air in its passage from the lungs through the vocal tract (Finegan and Besnier, 1989:42). Unlike in the production of vowels, where there is no obstruction of the air current in the oral cavity, in the production of consonants the air is being obstructed either completely or partially.



Jurafsky and Martin (2000:98) also maintain that “consonants are made by restricting or blocking the airflow in some way, and may be voiced or unvoiced. Because they are made by restricting the airflow in some way, they can be distinguished by where this restriction is made: the point of maximum restriction is called the place of articulation of a consonant.” Winkler (2007:64) maintains that “consonants are sounds made by obstructing the airstream in different ways after it leaves the lungs. They are produced by three mechanisms: 1) *voicing*, the vibration of the vocal folds; 2) *manner of articulation*, the modification of the airstream as it travels through the larynx and mouth; and 3) *place of articulation*, the movement of the articulators where the main modification of the airstream takes place.”

Finegan (2008:85) too states that “consonants are sounds produced by partially or completely blocking air in its passage from the lungs through the vocal tract.” It is well-known that several kinds of consonant sounds are to be found in isiXhosa. All of these sounds need to be effectively accounted for in the standardised written version of the language through the assignment of an appropriate alphabetic symbol or set of symbols to each of these sounds. Doke (1967:93) is of the opinion that:

Consonants in Nguni are of two main types, plain consonants and clicks, the latter being a feature foreign to Bantu, and acquired through contact with the Bushman and Hottentot languages. Aspiration and ejection are significant features of Nguni phonology. Implosive ɓ is semantically distinct from explosive b. There is a full range of nasal consonants, which appear homorganically to the consonant immediately following. The symbol ɟ is used for the unvoiced prepalatal fricative. The lateral fricatives are indicated by *hl* and *dl*. The voiced and the unvoiced glottal fricatives are represented by *h*. In the writing of the prepalatal affricates, Xhosa has radical tɟ, aspirated tɟʰ, and ejective with nasal ntɟ.

In his discussion of some consonants of isiXhosa, Doke makes use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) which was adopted by the International Phonetic Association in 1888. However, it has been observed that use of the IPA symbols is impractical, since they cannot be used in the daily, routine publication of written texts in isiXhosa. The more conventional alphabetic symbols, which are more “printer friendly”, are therefore always used for this purpose.



It should, however, be mentioned that modern computer technology creates the opportunity for some IPA symbols to be printed as part of a written isiXhosa text. Modern word processing programmes provide almost all of the symbols which are necessary for an accurate writing system where each and every sound in the language has its own unique symbol in writing.

The discussion in the next section consists of a comprehensive assessment of the degree of accuracy which has been achieved in the assignment of alphabetic symbols to various isiXhosa consonant sounds (also known as standardisation), as part of this overall investigation into the present state of isiXhosa orthography. The various consonant categories will receive individual attention in the paragraphs below. Examples from the body of selected isiXhosa texts will illustrate how alphabetical symbols have been assigned to these sounds, in order to evaluate their accuracy.

In 1872, Davis (1872:1-2) claimed that “Xhosa contains seventeen consonants, one is a guttural and the others clicks, the sounds of which are not heard in any of the

European languages. The seventeen consonants are /b/, /d/, /f/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /s/, /t/, /v/, /w/, /y/, /z/. The English sound of /r/ is foreign to the Xhosa tongue.”

Davis’s work, however important, does contain certain important shortcomings. Some consonants in the above list should be modified for effective written isiXhosa. For instance, the consonant /b/ represents the partially voiced bilabial explosive, the voiced bilabial implosive and the fully voiced bilabial explosive, which only occurs in the form of a nasal compound. Furthermore, the explosives /k/ and /p/ represent both the aspirated and the ejective explosives. These anomalies will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

Lyons (1989:104) provides a description of the different kinds of consonants grouped according to voicing, as well as place and manner of articulation. He writes:

Consonants fall into several different categories. They may be voiced or voiceless; and oral or nasal. If the obstruction in the air passage is complete, the resulting sounds are described as stops (or plosives); if the obstruction is only partial, but produces friction, they are called fricatives (or aspirants). The place at which the obstruction occurs is referred to as the point of articulation: the lips, the teeth, the alveolar (or teeth ridge), the palate (i.e. the hard palate), the velum (or soft palate), the uvula, the pharynx, the glottis—these are the principal points of articulation to which recognition is given in the IPA. The organ (or that part of it) which is brought into contact with (or close to) the point of articulation is called the articulator: in most cases this is some part of the tongue, which for the purpose is regarded as being made up of four parts—the apex (or tip), the blade, the middle, the dorsum (or back). Apical consonants are those in which the tip of the tongue acts as articulator; dorsal consonants those in which the articulator is the back of the tongue.

Accordingly the different kinds of consonant sounds which are found in isiXhosa are the following:

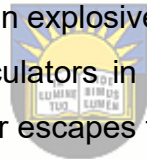
- i) Plosives
- ii) Fricatives

- iii) Affricates
- iv) Nasals
- v) Laterals
- vi) Clicks

What follows now is an extensive discussion of the consonants according to their respective categories. The aim of this discussion is to establish whether these sounds have been represented satisfactorily in written form by means of the designated alphabetic symbols or sets of symbols.

3.3.2.1 Plosives / Stops

Jurafsky and Martin (2000:99) believe that “a stop is a consonant in which airflow is completely blocked for a short time. This blockage is followed by an explosive sound as the air is released. The period of blockage is called closure and the explosion is called release.” In the production of an explosive stop, the air current is briefly blocked by the coming together of two articulators in the oral cavity, and when these two articulators separate at speed, the air escapes the mouth.



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Just so Winkler (2007:66) observes: “sometimes, in the production of a consonant, the air cavity is completely blocked for a short time before it is released. These sounds are called stops or plosives (because a little puff of air ‘explodes’ from the mouth when the consonant is released).”

The above information is also being witnessed by Finegan (2008:85) who maintains that “stops are formed when air is built up in the vocal tract and suddenly released through the mouth.” Fromkin *et al.* (2011:201) concur with what has been stated by the above-mentioned linguist as they are of the opinion that “stops are consonants in which the airstream is completely blocked in the oral cavity for a short period.”

Jurafsky, Martin, Winkler, Finegan and Fromkin *et al.* observed that there is only one form of explosive and that is where the air is released from the mouth or where it goes out of the mouth. It is clear however that these linguists have overlooked the fact that there is also a second type of plosive in isiXhosa. This plosive is formed when the air is sucked into the mouth, rather than released from it. This observation is confirmed

by Doke (1967:93) who states that, there are two kinds of plosives. These plosives are either implosive or explosive. To differentiate between them, these types of plosives should be represented by different symbols.

It should be noted that plosives are also known as stops. It should also be noticed that there are two types of stops. There are oral and nasal stops. The difference between them is that, in the formation of the oral stop there is the brief coming together of the two articulators in the oral tract followed by their immediate separation. This results in the outward movement of the air from the mouth, or the movement of the air into the mouth. In the formation of the nasal stop, the two articulators come together in the oral tract without separation, and this causes air to move out through the nasal tract.

3.3.2.1.1 The implosive [ɓ]

Finlayson *et al.* (1991:59) state that “there is only one implosive stop in Xhosa. It is a voiced bilabial implosive [ɓ].” In the articulation of an implosive, after the immediate separation of the two articulators which have been coming together in the mouth the air current flows inwards.



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An examination of the selected isiXhosa texts shows that this sound has been written as /b/, as in the writing of the following words:

Inkoliso ya**ba**ntu a**ba**suka kum**ba**ndi we-Afrika **be**bese**be**enza ezihotele
(Ngewu, 2000:81).

(The majority of the people who came from central Africa was working in the hotels.)

Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesi**bi**ni ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967. (Mdlokolo, 2004:51).

(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster took place in 1967.)

Le ndoda yayifuna uku**ba** inkqu**ba**ela ye-Afrika (Magona, 2006:14).
(This man wanted to see the progress of Africa.)

Malunga nowe 1960, indoda i**ba**samnkela iR10 ngenyanga (Nzo, 2002:8) (Round about 1960, a man was paid R10 per month.)

Ngeli xesha u-Adam no-Eva bazifihla ubuze babo (Marwanqa, 2006:21)
(During this period, Adam and Eve hid their nakedness.)

Kwanqandwa amahayi-hayi ngabannye abasebenzi... (Madolo, 2005:22)
(Other workers intervened...)

It should be noted that an implosive may also be nasalised. In such instance it becomes an explosive [b]. Finlayson *et al.* (1991:58) describe this sound as “a bilabial plosive with full breathy voice which occurs in the nasal compound.” Finlayson *et al.* (1991:58) also assign the alphabetic compound /mb/ to this sound. This sound is represented as follows:

Le ntmbi yazalwa ngowe 1976 (Mdlokolo, 2004:42).
(This girl was born in 1967.)

Nanko umfana uMark kaShuttleworth waseMzantsi Afrika esenza imbali (Mkonto, 2004:16).
(There's a young man Mark Shuttleworth of South Africa who is making history.)

Inkqubela phambili yoMzantsi-Afrika (Mkonto, 2004:16)
(The progress of South Africa)

Ayikho inkqubela-phambili kweli lizwe (PanSALB, 2005:15)
(There is no progress in this country)



These examples from the texts analysed, point to an anomaly with regard to the written representation of these specific sounds, since the same alphabetic symbol is used to represent two different sounds. This matter will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

3.3.2.1.2 Explosives

It has already been mentioned that in the orthography of isiXhosa there are two types of plosives, namely an implosive and a set of explosives. These plosives are also known as stops. According to Pittman (1948:14) “stops are sounds in which the articulator completely cuts off the air stream at the point of articulation. They may either

be voiced or voiceless.” The different types of plosives in isiXhosa and their corresponding graphic symbols will now be discussed.

In the sound systems of most languages the following types of basic explosives have been observed:

- (i) the voiceless basic explosives: [p' t' k']
- (ii) the voiced basic explosives: [b d g]

These basic explosives can be further described as follows:

- [p'] - voiceless ejective bilabial explosive
- [t'] - voiceless ejective alveolar explosive
- [k'] - voiceless ejective velar explosive
- [b] - partially voiced bilabial explosive
- [d] - partially voiced alveolar explosive
- [g] - partially voiced velar explosive



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Pittman (1948:14) is of the opinion that “the voiceless stops [p], [t], [k] are very common sounds, occurring in a great many languages in all parts of the world.”

In the consulted isiXhosa texts, the voiceless ejective basic explosive [p] is represented by the alphabetic symbol /p/ as in:

Waye epenapena njalo engasenakukwazi kuphakama (Madolo, 2005:2).
(He was swaying from one side to the other, being unable to stand up.)

libhulukhe ziyasipitsa (Marwanqa, 2006:49).
(The pairs of trousers keep us tight)

Amapolisa nabaphulimthetho ayelapho (iDike-lethu, April 2008:7)
(The police and the offenders were there.)

The voiceless ejective alveolar explosive [t] is represented by the alphabetic symbol /t/, as in:

Awanamhlanje amakhwenkwe akhulela kwiimeko ezi^{ti}fofo^{to}fo (Mtumane, 2004:49)
(Boys of today grow up under soft conditions.)

UVi^{ti}oli waba newonga nengqondo ekrele-krele (Mdlokolo, 2004:33)
(Vitoli became dignified and brilliant.)

linkokeli zopoli^{ti}iko (Marwanqa, 2006:15)
(Political leaders.)

The alphabetic symbol /k/ has been assigned to the voiceless ejective velar explosive [k'], as in:

Intle^{ke}le leyo yenze^{ka} ^kulwandle lwe-Indiya (Magona, 2006:14).
(That disaster took place in the Indian Ocean)

Oo-ewe kwa^kubona^kala u^kuba bathe chu nje apha emilebeni yeentombi
(Marwanqa, 2006:41).
(It was clear that the girls were keen to accept the proposal of love)

Kwathi ngempela-ve^{ki} xa kanye lithi ndithenge... (Mdlokolo, 2004:9).
(In the weekend before sunset...)

UMzantsi Afrika unomgaqo sise^{ko} wawo omtsha (Mbontsi, 2006:22)
(South Africa has got its own new constitution.)

Ebeyalatha phantsi kwalaa maji^{ko}-ji^{ko}... (Saule, 2006:99)
(He was pointing it out below those bends...)

^Kalo^{ku} ngoLwesine ^kule ve^{ki} iphelileyo...(Ngewu, 2002: 67)
(On Thursday last week...)

In the sound system of isiXhosa these voiceless explosives are also found in aspirated form.

According to Meinhof (1932:8):

Stops may be articulated in several ways. If the explosion of a stop is followed by a strong aspiration, we speak of fortes or aspirates. They are written with /h/, e.g. /ph/, /kh/, /th/.

Meinhof differentiates between aspirated stops and ejective stops. The aspirated stops are written with /h/. During the articulation of aspirated sounds, the air current is stronger than when ejective sounds are articulated. These sounds should clearly be indicated as different from one another.

This selection of isiXhosa texts provided the following illustrations:

[pʰ] is written as /ph/, for instance:

ULumka unolwazi olupangaleleyo lokulawulwa kwe-ofisi (Ngewu, 2000:14).
(Lumka has wide knowledge of office management.)

I-ofisi leyo yopinda ihlolwe emva kweenyanga ezintathu (Nzo, 2002:14).
(That office will be inspected again after three months.)

Kulungile ukufunda amapepha-ndaba (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:18)
(It is good to read newspapers.)

Kwanqandwa amahayi-hayi ngabanye abasebenzi efuna ukuya kucela kum

hathi (Madolo, 2005:22)

(Other workers stopped him repeatedly while he wanted to ask for permission from his manager.)

Ukhupe ifowuni wacofa u10111 (Saule, 2006:89)
(He took out the phone and dialled 10111.)

[kʰ] is written as /kh/, for instance:

Amakhwenkwe akule tofo-tofo avame ukuba nengxaki (Mtumane, 2004:14).
(Boys who have grown up being treated softly are inclined to encounter some problems.)

Ufike erenkini kungeko kwanto ithi bekue kwema tekisi apho (Madolo, 2005:15)
(When he arrived at the taxi rank there was no sign what-so-ever that a taxi has stopped there.)

Ikompyutha iluncedo (Mbontsi, 2006:28)
(A computer is helpful.)

Kuza kubako uchongo-magama lwabafunekayo (Dept. of Ed., 2006:17)

(There will be the choosing of the names of those who are needed.)

[tʰ] is written as /*th*/, for instance:

Amapolisa nabaphulim*thetho* ayelapho (iDike-lethu, April 2008:7)

(The police and the offenders were there.)

I-ofisi leyo yophinda ihlolwe emva kweenyanga ezinta*thu* (Nzo, 2002:14)

(That office will be inspected again after three months.)

Ufike erenkini kungekho kwanto *ithi* bekukhe kwema tekisi apho (Madolo, 2005:15)

(When he arrived at the taxi rank there was no sign what-so-ever that a taxi has stopped there.)

Zininzi ii-akhronimi kubhalo lweli lizwe le*thu* (PanSALB, 2005.)

(There are many acronyms in the orthography of this country of ours)

Ikhankath*ha* li*thi* limntlonke ngokumphath*ha* gadalala umkhweth*ha* (Mtumane, 2004:43)

(The mentor ill-treats the initiate deliberately by treating him roughly.)

In the paragraphs above the voiceless explosive sounds that are found in isiXhosa were discussed. A list of the various voiced sounds was also provided above. What follows below is a discussion of the various voiced explosive sounds as well as their graphic representation in the language.

The selected isiXhosa texts provided the following instances:

[b] is written as /*bh*/, for instance:

Zininzi ii-akhronimi ku*bh*alo lweli lizwe lethu (PanSALB, 2005:15).

(There are many acronyms in the orthography of this country of ours.)

Usebenzisa ikhompyutha xa ebhala (Bona, 2008:11).

(He uses a computer when he writes.)

Unotsibidyokhwe yintombazana esencinci enganeminyaka esibhozo ekwixesha lokufikisa (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:696).

(A young girl between the age of eight and puberty.)

Zininzi ii-akhronimi kubhalo lweli lizwe lethu (PanSALB, 2005:15)

(There are many acronyms in the orthography of this country of ours.)

Unestayile esitsha sokudlala ibhola (Bona, 2009:56)

(He has a new style of playing the ball.)

Concerning the basic voiced explosives which have already been mentioned, it has been noticed that the partially voiced bilabial explosive in the present [b] orthography of this language has been written as /bh/, in order for it to be represented differently from the voiced bilabial implosive [ɓ] and the fully voiced bilabial explosive [b] which only occurs in the form of a nasal compound.

Concerning the remaining two basic voiced explosives, it has been found that the alphabetic symbol /d/ has been assigned to the sound [d̥], as can be seen in the following examples:

Le yindoda yomnyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16).

(This is a man of the year 1965.)

UYehova waqala wadala indoda engu-Adam (Mbontsi, 2006:4).

(God started by creating a man called Adam.)

Adutyulwa omabini amawele eseteksini eya eMtata (Mkonto, 2004:94) (sic.)

(Both twins were shot in a taxi which was going to Mthatha.)

Ikhankatha lithi limntlonthe ngokumphatha gadalala umkhwetha (Mtumane, 2004:43)

(The mentor ill-treats the initiate deliberately by treating him roughly.)

Bekukho umnyadala weembaleki eDikeni (iDike-lethu, 2008:8)

(There was a festival of racing in Alice.)

Bazakugoduka emva kwalentshumayelo (sic.) (iDike-lethu, 15 August 2009:1)
(They will go home after this sermon.)

Lastly, the alphabetic symbol /g/ has been assigned to the basic voiced explosive [g] as can be seen in the following examples:

Izigulana zisebenzisa i-ambulansi (Nzo, 2002:25).
(The sick use an ambulance)

UMzantsi Afrika unomgaqo siseko wawo omtsha (Mbontsi, 2006:22).
(South Africa has got its own new constitution)

Ikhankatha lithi limntlonthe ngokumphatha gadalala umkhwetha (Mtumane, 2004:43).
(The mentor ill-treats the initiate deliberately by treating him roughly)

umgaqo 21 (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007:Rule 18.5)
(rule 21)

Bazakugoduka emva kwalentshumayelo (sic.) (iDike-lethu, 15 August 2009:1)
(They will go home after this sermon.)

Isifo sikagawulayo sinobungozi (E.C.V., July 2008:1)
(HIV / AIDS disease is dangerous.)

In addition to the basic explosives, isiXhosa also has another set of explosives. These explosives are the following:

the voiceless ejective palatal explosive [c']

the voiceless aspirated palatal explosive [c^h]

the partially voiced palatal explosive [ɟ]

Finlayson *et al.* (1991:57) state that “the palate lies high up in the mouth and therefore only certain sounds may be formed. When the middle of the tongue touches the hard palate, sounds which have a medio-palatal place of articulation are formed e.g. *ty* [c'] in *ukutya* (food) and *ndy* [ɟ] in *indyabo* (plenty).”

These palatal explosives are a combination of the basic alveolar explosives /t / or /d/ and the voiced palatal semi-vowel /y/.

Finlayson *et al.* (1991:57) assign the alphabetic compound /ty/ to the voiceless ejective palatal explosive [c'].

In the selected isiXhosa texts, the alphabetic compound /ty/ was also assigned to the voiceless ejective palatal explosive [c'], as in the following examples:

Adutyulwa omabini amawele eseteksini eya eMtata (sic.) (Mkonto, 2004:94)

(Both twins were shot in a taxi which was going to Mthatha)

Iltye loshicilelo laseLovedale... (G. Dic. of XH. Vol. 3, 1989:xvi)

(The printing press of Lovedale...)

ULtychtestein owathi watyaktya uMzantsi-Afrika...(G. Dic. of XH. Vol.3, 1989:xvi)

(Lichtenstein who travelled South Africa...)

The palatal explosive [c^h] is also found in the selected texts. The alphabetic compound /tyh/ was assigned to this sound, as may be seen in the following examples:

Watyhila-tyhila watyhila-tyhila uBantu wee jaju phaya (Saule, 2006:63)

(Bantu opened repeatedly and jumped away).

Akaxolanga malunga nezi zityholo (E.C.V., 2008:3)

(He is not satisfied about these allegations.)

Ndiya bona ukuba utyhafile (E.C.V., 2008:3).

(I see that he is weak.)

The palatal explosive [j] was also found in the selected texts. The alphabetic compound /dy/ was assigned to this sound, as in the following examples:

Kulo mdyarho, intwazana yethu ibinqenqeza phambili (sic.) (E.C.V.,

July 2008:8:

(In this race our girl was leading.)

Unotsibid^hyokhwe yintombazana esencinci enganeminyaka esibhozo
ekwixesha lokufikisa (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:696)

(A young girl between the age of eight and who is at the stage of
puberty.)

amad^hyungud^hyungu (XH.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:184)
(blisters)

um^hdyaro/um^hdyarho (XH.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:78 & 79)
(horserace)

It has also been observed that in the writing of this language it is possible for the
explosives to be nasalised.

The discussion below deals with the nasalisation of explosive sounds in isiXhosa and
in particular, with the manner in which they are represented in written texts. Explosive
sounds have already been dealt with. Nasal sounds are of two types, namely [n] and
[m]. These sounds will be more fully discussed in the paragraphs below on nasal
consonants.

It has been observed that when voiceless aspirated explosives are nasalised, they
become ejective. The difference between ejective and aspirated explosives is that in
the articulation of the ejective sounds, the puff of air is less than in the articulation of
the aspirated ones (Westermann and Ward, 1964:50). The following voiceless
nasalised explosives are found in isiXhosa:

[n + p^h] becomes [mp']

This sound change is due to the phonological process of nasalisation which occurs in
classes 9 and 10 and which causes the sound combination to change from an alveolar
nasal to a bilabial nasal. This sound was written as /mp/ in the texts under discussion,
as in the following examples:

- *in + phumelela* becomes *impumelelo*, e.g.:

Olu tyelelo lube y*impumelelo* (iDike-lethu, 2009:1)

(This visit has been successful)

- *in + phila* becomes *impilo*, e.g.:

Ukudla iorenji kunika *impilo* (Dept. of Health, 2007:39)

(To eat oranges gives health)

- *in + phatha* becomes *impatho*, e.g.:

Wafumana *impatho*-mbi emzini wakhe (Bona, 2009:21)

(She was ill-treated at the home of her in-laws)

[n + k^h] becomes [ŋk']

This sound change is due to the process already referred to. This sound is written as /nk/ in the texts under discussion, as in the following examples:

- *iin + khokela* becomes *iinkokheli* e.g.:

Andingetsho ukuthi *iinkokheli* zopolitiko azinabantu (Marwanqa, 2006:16)

(I can't say that political leaders are not humane)

Note that the ejectives of the above sounds is not indicated by the use of a diacritic in the conventional written form, even phonetically a diacritic in the form of an apostrophe is always used. This means that the respective sounds are not being represented effectively in the written texts under discussion, and reflects a weakness in the standardisation of the spelling of isiXhosa. This matter will be discussed in greater detail in paragraph 3.4 below.

In the sound system of isiXhosa, the partially voiced explosive [d] becomes fully voiced when nasalised: [d̃]. In the examples below, the alphabetic symbol /d/ has been assigned to the partially voiced explosive [d̃], whilst the compound /nd/ has been

assigned to the fully voiced nasalised explosive [nd]. This is reflected in the writing of the following words:

Le indoda yomnyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16).
(This is a man of the year 1965.)

UYehova waqala wadala indoda engu-Adam (Mbontsi, 2006:4).
(God started by creating a man called Adam.)

In these examples, there is no difference between the writing of the partially voiced and the fully voiced explosives, as they are both written without a diacritic. The result is that these two sounds are not sufficiently differentiated and also reflects a weakness in the standardisation of the spelling of isiXhosa. This matter will also receive more attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

The partially voiced bilabial explosive sound [ɸ] is a partially voiced version of the fully voiced explosive [b]. The former sound only occurs in the form of a nasal compound (PanSALB, 2008:114). This former sound is represented in writing by the alphabetic letters /bh/, as in the following example:

Uziswe yiam**bh**ulensi (Saule, 2006:97).
(He was brought by an ambulance.)

The orthographic representation of the sound [ɸ] by means of the graphic symbol /bh/ is not accurate. This matter will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

It has also been noticed that in the writing of this language there is a possibility of some of these explosives to be clustered with another type of consonant.

In the sound system of isiXhosa, some of the explosives may cluster with the voiced velar semi-vowel [w] in the formation of certain words. For example:

- the voiceless aspirated alveolar explosive [t^h]
- the nasalised fully voiced alveolar explosive [nd]
- the nasalised voiceless ejective alveolar explosive [ntʰ]
- the partially voiced alveolar explosive [d]

- the nasalised voiceless ejective palatal explosive [ɲc']
- the voiceless ejective velar explosive [k']
- the voiceless aspirated velar explosive [k^h]
- the nasalised voiceless ejective velar explosive [ɲk']

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds in the selected texts are as follows:

[t^h] + [w] becomes /*thw*/, as in the following example:

- Le nto i-ethe-ethe ifuna ukuphathwa ngobunono (Magona, 2006:18).
(This thing is sensitive and it needs to be treated carefully)

[nd] + [w] becomes /*ndw*/, as in the following example:

- Kwanqandwa amahayi-hayi ngabanye abasebenzi..(Madolo, 2005:22)
(Other workers intervened him repeatedly...)


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[nt'] + [w] becomes /*ntw*/, as in the following example:

- Kulo mdyarho, intwazana yethu ibinqenqeza phambili (iDike-lethu, 2008:8)
(In this race, our girl has been leading)

[d] + [w] becomes /*dw*/, as in the following example:

- Yi 'ntlukuhla' yodwa eseleyo (Isigidimi, 2008:8)
(It is only the sediment which is left)

[ɲc'] + [w] becomes /*ntyw*/, as in the following example:

- Amadoda ayeqala ukuntywila kwirhewu elinomsila kwangoLwesihlanu
(Nzo, 2002:16)

(Men started to drink liquor as early as on Friday)

[k'] + [w] becomes /kw/, as in the following example:

- Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967
(Mdlokolo, 2004:51)
(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster happened in 1967)

[k^h] + [w] becomes /khw/, as in the following examples:

- Amakhwenkwe akhule tofo-tofo avame ukuba nengxaki (Mtumane, 2004:14)
(Boys who have grown up being treated softly are inclined to encounter some problems)
- Unotsibidyokhwe yintombazana esencinci enganeminyaka esibhozo ekwixesha lokufikisa (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:696)
(A young girl between the age of eight and who is at the stage of puberty.)

[ŋk'] + [w] becomes /nkw/, as in the following example:

Amakhwennkwe akhule tofo-tofo avame ukuba nengxaki (Mtumane, 2004:14)
(Boys who have grown up being treated softly are inclined to encounter some problems.)

In the following section, the orthographic representation of another category of consonants, namely fricatives, will be discussed.

3.3.2.2 Fricatives

In the sound system of isiXhosa, the plosives are distinguished by the fact that the two articulators come together in order to form a stoppage. There is however, also another category of consonants. This category is distinguished by the fact that the two

articulators merely come nearer to each other, without forming a stoppage in the articulation of the sound. There is only a formation of a narrow passage in the oral tract where the air current forces itself through it. This kind of consonant is called a fricative.

According to Lyons (1975:320), “a fricative is articulated with partial closure in the mouth such as to cause audible friction as the air passes through it.” During the articulation of a fricative, the two articulators come nearer to each other. This causes air to force itself through a narrow passage and this results in the production of a hissing sound.

Hock (1991:13) also maintains of fricatives that “a less radical modification than complete blockage of the airflow is that made for fricatives: The obstruction is incomplete, but narrows the air passage sufficiently to produce a special friction noise, with specific resonances according to the place of articulation.” In the production of a fricative there is no complete blockage of the airflow as in the case of plosives, where the airflow is interrupted by the coming together of two articulators in the production of stops. What occurs here is the coming together of two articulators close to each other in order for the passage to become narrower. This friction results in the formation of whistling sound.

About fricatives, Yule (1996:39) too states that “the manner of articulation used in producing the set of sounds [f], [v], [s], [z] etc. involves almost blocking the airstream, and having the air push through the narrow opening. As the air is pushed through, a type of friction is produced and the resulting sounds are called fricatives.”

Jurafsky and Martin (2000:100) also maintain that “in fricatives, airflow is constricted but not cut off completely. The turbulent airflow that results from the constriction produces a characteristic “hissing” sound. What is meant by these linguists is that, when a fricative is produced, there is no complete stoppage of the airstream as the two articulators do not come together, but instead they just approach each other, leaving a narrow passage between them through which the airstream forces itself resulting to the production of whistling sounds.

Winkler (2007:70) concurs with the above statement as she is of the opinion that “fricative consonants are formed by bringing two articulators close together and forcing the air through the remaining space, with the movement of air generally causing a hissing or rushing sound.” With regard to fricatives again, Finegan (2008:86) believes that “fricatives are characterized by a forcing of air in a continuous stream through a narrow opening.”

Gleason (1961:245) differentiates between two forms of fricatives. He states that “if there is a constriction producing friction anywhere in the mouth, the resulting sound is a fricative. There may be simultaneous voice in the cords, in which case the sound is a voiced fricative, or the cords may be inactive, in which case the sound is a voiceless fricative.” Gleason therefore, clearly distinguishes two basic categories of fricatives, namely voiced and voiceless fricatives.

In the selected isiXhosa texts, the following fricatives were identified:

- voiceless denti-labial fricative [f]
- voiced denti-labial fricative [v]
- voiceless alveolar fricative [s]
- voiced alveolar fricative [z]
- voiceless alveo-lateral fricative [ɬ]
- voiced alveo-lateral fricative [ɮ]
- voiceless palatal fricative [ʃ]
- voiceless velar fricative [x]
- voiced velar fricative [ɣ]
- voiceless glottal fricative [h]
- voiced glottal fricative [ɦ]

The alphabetic symbols which have generally been assigned to each of these sounds are as follows:

[f] becomes /f/, as in the following examples:

Le ndoda yayifuna ukubona inkqubela ye-Afrika (Magona, 2006:15)
(This man wanted to see the progress of Africa.)

Ukhuphe ifowuni wacofa u10111 (Saule, 2006:89).
(He took out the phone and he pressed 10111.)

IKrimesi ifikile (Marwanqa, 2006:31)
(Christmas has arrived.)

Ufike erenkini kungekho kwanto ithi bekukhe kwema tekisi apho (Madolo, 2005:15)
(When he arrived to the taxi rank there was no sign what-so-ever that a taxi has stopped there.)

Wafika apha kwinyanga yeSilimela ngomnyaka we-2003 (Mkonto, 2004:34.)
(He arrived here in June 2003.)

[v] becomes /v/, as in the following examples:

Kwathi ngempela-yeki xa kanye lithi ndithenge ilanga...(Mdlokolo, 2004:9)
(During the weekend before sunset...)

Zininzi izinto ezenzeke emya kwevoti ka 1994 (Mbontsi, 2006:32)
(There are many things that have happened after the 1994 elections)

Uyoto lowe-2001 lwaluzolile (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:11)
(The 2001 elections were peaceful)

[s] becomes /s/, as in the following examples:

Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe1960 indoda... (Nzo, 2002:8).
(Did you know that round about 1960 a man...

Yena usaya kuzama imali yempelaveki kubaqhubi (Ngewu, 2000:85).
(He will try to get weekend money from the drivers.)

UMzantsi Afrika unomgaqo siseko wawo omtsha (Mbontsi, 2006:22).
(South Africa has got its new constitution.)

[z] becomes /z/, as in the following examples:

Wenziwe ilungu elizeleyo ku-Oktobha wonyaka ophelileyo (Ngcelwane, 2006:33)

(He was made a full member in October last year)

Uziswe yiambhulensi (Saule, 2006:97)
(He was brought by an ambulance)

Sikwaqwalasela izizwe ezalukayo emZantsi Afrika (Mtumane, 2004:1)
(We also take note of the nations who practice the circumcision custom in South Africa)

[t] becomes /h/, as in the following examples:

Kwalile ngo1955, umthetho woMzantsi Afrika wah^hlengah^hlengisintlalo (sic) yabantu (Nzo, 2002:81).
(In 1955, the South African law changed the social life of the people.)

Ngom^hla wama 29 Agasti (Mdlokolo, 2004:51).
(On the 29th of August.)

Ngeli xesha u-Adam no-Eva bazifi^hla ubuze babo (Marwanqa, 2006:21).
(During this period, Adam and Eve hid their nudity.)



[ɬ] becomes /d/, as in the following examples:

Baya kuthini abantu abad^dlula ngendlela, . (Saule, 2006:51).
(What will the passers-by say.)

Ingqesho iza kwandulelwa lud^dliwano-ndlebe (Dept. of Ed., 2006:22).
(The employment will be preceded by the interviews)

Bad^dlala kumabala ase Dikeni (iDike-lethu, 2008:8).
(They play on Alice grounds.)

[ʃ] becomes /sh/, as in the following examples:

Bafika ngaxes^{sh}a-nye (Magona, 2006:60)
(They arrived at the same time)

Impilo yakhe ihes^{sh}e-hes^{sh}e (E.C.V., 2008:3).
(His health is not in good condition.)

Ingqesho iza kwandulelwa ludliwano-ndlebe (Dept. of Ed., 2006:22).
(The employment will be preceded by the interview.)

[x] becomes /rh/, as in the following examples:

irhanisi (Xh-Eng., Eng-Xh., B.E.D. Vol.1, 2006:57)
(domestic goose)

In some instances however, the graphic variant: /r/ is also assigned to this sound, e.g., as in the following example:

iranisi (Xh-Eng., Eng.-Xh., B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:78 & 79).
(domestic goose)

It is evident that there is inconsistency with regard to the manner in which this particular sound [x] is represented in conventional writing. This phenomenon will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

[x] becomes /grh/, as in the following example:

Kukho ugrhogrhiso kule ndawo (E.C.V., 2008:1)
(There is terrorism in this place)



In some instances however, the graphic compound /gr/ is also assigned to this sound, as in the following examples:

Kukho izigrogriso kwabo baphangelayo bona (Isigidimi, 2008:3).
(There are some threats to those who are going to work.)

ukugrenya (PanSALB, 2008:17).
(to bite)

It is evident that there is inconsistency with regard to the manner in which this particular sound [x] is represented in conventional writing. This phenomenon will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

[h] becomes /h/, as in the following examples:

Kwanqandwa amahayi-hayi ngabanye abasebenzi...(Madolo, 2005:22)
(Other workers intervened repeatedly..)

Impilo yakhe iheshe-heshe (E.C.V., 2008:3)
(His health is not in good condition)

ihobe (PanSALB, 2008:87)
(dove)

[h] becomes /h/, as in the following example:

uhili (PanSALB, 2008:87)
(dwarf)

In this instance, it is evident that two distinct sounds namely [h̥] and [h] are being represented by the same alphabetic symbol, namely /h/. This anomaly will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

Although the denti-labial fricatives, the alveolar fricatives and the glottal fricatives are represented by a single letter, the palatal fricatives and velar fricatives are made up of alphabetic compounds. It has equally been observed that in the writing of this language there is a possibility of a single sound being represented by two different written symbols, as determined by the different modes of articulation. Such a sound is called an affricate.



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3.3.2.3 Affricates

Lyons (1975:317) states that “an affricate is a sound which is composed of a stop which is followed by a homorganic fricative.” An affricate therefore, is a sound which is formed up of two sounds produced by different manners of articulation but whose place of articulation is the same. In other words, this is the combination of an explosive and a fricative of the same place of articulation. According to Lyons (1987:83) “when two or more segments share a single feature in this way (especially if it is a consonantal feature having to do with place of articulation) they are commonly described as homorganic (produced by the same organ).”

Finegan and Besnier (1989:46) believe that “in the pronunciation of an affricate, air is built up by a complete closure of the oral tract at some place of articulation, then released (something like a stop) and continued (like a fricative).” In the pronunciation

of an affricate, two actions take place. The first action is that of the coming together of two articulators in the oral tract just like in the production of a stop, and the second is that of the nearing of two articulators to each other but leaving a narrow space between them just as in the pronunciation of a fricative. This shows the combination of two different sounds for the formation of a single sound, represented by two different symbols. Jurafsky and Martin (2000:100) state that “stops that are followed immediately by fricatives are called affricates.” Finegan (2004:90) agrees and maintains that “in the pronunciation of an affricate, air is built up by a complete closure of the oral tract at some place of articulation, then released (something like a stop) and continued (like a fricative).”

The above mentioned combination of the explosive stop and the fricative in the production of an affricate has also been recognised by Winkler (2007:71) who maintains that “an affricate is created when the airstream is stopped for a brief instant at the palate and then forced through a narrow space, making these sounds a combination of a stop and a fricative.” The above-mentioned brief stoppage and forcing of air through a narrow passage in the oral tract during the pronunciation of an affricate has been taken into account by Finegan (2008:87) as he states that “in the pronunciation of an affricate, air is built up by a complete closure of the oral tract at some place of articulation, then released (something like a stop) and continued (like a fricative).” Fromkin *et al.* (2011:202) agree and state that “affricates are sounds produced by a stop closure followed immediately by a gradual release of the closure that produces an effect characteristic of a fricative.”

In the pronunciation of an affricate, there is a combination of the articulation of an explosive and that of a fricative, as in its written form it is made up of these two different symbols. Although it is possible for some affricates to occur without being in the form of a nasal compound, this is not possible in the writing of the denti-labial affricates. Even when these affricates are in the form of a nasal compound, a fricative still appears to have remained a fricative. This type of sound is represented by two graphic symbols, but it is pronounced as one sound.

The above statement can be exemplified by using the observations as based on the consulted isiXhosa texts with regard to the writing of the nasalised voiceless ejective

denti-labial affricate [ɱɸf'] and the nasalised voiced denti-labial affricate [ɱɸv]. The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds, are as follows:

[ɱɸf'] becomes /mf/, as in the following examples:

Uvavanyo-gazi luyimfuneko kweli lizwe lethu (Dept. of Health, 2007:44)

(Blood testing is a necessity in this country of ours)

Xa ubani efunda, izichazi magama ziyimfuneko (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:11)

(When one studies, dictionaries are a necessity.)

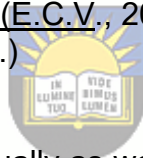
imfene (PanSALB, 2008:18)

(baboon)

[ɱɸv] becomes /mv/, as in the following example:

Imvula yayisina iphinda-phinda (E.C.V., 2008:24).

(The rain was falling repeatedly.)



Alveolar affricates occur both individually as well as in the form of nasal compounds. For instance, alternative forms of the voiceless ejective alveolar affricate [ts'] have been observed in these texts. The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to this sound are as follows:

[ts'] becomes /ts/, as in the following examples:

libhulukhwe ziyasipitsa (Marwanqa, 2006:49).

(The pairs of trousers keep us tight.)

Umgaqo-siseko weli lizwe unomtsalane (Dept. of Ed., 2006:7).

(The Constitution of this country is attractive.)

Unotsibidyokhwe yintombazana esencinci enganeminyaka esibhozo ekwixesha lokufikisa (G.Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:696).

(A young girl between the age of eight and puberty.)

The above affricate has also been observed in the form of a nasal compound: [nts'] .

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to this sound are as follows:

[nts'] becomes /nts/, as in the following examples:

Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967
(Mdlokolo, 2004:51).
(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster happened.)

Kungokunjalo nakwinenekazi lokuqala lenkululeko yoMzantsi-Afrika
(Mkonto, 2004:11.)
(It is also the same to the first lady of a free South Africa.)

Ebeyalatha phantsi kwalaa majiko-jiko kaMlengana (Saule, 2006:99).
(He has been pointing it out below those bends of Mlengana.)

The voiceless ejective alveo-lateral affricate [tʰ] has only been used in one of the consulted isiXhosa texts. The alphabetic compound which has been assigned to this sound is:

[tʰ] becomes /tʰ/, as in the following example:



iyatlitliza (PanSALB, 2008:89)
(the sound made by a fishing net which is full of fish.)

In these selected isiXhosa texts, the above-mentioned voiceless ejective alveo-lateral affricate [tʰ] is mostly found in the form of a nasal compound. The alphabetic compound which has been assigned to this sound is:

[ntʰ] becomes /ntʰ/, as in the following examples:

Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967 (Mdlokolo, 2004:51).
(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster happened.)

Intlekele leyo yenzeka kulwandle lwe-Indiya (Magona, 2006:14).
(That disaster happened in the Indian Ocean.)

Kwalile ngo1955, umthetho woMzantsi Afrika wahlengahlengisa
intlalo yabantu (Nzo, 2002:81).

(In 1955, the South African law changed the social life of people.)

In the consulted isiXhosa texts, the partially voiced alveolar affricate [d͡z] is also mostly found in the form of a nasal compound [nd͡z]. The alphabetic compound which has been assigned to this sound is as follows:

[nd͡z] becomes /nz/, as in the following examples:

Inkoliso yabantu abasuka kumbindi we-Afrika bebesebenza ezihotele
(Ngewu, 2000:81).

(The majority of the people who came from central Africa was working in the hotels.)

Le nto yenzele kwinyanga yoMsintsi ngowama-1977 (Madolo, 2005:20).

(This happened in September 1977.)

Intlekele leyo yenzele kulwandle lwe-Indiya (Magona, 2006:14).

(That disaster happened in the Indian Ocean.)

Another affricate which has been observed to appear less frequently in the consulted isiXhosa texts, is the voiceless aspirated alveolar affricate [ts^h]. The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to this sound are as follows:

[ts^h] becomes /ths/, as in the following example:

isithsaba (PanSALB, 2008:118)

(crown)

Other affricates that were observed in the consulted isiXhosa texts, are the following:

- voiceless ejective palatal affricate [tʃʼ]
- nasalised voiceless ejective palatal affricate [ɲtʃʼ]
- voiceless aspirated palatal affricate [tʃ^h]
- partially voiced palatal affricate [d͡ʒ]

- nasalised fully voiced palatal affricate [ɲdʒ]
- voiceless ejective velar affricate [kx']

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds are as follows:

[tʃ'] becomes /tsh/, as in the following example:

isitshixo (PanSALB, 2008:22)

(a key)

[ɲtʃ'] becomes /ntsh/, as in the following examples:

utshintsho-tshintsho (IRB, Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 20.11).
(repeated changing)

Bazakugoduka (sic.) emva kwalentshumayelo (sic.) (iDike-lethu, 2009:1).
(They will go home after this sermon.)

Kukho iiprojekthi ezintsha (iDike-lethu, 2009:2).
(There are new projects.)

[tʃʰ] becomes /tsh/, as in the following examples:

We are using the same alphabetic compound to represent different sounds.

Andingetsho ukuthi iinkokheli zopolitiko azinabuntu (Marwanqa, 2006:16).
(I can't say that political leaders are not humane.)

Isitya esitsha (PanSALB, 2008:13).
(A new dish.)

Lo mfundisi ufike kutshanje (E.C.V., 2008:3).
(This pastor arrived recently.)

From the discussion above, it is clear that the alphabetic compound /tsh/ is used in the publications consulted to represent not less than three different sounds namely, [tʃ'], [ɲtʃ'] and [tʃʰ]. That reflects a serious lack of standardisation as

far as the accurate representation of these sounds in the writing of isiXhosa is concerned. This matter will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

[d̥ʒ] becomes /j/, as in the following examples:

Wamana ukujikajikana nale ngxaki (Magona, 2006:8).
(He often meditated about this problem.)

Unyuke ngomgaqo esiya apho zazijika khona ezi taxi (Madolo, 2005:15)
(He moved up the street going to where these taxis were turning.)

Jonga naku-10.1.3 (PanSALB, 2008:38).
(Look also at 10.1.3.)

[ndʒ] becomes /nj/, as in the following examples:

Awanamhlanje amakhwenkwe akhulela kwiimeko ezitofotofo (Mtumane, 2004:49).
(Boys of today grow up under soft conditions.)

Ivusa umnye into yokuba ithi ingqutsela yesigebenga ebibanjwe ngolwesiHlanu ibe ngoku seyingaphandle (Marwanqa, 2006:63).
(It makes one angry that the giant criminal who was arrested on Friday but now he is already out.)

Lo mfundisi ufike kutshanje (E.C.V., 2008:3).
(This pastor has arrived recently.)

[kx'] becomes /kr/, as in the following examples, where the same word is used by three different authors, using exactly the same spelling:

UVitoli lo waba newonga nengqondo ekrele-krele (Mdlokolo, 2004:33).
(This Vitoli became dignified and brilliant.)

Mna andikrelekrelelanga (Dept. of Health, 2007:11).
(I'm not clever.)

Wabonisa ubukrelekrele bengqondo (Sibula, 2005:5).
(He showed brilliancy of mind.)

In the section that follows, the focus will shift to the orthographic representation of nasal sounds.

3.3.2.4 Nasals

The selected texts were also analysed for the occurrence and representation of individual nasals not found in the form of nasal compounds as in the explosives above, but as individual sounds. The orthographic representation of these sounds in the texts under discussion will be investigated in the paragraphs below.

Finlayson *et al.* (1991:72) state that “nasal consonants are sometimes called nasal stops because no oral release of the airstream takes place during their articulation. Because these sounds are articulated by means of a voiced airstream, which resonates in both the oral and nasal cavities, they have a sonorous quality.” Therefore, when a nasal is pronounced, the air current from the lungs flows out through the nasal tract instead of flowing out through the oral tract, as there are two tracts for the articulation of sounds.

Judged in accordance with variations in pronunciation, there are six nasal sounds in isiXhosa (Finlayson *et al.* 1991:73). These nasal sounds are the following:

- 
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- voiced bilabial nasal [m]
 - voiced denti-labial nasal [ɱ]
 - voiced alveolar nasal [n]
 - voiced prepalatal nasal [ɲ]
 - voiced velar nasal [ŋ]
 - voiced palatal nasal [ɲ]

Yule (1996:40) states that “most sounds are produced orally, with the velum raised, preventing airflow from entering the nasal cavity. However, when the velum is lowered and the airflow is allowed to flow out through the nose to produce [m], [n] and [ŋ], the sounds are described as nasals.” Yule is right to say that two tracts or cavities are used in the production of sounds. These are the oral and the nasal cavities. When the sounds produced are not nasal, the airflow moves out through the oral tract, but when they are nasal, it moves out through the nasal cavity or tract.

Jurafsky and Martin (2000:100) agree as they maintain that “the nasal sounds [n] , [m] and [ŋ] are made by lowering the velum and allowing air to pass into the nasal cavity.” Finegan (2008:88) too maintains that “nasal consonants are produced by lowering the velum, thus allowing the stream of air to pass out through the nasal cavity instead of through the oral cavity.”

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds in the texts under discussion are as follows:

[m] becomes /m/, as in the following examples:

Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe 1960 indoda ibisamnkela iR10?..(Nzo, 2002:8)
(Did you know that round about 1960 a man was paid R10?...

[m] becomes /m/, as in the following example:

Uvavanyo-gazi luyimfuneko kweli lizwe lethu (Dept. of Health, 2007:15)
(Blood testing is a necessity in this country of ours)

[n] becomes /n/, as in the following example:

Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe 1960 indoda ibisamnkela iR10?..(Nzo, 2002:8).
(Did you know that round about 1960 a man was paid R10?...)

[ŋ] becomes /n/, as in the following example:

Awanamhlanŋje amakhwenkwe...(Mtumane, 2004:49).
(Boys of today...)

[ŋ] becomes /n/, as in the following examples:

Ubusazi ukuba malunŋga nowe 1960 indoda ibisamŋkela iR10?...(Nzo, 2002:8)
(Did you know that round about 1960 a man was paid R10?...)

Another voiced palatal nasal sound was observed in the selected isiXhosa texts. This nasal sound is the following:

voiced palatal nasal [ɲ]

The alphabetic compound which has been assigned to this sound, is as follows:

[ɲ] becomes /n /, as in the following example:

Uvavanyo-gazi luyimfuneko kweli lizwe lethu (Dept. of Health, 2007:15).

(Blood testing is a necessity in this country of ours.)

This type of nasal is represented by two graphic symbols namely /n/ and /y/. It is, however, pronounced as one sound (PanSALB, 2008:117).

In addition to the conventional nasals, other unique nasals were found in the consulted texts. These nasals are the following:

breathy voiced bilabial nasal [mʰ]

breathy voiced alveolar nasal [nʰ]

breathy voiced palatal nasal [ɲʰ]

voiced velar nasal [ŋ]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds are as follows:

[mʰ] becomes /mh/, as in the following example:

Mhomha (PanSALB, 2008:18)

(to drink without a glass)

[nɸ] becomes /nh/, as in the following example:

isinhanha (PanSALB, 2008:83)
(rich person)

[ɸɸ] becomes /nyh/, as in the following example:

inyheke (PanSALB, 2008:20)
(lower lip)

[ŋ] becomes /ng'/, as in the following example:

ing'ang'ane (PanSALB, 2008:18)
(a hadeda) (a bird specy)

Apparent from the various texts consulted is that, there seems to be an anomaly as to the representation of the nasal sounds in written form since there are only two graphic symbols (/m/ and /n/), to represent all the nasal sounds in isiXhosa. This matter will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

In addition to the occurrence of nasal sounds, the consulted texts of this language also contain symbols to reflect lateral sounds.

3.3.2.5 Laterals / Liquids

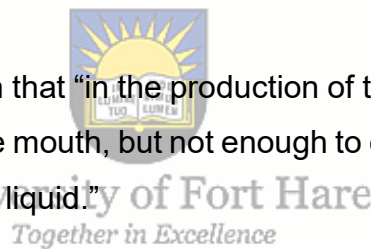
In the paragraphs below, the orthographic representation of lateral sounds in the texts under discussion will be investigated.

According to Todd (1991:16) “lateral sounds involve partial closure in the mouth. The air stream is blocked by the tip of the tongue but allowed to escape around the sides of the tongue.”

Lateral consonants are therefore formed by stopping the air passage in the middle of the mouth and allowing it to escape along one or both sides of the tongue. The stoppage is generally effected by placing the tip of the tongue on the teeth-ridge or against the teeth (alveolar or dental): it can also be made by placing the curled-up tip of the tongue on some part of the hard palate (retroflex l), or by pressing the front of the tongue against the hard palate (palatal). All sounds thus made are *l*-sounds (Westermann and Ward, 1964:68-69).

Yule (1996:40) agrees and states that “the [l] sound is formed by letting the airstream flow around the sides of the tongue as it makes contact with the alveolar ridge.” Jurafsky and Martin (2000:100) also maintain that “[l] is formed with the tip of the tongue up against the alveolar ridge or the teeth, with one or both sides of the tongue lowered to allow air to flow over it. [l] is called a lateral sound because of the drop in the sides of the tongue.”

Fromkin *et al.* (2011:202) explain that “in the production of the sound [l], there is some obstruction of the airstream in the mouth, but not enough to cause any real constriction or friction. This sound is called a liquid.”



During the articulation of a lateral sound, the air current therefore flows out along the sides of the tongue instead of flowing out through the middle of the mouth. The types of lateral sounds which have been observed in the consulted texts of this language are the following:

- i) The voiced alveo-lateral sound [l]
- ii) The nasalised voiceless ejective alveo-lateral affricate [ntʰ]
- iii) The nasalised fully voiced alveo-lateral affricate [ndʒ]
- iv) The voiced alveo-lateral fricative [ʒ]
- v) The voiceless alveo-lateral fricative [ɬ]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds, are as follows:

[l] becomes //, as in the following example:

Le yindoda yomnyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16).
(This is a man of the year 1965.)

[ntʰ] becomes /nt//, as in the following example:

Intlekele leyo yenzeka kulwandle lwe-Indiya (Magona, 2006:14).
(That disaster took place in the Indian Ocean.)

[ndʒ] becomes /nd//, as in the following example:

Baya kuthini abantu abadlula ngendlela, xa bendibona ndinkolonkoloza ecaleni komnyango wecawa ebusuku? (Saule, 2006:51).

(What will the passers-by say when they see me looking around near the door of the church at night?)

[ʒ] becomes /d//, as in the following example:

Baya kuthini abantu abaddula ngendlela, xa bendibona ndinkolonkoloza ecaleni komnyango wecawa ebusuku (Saule, 2006:51).

(What will the passers-by say when they see me looking around near the door of the church at night.)

[tʰ] becomes /h//, as in the following example:

I-ofisi leyo yophinda iholwe emva kweenyanga ezintathu (Nzo, 2002:14).
(That office will be inspected again after three months.)

It was also noted that one of the selected texts of this language reflects a special lateral sound. This lateral sound is the following:

apico-alveolateral resonant with breathy voice [lʰ]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to this sound are as follows:

[lʰ] becomes //h/, as in the following example:

uLhalha (PanSALB, 2008:83)
(a person's name)

It was also noted that these lateral fricatives can cluster with another type of consonant to form a syllable.

In the selected texts it was observed that the lateral sound [l] can be combined with the voiced velar semi-vowel [w] in the formation of a syllable which ends with a vowel.

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The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds are as follows:

[l] + [w] becomes //w/, as in the following examples:

Intlekele leyo yenzeka kuwandle lwe-Indiya (Magona, 2006:14).
(That disaster took place in the Indian Ocean.)

ULumka unowazi oluphangaleleyo lokulawuwa kwe-ofisi (Ngewu, 2000:14).
(Lumka has wide knowledge of office management.)

Le ntombi yazawa ngowe 1976 (Mdlokolo, 2004:42).
(This girl was born in 1976.)

Another type noted in the selected texts is the semi-vowel:

3.3.2.6 Semi-vowels

In this section, a specific sound will be discussed which may be regarded as a hybrid since it contains features of a vowel as well as features of a consonant:

“A semi-vowel has the characteristics of a vowel and a consonant. It is an independent vowel glide in which the tongue starts from the position of a closed (or half-closed) vowel, such as /i/, /u/, and immediately moves to some more open position, i.e. to that of a vowel of greater sonority than itself. Thus /w/ is the semi-vowel beginning from the /u/ position and /y/ the semi-vowel from the /i/ position. The consonantal character of a semi-vowel lies in the fact that it has little sonority: it cannot have syllabic quality nor can it bear a specific tone” (Westermann and Ward, 1964:89).

Some linguists are of the opinion that semi-vowels are related more closely to vowels than to consonants.

Potter (1957:29), for instance, states that “semi-vowels are essentially vowel-glides. First the speech-organs form a closed vowel sound, and then they move quickly to another vowel of greater prominence. It is only their rapid gliding motion joined with weak breath force that makes these sounds consonantal.”

According to Yule (1996:40) “the sounds [w] and [y] are produced very much as transition sounds. They are called glides or semi-vowels. In pronunciation, they are usually produced with the tongue moving, or gliding, to or from a position associated with a neighboring vowel sound. They are both voiced.” Winkler (2007:72) also states that “the glides are produced with almost no restriction of the airflow at all.” Fromkin *et al.* (2011:202) also maintain that the glide [j] is a palatal sound; the blade of the tongue (the front part minus the tip) is raised toward the hard palate in a position almost identical to that in producing the vowel sound [i]. The glide [w] is produced by both rounding the lips and simultaneously raising the back of the tongue toward the velum. It is thus a labio-velar glide.”

The formal description of the above-mentioned semi-vowels is as follows:

- the high front palatal semi-vowel [j]
- the high back velar semi-vowel [w]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to each of these sounds in the consulted texts are as follows:

[j] becomes /y/, as in the following examples:

Le yindoda yomnyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16).
(This is a man of the year 1965.)

Le ndoda yayifuna ukubona inkqubela ye-Afrika (Magona, 2006:15).
(This man wanted to see the progress of Africa.)

Le ntombi yazalwa ngowe 1976 (Mdlokolo, 2004:42).
(This girl was born in 1976.)

[w] becomes /w/, as in the following examples:

Unyaka ka 1994 weza nenkululeko kweli lizwe lethu (Mbontsi, 2006:32).
(The year of 1994 came with freedom in this country of ours.)

Unyaka u1868, wulibaleki kuye (Magona, 2006:20).
(The year 1868 is unforgettable to him.)

Ukhuphe ifowuni wacofa u10111 (Saule, 2006:89).
(He took out the phone and entered 10111.)

Furthermore, other semi-vowels were also found in the selected texts. These semi-vowels are described as follows:

breathy voiced palatal semi-vowel [jʰ]

breathy voiced velar semi-vowel [wʰ]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to these sounds, are as follows:

[jʰ] becomes /yh/, as in the following example:

yhini! (PanSALB, 2008:92)
(exclamation)

[wʰ] becomes /wh/, as in the following example:

whowu! (PanSALB, 2008:92)
(exclamation)

In the writing of isiXhosa, the above semi-vowels are commonly found in the writing of the names of people, as in the following:

uWhewhe

uWhiwhi

uNowhase

uYhoyho



In the writing of isiXhosa there is another category of consonants referred to as “clicks”.

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3.3.2.7 Clicks

Click sounds are a characteristic feature of the Southern African Bantu languages as well as the Khoisan languages. Most of the languages of this region have one or more click sounds. Finegan(2008:89) for instance, states that “several languages of southern Africa have among their stop consonants certain click sounds that are an integral part of their sound system.

Click sounds have their own peculiar means according to which they are formed. Finlayson *et al.* (1991:37) state that “clicks are made by trapping a body of air between the tongue and the roof of the mouth.” It means that the articulation of the clicks is different from that of the ordinary consonants, as in the ordinary consonants there is no trapping of air whatsoever.

Westermann and Ward, (1964:98) are of the opinion that:

Click consonants, which occur in Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Hottentot, Bushman (sic.) and other languages, like implosives, are sounds of a plosive nature made with the breath going into the mouth, instead of out. The peculiar smacking sound is due to their special formation. There are always two points of articulation, one of them being the velar stop, and the other made by some other part of the tongue or by the lips.

Finegan (2008:89) states that “several languages of southern Africa have among their stop consonants certain click sounds that are an integral part of their sound system.

The types of clicks which have been observed in the selected isiXhosa texts can be described as follows:

1. voiceless alveolar click [/]
2. voiceless alveo-lateral click [//]
3. voiceless palatal click [!]
4. voiceless aspirated alveolar click [/^h]
5. voiceless aspirated alveo-lateral click [//^h]
6. voiceless aspirated palatal click [!^h]
7. voiced alveolar click [/g]
8. voiced alveo-lateral click [//g]
9. voiced palatal click [!g]
10. nasalised voiced alveolar click [ŋ/g]
11. nasalised voiced alveo-lateral click [ŋ//g]
12. nasalised voiced palatal click [ŋ!g]
13. prenasalised voiceless alveolar click [ŋ /]
14. prenasalised voiceless alveo-lateral click [ŋ //]
15. prenasalised voiceless palatal click [ŋ !]
16. nasalised voiceless ejective alveolar click [ŋ']
17. nasalised voiceless ejective alveo-lateral click [ŋ // ']



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18. nasalised voiceless ejective palatal click [ɲ!]

The alphabetic symbols which have been assigned to these sounds, are as follows:

[/] becomes /c/, as in the following examples:

Ukhuphe ifowuni wacofa u10111(Saule, 2006:89).
(He took out the phone and he pressed 10111.)

Kuza kwenziwa imali-mboleko yokuphucula izakhiwo
(Dept. of Health, 2007:11).
(A loan will be raised to upgrade the buildings.)

Akukho mfuneko yokuba bacalu-calule (E.C.V., 2008:3).
(There is no need for them to discriminate.)

[//] becomes /x/, as in the following examples:

Ngeli xesha u-Adam no-Eva bazifihla ubuze babo (Marwanqa, 2006:21).
(During this period, Adam and Eve hid their nudity.)

Kwathi ngempela-veki xa kanye lithi ndithenge ilanga...(Mdlokolo, 2004:9).
(During the weekend before sunset...)

Bafika ngaxxesha-nye (Magona, 2006:60).
(They arrived at the same time.)

[!] becomes /q/, as in the following examples:

Elo qela laligqugqisile kwelo leMpuma-Koloni (Mdlokolo, 2004:44).
(That team beat all the teams in the Eastern Cape.)

Kungokunjalo nakwinenekazi lokugqala lenkululeko yoMzantsi-Afrika
(Mkonto, 2004:11).
(It is also the same to the first lady of a free South Africa.)

UMzantsi Afrika unomgagqo siseko wawo omtsha (Mbontsi, 2006:22).
(South Africa has got its own new constitution.)

[/^h] becomes /ch/, as in the following examples:

Oo-ewe kwakubonakala ukuba bathe chu nje apha emilebeni yeentombi
(Marwanqa, 2006:41).
(It was clear that the girls were keen to accept the proposal of love.)

Kuza kubakho uchongo-magama lwabafunekayo (Dept. of Ed., 2006:17).
(There will be the choosing of the names of those who are needed.)

Xa ubani efunda, izichazi magama ziyimfuneko (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:20).
(When one studies, dictionaries are a necessity.)

[//^h] becomes /xh/, as in the following examples:

Inja yaxoxa imana ixhuma-xhuma (Saule, 2006:89).
(The dog barked and jumped up and down now and again.)

Uphuhliso luxhomekeke kulwabiwomali (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:20).
(Development depends on the budget.)

Lamantombazana ayaxhentsa (iDike-lethu, 2009:2).
(These girls are dancing traditionally.)

[!^h] becomes /qh/, as in the following examples:

Yena usaya kuzama imali yempelaveki kubagqhubi (Ngewu, 2000:85).
(He will try to get weekend money from the drivers.)

Wahlala phantsi waphendla-phendla isigqhuma seencwadi (Saule, 2006:70).
(He sat down and paged repeatedly through a pile of books.)

I-aplikosi sisiqhamo endisithandayo (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B. E. D. Vol. 1, 2006:402).
(An apricot is fruit which I like.)

[/g] becomes /gc/, as in the following example:

umgca wama-22 (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 13.12)
(the 22 metre line)

[//g] becomes /gx/, as in the following example:

uxwebhu olunguggxuphu-gxuphu (PanSALB, 2008:43).
(a big and disorganised paper.)

[!g] becomes /gq/, as in the following examples:

Elo qela laliggugqisile kwelo leMpuma-Koloni (Mdlokolo, 2004:44).
(That team beat all the teams in the Eastern Cape.)

Waggiba ngoo-1990 (Bona, 2008:12).
(He completed in the 1990's.)

Izivatho zamaKrestu zaziggamile (Isigidimi, 2008:6).
(Christian clothing was dominating.)

[ŋ/g] becomes /ngc/, as in the following:

Ubomi buka nkosikazi busemngciphekweni (E.C.V., 2008:1)
(My wife's life is at stake)

[ŋ//g] becomes /ngx/, as in the following examples:

Amakhwenkwe akhule tofo-tofo avame ukuba nengxaki (Mtumane, 2004:14).
(Boys who have grown up being treated softly used to have some problems.)

Kwakukho amagingxigingxi kolo hambo (iDike-lethu, 2008:8).
(There were difficulties during that journey.)

Ukuthi wala wala yintetho engenangxam (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:540)
(A purposeless talk or activity.)

[ŋ!g] becomes /ngq/, as in the following examples:

UVitoli waba newonga nenngqondo ekrele-krele (Mdlokolo, 2004:33).
(Vitoli became dignified and brilliant.)

Ivusa umnye into yokuba ithi ingqutsela yesigebenga ebibanjwe ngoLwesihlanu ibe ngoku seyingaphandle (Marwanqa, 2006:63).
(It makes one angry that the big giant who was put in jail on Friday but now he is already out.)

Inggesho iza kwandulelwa ludliwano-ndlebe (Dept. of Ed., 2006:22).
(The employment will be preceded by the interviews.)

[ŋ/] becomes /nc/, as in the following examples:

Wakwazi ngolo hlobo ukufowunela emsebenzini, wathi ukuncokoncokola noTiny... (Saule, 2006:65).

(He managed that way to phone to the place where he was working and he chatted with Tiny...)

Ikhompyutha iluncedo (Mbontsi, 2006:28).

(A computer is helpful.)

liapile ziluncedo empilweni (Dept. of Health, 2007:39).

(Apples are a help in health.)

[ŋ//] becomes /nx/, as in the following examples:

Abadlali abathatha-inxaxheba (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007:Rule 14.2).

(Players who participate.)

Walile ukunxiba ezimpahla zam (iDike-lethu, 2008:7).

(He refused to wear these clothes of mine.)

Wayenxibe isuti egreyi (Bona, 2009:110).

(He was wearing a grey suit.)

[ŋ!] becomes /nq/, as in the following examples:

Isinqanda-mathe ngumntu othandana naye (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:707)

(A lover male or female) .

unqumlo-ntloko (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol.1, 2006:55)

(decapitation.)

[ŋ''] becomes /nkc/, as in the following example:

inkcubeko (PanSALB, 2008:116)

(culture)

[ŋ//'] becomes /nkx/, as in the following example:

inkxaso (PanSALB, 2008:116)

(support)

[ŋ!'] becomes /nkq/, as in the following examples:

Le ndoda yayifuna ukubona inkgubela ye-Afrika (Magona,2006:15).
(This man wanted to see the progress of Africa.)

Inkgubela phambili yoMzantsi-Afrika (Mkonto, 2004:11.)
(The progress of South Africa.)

Kufuneka kulandelwe umGaqonkqubo ngalo lonke ixesha
(The constitution should be followed all the time.)

The various texts as analysed here, suggest an anomaly in cases where both the nasalised voiceless ejective alveo-lateral click [ŋ//] and the voiceless prenasalised alveo-lateral click [ŋ//] are represented by the same graphic symbol, namely /nx/, as in the following examples:

Abantu abangenanto bafumana inxaso (E.C.V., July 2008:3) .
(People who own nothing get support.)

Abadlali abathatha-inxaxheba (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 14.2).
(Players who participate.)



A further anomaly appears in instances where both the nasalised voiceless ejective palatal click [ŋ!'] and the voiceless prenasalised palatal click [ŋ!] have been represented by the same graphic symbol, namely /nq/, as in the following examples:

Thina sinengubo yethu (iDike-lethu, August, 2009:4).
(We have our programme.)

Elingaku libonakele ephepheni (iDike-lethu, April, 2008:2).
(This point has appeared in the paper).

These matters will receive further attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

It was further observed that in written isiXhosa, it is possible under certain circumstances for the consonants that belong to the same place of articulation to form a cluster.

3.3.2.8 Clustering of consonants belonging to the same place of articulation

In any language, the various consonants generally have different places of articulation. In some instances however different consonants could have the same place of articulation and when these sounds are pronounced together, clustering occurs, as in the case of the following examples:

The clustering of the consonant sounds [n], [t'] and [s], produce the sound: [nts']. This cluster is represented by the graphic compound symbol /nts'/ as in the following example:

Ebeyalatha phantsi kwalaa majiko-jiko kaMlengana (Saule, 2006:99)
(He was pointing it out below those curves of Mlengana.)

Wakwazi ngolo hlobo ukufowunela emsebenenzini (Saule, 2006:65).
(He managed in that way to phone to the place where he was working.)

Kwakuyiintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele (Mdlokolo, 2004:51).
(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster occurred.)

Umgaqo-siseko weli lizwe unomtsalane (Dept. of Ed., 2006:7).
(The constitution of this country is interesting.)

It was noticed that the consonant clusters /nts/, /nz/, /ntl/, and /ts/ are clusters of sounds of the same place of articulation, alveolar in this case. This is described as follows:

/nts/- is the nasalised voiceless ejective alveolar affricate

/nz/- is the nasalised fully voiced alveolar affricate

/ntl/- is the nasalised voiceless ejective alveolar affricate

/ts/- is the voiceless ejective alveolar affricate

It was observed that nasalisation of a fricative in the writing of isiXhosa usually results in the formation of an affricate. This can be seen in the following examples:

n+s becomes /nts/

n+hl becomes /ntl/

But in the nasalisation of the voiced alveolar fricative sound [z], it appears as if it remains a fricative even after nasalisation has taken place. This anomaly will receive more attention in paragraph 3.4 below.

3.3.2.9 Difference in spelling of one and the same word

It was indicated that the isiXhosa equivalent for the English term “corruption” is written differently in some instances. Mtumane (2004:43) has written it as: limntlonnte (basic noun stem: -ntlonnti), whilst Mbontsi (2006:18) has written it as : Yintlondi (basic noun stem: -ntlondi). The accepted word should be intlondi, because the noun stem :-ntlondi has been used in both The Greater Dictionary of IsiXhosa Vol. 2 (2003:772) and Isichazi-Magama SesiXhosa (2008:432).

It was also observed that Marwanqa (2006), has written the isiXhosa equivalent of the English term “leaders” in an inconsistent manner, namely as linkokeli (2006:15) and also as iinkokheli (2006:16). The difference in the spelling of these words is found in the third syllable. The consonant of the third syllable in the first word is the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/, whilst that of the second word is the voiceless aspirated velar explosive /kh/.

Since the writing of the above words does not change their meaning, the respective variants may both be used, just as it appears in Isichazi-Magama SesiXhosa (2008:411). It is important to mention that the occurrence of these variants is caused by the influence of the dialects of this language.

3.4 Clarification of the issues identified in the previous sections of this chapter

In the preceding sections, various anomalies in the representation of specific sounds by means of alphabetic symbols were identified in the texts selected. In this section, these anomalies will be addressed and clarified. Recommendations will be made with

a view to the elimination of these anomalies. The purpose is to have a more accurate orthographic representation of the isiXhosa sound system and therefore, to improve the standardisation of the language.

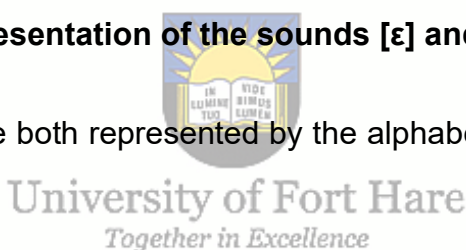
The discussion below will be subdivided into two sections, namely anomalies in the spelling of words that contain certain vowel sounds and anomalies in the spelling of words that contain certain consonant sounds.

3.4.1 Anomalies in the graphic representation of certain vowel sounds

As indicated above there are certain anomalies in the graphic representation of vowel sounds in isiXhosa. These anomalies have a negative impact on the writing as well as the reading of written texts. The various anomalies that were identified will now be discussed and recommendations will be made that will lead to the elimination of these anomalies.

3.4.1.1 The graphic representation of the sounds [ɛ] and [e]

The sounds [ɛ] and [e] are both represented by the alphabetic symbol /e/, as seen in the following examples:



esaa (PanSALB, 2008:25)
(that one)

esi (PanSALB, 2008:25)
(this one)

The initial vowels of these words have been represented by one and the same symbol although, in pronunciation, they are marginally different. Hence there is no standard differentiation between the writing of the half-open front vowel and the half-close front vowel, as they are both represented by /e/. In order to achieve a sufficient degree of differentiation between the writing of these sounds, the half-open front vowel in the first word should be written as /ɛ/, since the half-open front vowel is not followed by a high vowel. Therefore, /esaa/ should be written as /ɛsaa/.

In the writing of the second word, the half-close front vowel should be written as /e/, since it is followed by a high vowel. The spelling of /esi/ should also remain unchanged. The substitution of the half-open front vowel /ɛ/ by the half-close front vowel /e/ when it is followed by a high vowel, is called vowel raising.

For greater accuracy the above words should be written as follows:

esaa
(that one)

esi
(this one)

3.4.1.2 The graphic representation of the sounds [ɔ] and [o]

The sounds [ɔ] and [o] are both represented by the alphabetic symbol /o/, as seen in the following examples:

olo (PanSALB, 2008:45)
(that one)

olu (PanSALB, 2008:34)
(this one)



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In the writing of the above words, there is no proper differentiation between the writing of the half-open back vowel and the half-close back vowel, as they are both represented by the alphabetic symbol /o/. When the half-open back vowel [ɔ] is not followed by a high vowel in the writing of a word, it is represented by the phonetic symbol [ɔ]. However, when it is followed by a high vowel in the writing of a word, the sound is being raised and it becomes written as /o/ (Finlayson, 1991:54). Therefore, for the above words to be written accurately and to achieve the required degree of differentiation between the respective sounds, the relevant sounds should be graphically represented as follows:

ɔlo
(that one)

olu
(this one)

The discussion above shows that orthographically there is currently no difference between the writing of the half-open front vowel and the half-close front vowel, since they are both represented by /e/, e.g. /ewe/ (yes) versus /eli/ (this one). Furthermore, the half-open back vowel and the half-close back vowel are both written as /o/, e.g. /olo/ (that one) versus /olu/ (this one). Required for each and every sound to be represented by its unique writing symbol is that the half-open front vowel should be written as /ɛ/, e.g. /ɛwɛ/ (yes), whilst the half-close front vowel should be written as /e/, e.g. /eli/ (this one). Again, the half-open back vowel should be written as /ɔ/, e.g. /ɔlɔ/ (that one) and the half-close back vowel should be written as /o/, e.g. /olu/ (this one). For isiXhosa to have an accurate written form, a system should be developed so as to follow all seven vowels to be represented uniquely and specifically in the written form of the language.



Traditionally, it was believed that the writing system of a language should as far as possible, make use of the conventional symbols of the Roman alphabet. In the past, printing equipment could seldom make provision for the printing of symbols other than those belonging to the Roman alphabet. As a result, the seven-vowel system, as defined by Doke, could hardly be used in writing, because of the expenses that come with the modification of printing equipment to make provision for these unique graphic symbols. However in the modern age of computerisation these symbols can be accessed by means of word-processing programmes and printed fairly easily. Therefore there is no technical reason any longer that prevents the implementation of these recommendations.

3.4.1.3 Lack of vowel doubling in the plural form

Some of the selected texts showed a lack of vowel doubling to indicate the plural form in the case of nouns belonging to class 10 as well as nouns belonging to class 2(a) or inflections thereof.

The principle of vowel doubling as outlined above is fully recognised in the guidelines for isiXhosa orthography. Language bodies such as PanSALB, Provincial Language Committee as well as Xhosa National Language Unit all endorse the existence of this rule. However in spite of substantial endorsement the principle of vowel doubling is not adhered to by many of the authors that were selected and analysed.

It was noted that this lack of vowel doubling may be due to the fact that when a person speaks, there does not always seem to be vowel lengthening and so the spelling of the plural form in the writing of the above words has been based on the way the language is spoken. In spite of the fact that there seems to be a lack of vowel lengthening in the spoken version of the language, strict adherence to the rule of vowel doubling in the written version is still encouraged to ensure clear differentiation between the singular and the plural forms in written texts (noun class distinction) and also between distances. The application of this morphological rule facilitates quicker and more accurate recognition and interpretation of the meaning of words belonging to these categories by readers of the language than would otherwise be the case.



3.4.1.4 Hyphen usage in vowels which are juxtaposed

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In paragraph 3.3.1.3 above, it was noted that in some instances identical vowel symbols are written next to one another, in juxtaposed format. These vowel sounds are not meant to be pronounced as one lengthened sound, but rather as two distinct sounds, for example, /i-inkil/ (ink), /i-apil (apple). However, there are also identical vowel sounds that are meant to be pronounced as one lengthened sound, written in the manner of vi-i-i-tyo!, si-i-i-! It is clear that there is not adequate differentiation between the writing of these two sets of sounds. This could lead to confusion with regard to the pronunciation of these words. In order to prevent any confusion, it is recommended that vowel sounds that are meant to be pronounced as one lengthened sound not be separated from one another by means of hyphens. For example, viiityo! and siii!

At the same time it was found in some cases where vowel sounds are juxtaposed and meant to be pronounced as two distinct sounds, that hyphenation did not occur, for example, /iambhulensi/ (ambulance). This could lead to confusion in the pronunciation

of these sounds and in some instances they could be pronounced as one lengthened sound. The use of the hyphen in instances such as these should therefore be encouraged.

3.4.2 Anomalies in the graphic representation of certain consonant sounds

As indicated in the sections above, there are certain important anomalies in the graphic representation of consonant sounds in isiXhosa. These anomalies have a negative impact on the writing as well as the reading of written texts. The various anomalies that were identified will now be discussed and recommendations will be made that will lead to the elimination of these anomalies, and to the more effective standardisation of isiXhosa orthography.

The representation of different sounds by one and the same alphabetic symbol in the selected texts of isiXhosa relates to the writing of certain consonants as well. This tendency may be observed in the following instances:



3.4.2.1 The sounds [b] and [ɓ]

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In paragraph 3.3.2.1.1 above, it was found that the voiced bilabial implosive as well as the fully-voiced bilabial explosive, which only occurs in the form of a nasal compound, are both represented by the alphabetic symbol /b/. This may be observed in the following words found in the selected texts:

baleka (PanSALB, 2008:24)
(run)

Imihla neenombolo (PanSALB, 2008:51)
(Dates and numbers)

In these examples the bilabial implosive in the word: /baleka/ (run) is written as /b/, and the fully-voiced bilabial explosive in the word: /neenombolo/ (and numbers), is also written as /b/ in the formation of /mb/. The requirement that each sound in the spoken language should be represented by a unique symbol in the written form, is here ignored. In this way the meaning of the message, as expressed in the spoken

form, is not being communicated effectively and clearly in the written version of the language. In order for the above sounds to be represented effectively and clearly in the written form, they should be represented by different graphic symbols. Therefore, the voiced bilabial implosive should be written as /ɓ/, whilst the fully voiced bilabial explosive which only occurs in the form of a nasal compound, should be written as /b/ in the formation of /mb/. Therefore, the spelling of the above words should be as follows:

ḡalɛka
(run)

Imihla nɛɛnɔmbɔɔ
(Dates and numbers)

3.4.2.2 The sounds [tʃ'] and [tʃʰ]

It was found that, in some of the selected texts, both the voiceless ejective prepalatal affricate and the voiceless aspirated prepalatal affricate are represented by the symbol /tsh/. This was so in the writing of the following words:

isitshixo (PanSALB, 2008:22)
(a key)

Isitya esitsha (PanSALB, 2008:13)
(A new dish)

In order for the above sounds to be represented differently from one another and accurately, the International Phonetic Alphabet symbols should be used. Thus, the voiceless ejective prepalatal affricate should be written as /tʃ/ and the voiceless aspirated prepalatal affricate should be written as /tʃʰ/. The above words should be written as follows:

isitʃixo
(a key)

Isitya esitha
(A new dish)

3.4.2.3 The sounds [ɦ] and [h], and the sign [ʰ]

Analysis of the selected texts in paragraph 3.3.2.2 above, demonstrated that the voiced glottal fricative [ɦ], the voiceless glottal fricative [h] and the aspirated sign [ʰ] are all represented by the alphabetic symbol /h/, as in the writing of the following words:

ihobe (PanSALB, 2008:87)
(dove)

uhili (PanSALB, 2008:87)
(dwarf)

ukhuko (PanSALB, 2008:17)
(mat)



Since the symbol /h/ in the writing of the above words represents two different sounds as well as a sign of aspiration, additional graphic symbols need to be introduced, to ensure that each of these sounds is represented as accurately as possible in written form. It is therefore proposed that the voiced glottal fricative should be written as /ɦ/ and both the voiceless glottal fricative and the sign of aspiration should be written as /h/. Accordingly the spelling of the above words should be as follows:

iɦobe
(a dove)

uhili
(dwarf)

ukhuko
(mat)

3.4.2.4 The sounds [m] and [ɱ]

In the selected texts (see paragraph 3.3.2.4), both the voiced bilabial nasal [m] and the voiced denti-labial or labio-dental nasal [ɱ], are represented by the alphabetic symbol /m/ as in the writing of the following words:

umama (PanSALB, 2008:82)
(mother)

imfene (PanSALB, 2008:18)
(baboon)

Since these nasal sounds are pronounced differently, their graphic symbol representation should also be different. The voiced bilabial nasal should therefore be written as /m/ whilst the voiced denti-labial nasal should be written as /ɱ/. The spelling of the above words should be as follows:

umama
(mother)

imfene
(baboon)



In the writing of isiXhosa, it is expected of a nasalised fricative to become an affricate. But in the case of the above nasalised fricative, it is not possible to represent the sound graphically as there is no suitable symbol yet that can be used to represent an explosive in the formation of an affricate.

3.4.2.5 The sounds [ɲ], [ɳ] and [ŋ]

In paragraph 3.3.2.4 it was found that the voiced alveolar nasal [ɲ], the voiced palatal nasal [ɳ] as well as the voiced velar nasal [ŋ], are all represented by the symbol /n/, as in the writing of the following words:

ziigusha neenttaka - [alveolar nasal] (PanSALB, 2008:39)
(it is sheep and birds)

intsho^hntsho- [palatal nasal] (PanSALB, 2008:88)
(a chicken)

inkulu - [velar nasal (PanSALB, 2008:83)
(heir)

The above sounds have all been represented by the same alphabetic symbol. However, when the symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet are used, it becomes possible for them to be represented by three different graphic symbols. This would ensure greater differentiation and therefore, greater accuracy in the spelling of the language. Accordingly the voiced alveolar nasal should be written as /n/, the voiced palatal nasal should be written as /ɲ/, and the voiced velar nasal should be written as /ŋ/, as in the writing of the following words:

ziigusha *ɲɛɛntaka*
(it is sheep and birds)

intʃɔntʃɔ
(a chicken)

inkulu
(heir)



3.4.2.6 The voiced velar fricative: [ɣ]

In the newspaper: Eastern Cape Voice Your Voice To The People (July 2008:1), the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] is written as /grh/, e.g. /ugr^hogr^hiso/ (terrorism). However, in the newspaper: Isigidimi (July 2008:3), the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] is written as /gr/, e.g. /izi^grogr^hiso/ (threats) (see paragraph 3.3.2.2 above). Here, the anomaly is that the same sound is represented by two different alphabetic compounds.

The graphic symbol which has to be regarded as the correct one for the representation of this sound is that of the second version, since the combination of symbols: /gr/ appears to have been used by the majority of writers in the consulted texts.

3.4.2.7 The voiceless ejective nasalised alveo-lateral click: [ɲ//']

It was found that the nasalised voiceless ejective alveo-lateral click [ŋ//'] was sometimes represented as the prenasalised voiceless alveo-lateral click [ŋ//], (see paragraph 3.3.2.7), as in the following example:

inxaso (E.C.V., July 2008:3)
(support)

It has been noticed that the above word is written as a prenasalised click /nx/ instead of being written as a nasalised click which is /nkx/. When a voiceless aspirated click is nasalised, it becomes ejective as follows: *in + xhasa < inkxaso* (support) (Mini *et al.*, 1987:90). The correct spelling of this word is inkxaso.

3.4.2.8 The voiceless ejective nasalised palatal click: [ŋ!']

In iDike-lethu (2008:8), the voiceless ejective nasalised palatal click [ŋ!'] was written as /nq/, e.g. ibingengeza (she was leading) (see paragraph 3.3.2.7 above). This representation of the above sound was also observed in the monthly newspaper iDike-lethu (15 July-15 August 2009:4) in the writing of the word: sinengubo (we have a programme).



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When a voiceless aspirated click is nasalised, it becomes ejective, as in the following example: *in + qhuba* becomes inkqubo (a programme) (Mini *et al.*, 1987:90). Since the above terms are said to be ejective, the words should be spelled as follows: ibinkqenkqeza, sinenkqubo.

3.4.2.9 The breathy voiced palatal nasal: [ɲ]

In iDike-lethu (2008:8), the breathy voiced palatal nasal [ɲ] has been written as /ny/, e.g.: umnyadala (festival) (see paragraph 3.3.2.4 above). In this form the spelling is incorrect, since it represents the voiced palatal nasal [ɲ]. This word should be spelled as umnyhadala.

3.4.2.10 The nasalised voiced alveolar affricate: [ndz]

In one of the the selected texts the nasalised voiced alveolar affricate [ndz] is written as /nz/, as in the following example:

Wakwazi ngolo hlobo ukufowunela emsebennzini (Saule, 2006:65)
(He managed in that way to phone to the place where he was working).

Since the nasalisation of a fricative in the writing of isiXhosa mostly results in the formation of an affricate (see paragraph 3.3.2.3 above), the sound [ndz] should be represented graphically as /ndz/. Therefore, the correct spelling of /emsebennzini/, is /emsebendzini/.

In his discussion of the nasalised voiced alveolar affricate sound, Mbadi (1978:95) suggests that it be spelt as follows:

n+z = nz e.g. /zala/ becomes /inzala/ (offspring)



Mbadi has written the nasalised voiced alveolar affricate as if the fricative /z/ has remained a fricative and as if there has been no change of sound.

This interpretation is not correct. For Mbadi himself spells the counterpart to this sound, viz. the nasalised voiceless ejective alveolar affricate, as follows:

n+s = nts e.g. /sela/ becomes /intselo/ (drinking)

In this example, the fricative has changed to an affricate. Therefore, in the case of the nasalised voiceless alveolar fricative, the fricative should also change to an affricate. This discussion of the consonants as observed in selected isiXhosa texts will be concluded by listing them in the form of a chart.

3.4.2.11 The chart of consonants as derived from the isiXhosa writing materials (from 2000 to date)

The chart below contains symbols which have been derived from the isiXhosa writing materials which were published from 2000 to date. The chart therefore, represents a summary of all the sounds that have been discussed here.



Chart 2

Manner of Articulation	Bilabial	Dental	Alveolar	Pre-Palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Lateral
Manner of Articulation								
Explosives:								
Voiceless ejective	p		t		ty	k		
Voiceless aspirated	ph		th			kh		
Voiced	bh		d			g		
Implosive: Voiced	b							

Fricatives: Voiceless Voiced		f v	s z	sh		rh gr	h h	hl dl
Affricates: Voiceless ejective Voiceless aspirated Voiced			ts ths dz	tsh tsh j				tl
Nasals: Plain Breathy voiced	m mh	m	n nh		ny nyh	ng'		
Liquids: Voiced Breathy voiced			l lh					
Vibrant:								
Semi-vowels: Voiced Breathy voiced					y yh	w wh		
Nasal explosive compounds: Voiceless compound Voiced compound	mp mb		nt nd		nty ndy	nk ng		
Nasal Affricate Compounds: Voiceless compound Voiced compound		mf mv	nts nz	ntsh nj				ntl ndl
Clicks: Voiceless ejective Voiceless aspirated Voiced Nasal voiceless Voiceless nasal Compound Voiced nasal Compound			c ch gc nc nkc ngc		q qh gq nq nkq ngq			x xh gx nx nkx ngx

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the current status of isiXhosa spelling was evaluated and analysed. For the purpose of this investigation, the spelling of a number of words found in isiXhosa texts were critically analysed and interpreted.

The purpose of this investigation was to identify the anomalies and discrepancies that exist in isiXhosa spelling and to come forward with recommendations for a more

accurate standardisation of the spelling of isiXhosa. This chapter which consists of a critical discussion of the spelling of authentic isiXhosa lexical items was introduced with a study of the theoretical aspects of the sounds of isiXhosa. The views of various prominent linguists such as Doke, Finlayson, etc. were represented here. The discussion of the spelling of authentic isiXhosa terminology was in turn subdivided into a critical analysis of the graphic representation of isiXhosa vowel sounds and the representation of consonant sounds. This division was necessitated by the inherent sound differences that exist between these two categories.

The analysis of the spelling of isiXhosa vowels revealed that all the authors have made use of only five graphic symbols in their respective texts. These are: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/. A deeper analysis of the isiXhosa sound system however, reveals the existence of no less than seven (7) vowel sounds. In addition to the five graphic symbols mentioned above, there are also the sounds [ɔ] and [ɛ] which do not have graphic representation. The sounds [ɛ] and [e] are both represented by the graphic symbol /e/, whilst the sounds [ɔ] and [o] are both represented by the graphic symbol /o/. Since it has been found that the pronunciation of these sounds differs marginally, it is recommended that the sound [e] as found in the word /esi/ (this one) be written as /e/, while the sound [ɛ] as found in the word /esaa/ (that one) be written as /ɛ/. Similarly, it is recommended that the sound [o] as found in the word /olu/ (this one) be written as /o/, while the sound [ɔ] as found in the word /olo/ (that one) be written as /ɔ/. By following this procedure, the universal principle of assigning a unique graphic symbol to each distinctive sound in a language will be adhered to more satisfactorily in the future. This approach will therefore ensure a more accurate standardisation of isiXhosa spelling, if these two sounds could be given full recognition.

A lack of vowel doubling was evident in various texts analysed. This tendency applies mostly to the spelling of nouns of class ten (10) where the prefix is written as /i-/ whilst the correct form should be /ii-/. Similarly, the noun prefix of class 2(a) is often written as /o-/ instead of /oo-/. Finally, the demonstrative (3rd place) is often written as /-a/, rather than the correct form which is /-aa/.

The incorrect use of vowel doubling results among other things, to lack of clear differentiation between the singular and the plural forms in written texts, making it difficult for younger mother-tongue readers as well as for foreign readers to interpret these texts properly.

During the discussion on consonants in this chapter it was found that in some instances a specific sound was represented by different alphabetic symbols (or, a combination of symbols) in the texts analysed. In some instances the sound [ɣ] was represented by the alphabetic symbol */grh/*. In other instances, it is represented by */gr/*. It was concluded that the correct form should be */gr/*.

Furthermore, this analysis of the spelling of isiXhosa consonants has revealed that, in some instances, different sounds were being represented by the same graphic symbol or symbols in the texts under discussion. For instance, the sounds [ǃ] and [b] are both represented by the alphabetic symbol */b/*. It is recommended that the sound [ǃ] be written as */ǃ/* and that the sound [b] be written as */b/*. Similarly, the sounds [tʃʰ] and [tʃʰ] are both represented by the alphabetic combination */tsh/*. It is recommended that the sound [tʃʰ] be represented by */tʃʰ/* whilst the sound [tʃʰ] should be written as */tʃʰ/*. Similarly, the sound [ŋʱ] was represented by the alphabetic symbol */nx/*. The correct form would be */nkx/*.

In other instances, guidelines already in existence have been reconfirmed here. It is clear that the authors of the selected texts are not fully aware of these guidelines. It is important to state that the anomalies which have been observed in the writing of the above newspapers, in accordance with this research, have been caused by the fact that the writers and the editors of these publications are not conversant enough with the standard orthography of the language.

It was found that in the texts under discussion borrowed words are also frequently used. These words are mostly derived from English but some are also borrowed from Afrikaans. The spelling of these words will be investigated in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 4

TOWARDS THE STANDARDISATION OF THE SPELLING OF ISIXHOSA BORROWED WORDS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to observe and analyse the various anomalies and inconsistencies in the spelling of isiXhosa borrowed words as found in the selected texts. The discussion of the spelling of isiXhosa borrowed words will be preceded by an exposition of the sound structure of isiXhosa. The ultimate aim of this chapter is to present a preferred format for each and every word of isiXhosa in terms of the theoretical principles that were identified in Chapter 2.

4.2 The spelling of borrowed words

Languages do not exist in isolation from one another. There is always some form of contact between languages that coexist in the same geographical region. For isiXhosa such contact has led to the use of a large number of borrowed words. As

Lyons (1974:25) observes:

It is a well-known fact that languages in geographical or cultural contact 'borrow' words from one another quite freely; for words tend to travel across geographical and linguistic boundaries together with the object or custom to which they refer. Much of the resemblance in the vocabularies of different languages may therefore be due to their having borrowed words either from one another or from some third language.

Fromkin *et al.* (2011:505) also believe that borrowing is the result of a process of continuous contact between different languages. They put it as follows: "borrowing words from other languages is an important source of new words, which are called loan words. Borrowing occurs when one language adds a word or morpheme from another language to its own lexicon. This often happens in situations of language

contact, when speakers of different languages regularly interact with one another, and especially where there are many bilingual or multilingual speakers.”

Pei (1965:102) too acknowledges the principle of borrowing and suggests that there are two forms of borrowing: “In borrowing, two processes are possible. The borrowing language may take a word and adapt it to its own sound-and-form scheme; in this case we have a loan word. Or the borrowing language may literally translate into native words the separate constituents of the foreign word, in which case we get a loan translation.”

Hartley (1986:106) observes that “borrowing is a process whereby one language adopts a meaningful unit from another..... First of all, the lender is often unaware of his generosity, and in the second place the borrower is apt to keep his new acquisition and adapt it to suit his own convenience.” Radford, Atkinson, Britain, Clahsen and Spencer (2009:225) agree as they say that “when a word is borrowed, it is often gradually changed so that it fits the phonological and morphological structure of the borrowing language or dialect.”



What these linguists point out here is certainly true of isiXhosa which has a large number of borrowed or loan words. This is to be expected since it is one of the Bantu languages described by Louwrens (1993:8-9) in these words:

When different languages are in close contact with one another as is the case in South Africa, mutual influence between these languages is inevitable. One of the major areas in which the consequences of contact between languages is observed, is that of linguistic borrowing, i.e. the adoption of loan- or foreign words from languages such as Afrikaans and English into the lexicon of, for example, a Bantu language. Although Bantu languages, in turn, may borrow lexical items from one another, the borrowing of words and expressions from English and Afrikaans is on a much larger scale. This is a natural process, particularly when different cultures are in close contact with one another, which leads to a need for terms to name foreign objects and concepts which were previously unknown to the speaker of the borrowing language.

In explaining why speakers do borrow words from other languages, Radford *et al.* (2009:225) are of the opinion that “perhaps the most obvious reason is sheer

necessity. People need to develop words for new and unfamiliar concepts- new technology, new plants and animals.” Langacker (1973:181) also maintains that “a common cause of lexical borrowing is the need to find words for new objects, and places. It is easier to borrow an existing term from another language than to make one up.”

The paragraphs below, will discuss the role played by borrowed words in isiXhosa. Existing anomalies in the spelling of these words (as found in the selection of texts) under discussion) will be identified and recommendations will be made with regard to the standardisation of the spelling of these words.

4.2.1 Syllables ending with a consonant

It has been observed in the writing of the selected isiXhosa documents that there are syllables in certain words of isiXhosa which end with a consonant, especially in the writing of borrowed words, although that consonant is not the usual one, that is, the voiced bilabial nasal /m/ (see paragraph 3.3.1.5 above). Some examples are the following:


idrop (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 13.1)
(a drop kick)

imo/ (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 15.2)
(a maul)

i-makh (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 18)
(a mark)

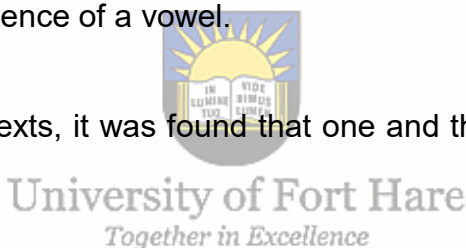
The common feature of these words is that they have been derived from English words. Although this spelling format is not according to the conventional principles for the spelling of isiXhosa, it should be condoned. This is due to the fact that language is not static but develops continuously. Language development keeps pace with the movement of the times and this can lead to what is called language change, which may include some changes in syllable formation. Clearly the standard guidelines for

written isiXhosa orthography are not applicable here. It is expected however, that it will be possible for applied linguists to formulate a set of guidelines for the spelling of isiXhosa words that have been derived from other languages in the near future. Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:105) state that:

Since language is dynamic, it is quite natural for the vocabulary, spelling and orthography of a language to change. These changes are mirrored in the way that especially the spelling system of a language adapts according to development. Usually the basic spelling and orthography policies and principles remain unchanged but when the language develops and modernises, this process usually has an effect on the spelling and orthography.

It is evident that, as a result of language development, changes in the vocabulary, spelling and orthography of a particular language can occur even as the basic spelling and orthography policies and principles remain unchanged. This tallies, for instance, with our finding that in some languages it is possible for the consonant to function as a syllable without the presence of a vowel.

In the selected isiXhosa texts, it was found that one and the same word was written differently.



4.2.2 One and the same word written differently

It is common for loan-words in isiXhosa to be written in varying ways. One of the aims of this research is to pave the way for this language to have a uniform way of writing. The borrowed words will therefore be classified according to their respective places of articulation, as derived from the initial consonant of the first syllable of each pair of words in the following manner:

4.2.2.1 Bilabials

- (i) ibhulukhwe ziyasipitsa (Marwanqa, 2006:49)

(The pairs of trousers are squeezing us)

versus:

Isela linxibe ibhrukhwe edlakadlaka (Saule, 2006:15)

(The thief is wearing a ragged pair of trousers)
(from Afrikaans: “broek”)

(ii) Uziswe y**iambhulensi** (Saule, 2006:97)

(He was brought by an ambulance)

versus:

Izigulana zisebenzisa **iambulansi** (Nzo, 2002:25)

(The sick use an ambulance)

(from English: “ambulance”)

4.2.2.2 Denti-labials

Bafike kwiveki yesibini ka**Februwari** (iDike-lethu, April 2008:7)

(They arrived in the second week of February)

versus:

Uvoto luza kubanjwa ngomhla **we-9 kuFebhuwari** (Dept. of Health, 2007:1)

(Voting will take place on the 9th of February)

(from English: “February”)



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4.2.2.3 Alveolars

Kukho ke nabo basuka babize intloko **yetryini** (Mkonto, 2004:5)

(There are also those whose prices are high)

versus:

He! Madoda, siyashiywa **yitileni** (Nzo, 2002:79)

(Gentlemen! The train is leaving us behind)

(from English: “train”)

Ufike erenkini kungekho kwanto ithi bekukhe kwema **teksi** apho (Madolo, 2005:15)

(When he arrived at the taxi rank there was no sign what-so-ever that a taxi has stopped there)

versus:

Izihlobo zifike ngeemoto zimbini nge**tekisi** (Nzo, 2002:34)

(The relatives arrived by two cars including a taxi)
(from English: “taxi”)

itishara (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:346)
(teacher)

versus:

itishala (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:346)
(teacher)

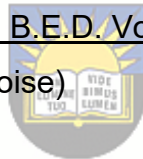
versus:

ititshala (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:346)
(from English: “teacher”)

Usikolpati (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:45)
(tortoise)

versus:

Uskolpati (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:45)
(from Afrikaans: “skilpad” (tortoise))



4.2.2.4 Palatals

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uJanywari (PanSALB, 2008:128)

versus:

uJanyuwari (PanSALB, 2008:32)
(from English: “January”)

umdyaro (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:78 & 79)
(horserace)

versus:

umdyarho (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:78 & 79)
(horserace)
(from Afrikaans: “jaag”)

4.2.2.5 Velars

IKrisimesi ifikile (Marwanqa, 2006:31)

(Christmas has come)

versus:

iKrisimesi (PanSALB, 2008:70)

(Christmas)

(from English: “Christmas”)

It has already been stated that one and the same borrowed word may be spelled differently in the selected isiXhosa texts. These different ways of spelling will be discussed in detail below, in order to determine which version of the word should be recognised as the correct one in the writing of this language.

4.2.2.6 Discussion of one and the same word spelled differently

4.2.2.6.1 ibhulukhwe / ibhrukhwe (from Afrikaans: “broek”) (a pair of trousers)

The first version of the word has been spelled according to the requirements for the writing of syllables of a word in isiXhosa, namely the sequence: /CV/ CV/, which means that a consonant is generally separated from another consonant by a vowel. For instance, the partially voiced bilabial explosive /bh/ has been separated from the voiced alveo-lateral liquid /l/ by the high back close vowel /u/. Furthermore, /l/ is separated from the voiceless aspirated velar explosive /kh/ by the high back close vowel /u/.

The spelling of the second version of the word is based more closely on the spelling of the Afrikaans word “broek.” In the second syllable there is a combination of the partially voiced bilabial explosive [b̥] and the voiced alveolar trill [r] and it ends with the high close back vowel /u/. The /br/ sound is not a common sound combination in isiXhosa; in fact it is foreign. It is also one of the reasons why /broe-/ = /bhulu-/.

As stated above, the basic structure of the word in isiXhosa is as follows: /CV/CV/. Therefore, in light of this unique structural characteristic of the language, it is recommended that the term ibhulukhwε be used.

4.2.2.6.2 iambhulensi / iambulansi (from English : “ambulance”)

The discrepancy in the spelling of this term is found in the third syllable, the third syllable of the first version being written as /mbhu/, that of the second written as /mbu/.

It is not common for the sound system of isiXhosa to consist of the nasalised fully voiced bilabial explosive [mb] being followed by /h/, because once it is in this form, it is regarded as being a separate syllable, and not a nasal compound. Since the third syllable of this particular term cannot be subdivided into two separate syllables, the version which contains the nasal compound /mbu/ should be recognised as the correct one. The correct spelling of this term therefore, is iambulensi.

This discussion on loan words that contain bilabial compounds in the first syllable, will be followed by a discussion of those which contain denti-labial sounds in the first syllable.



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4.2.2.6.3 uFebruwari / uFebhuwari / uFebhruwari (from English: “February”)

The difference in the writing of the first and second versions of the word is in the third syllable. In the first version the third syllable is written as /bru/ whereas in the second version it is written as /bhu/. The spelling of the first version is based more closely on the pronunciation of the English word “February” whereas that of the second version is based more closely on the sound system of isiXhosa, the borrowed sound /r/ having been completely avoided. This sound is foreign to the traditional sound pattern of isiXhosa.

As in the above, the difference between the first and third versions is also in the spelling of the third syllable. Where the third syllable of the first version is written as /bru/, that of the third version is written as /bhru/. The third syllable of the first version consists of the combination of the fully voiced bilabial explosive sound which is similar

in writing to the fully voiced bilabial implosive and the voiced alveolar trill which ends with the high back close vowel. The third syllable of the third version consists of the combination of the partially voiced bilabial explosive and the voiced alveolar trill, which also ends with the high back close vowel.

If the choice was only between */uFebruwari/* and */uFebhruwari/*, the latter would have been preferable. Since, however, there is also a third version which avoids the combination of */bh/* and */r/*, or */b/* and */r/* respectively, it is */uFebhuwari/* preferred, as it is written according to the required CV-sequence of isiXhosa, namely: */u/Fe/bhu/wa/ri/*.

The discussion of these words which belong to the denti-labial category, will be followed by the discussion of those which belong to the alveolar category.

4.2.2.6.4 itreyini / itileni (from English: “train”)

The spelling of the first version adheres more closely to that of the original English term “train.” The spelling of the second version adheres more closely to the traditional sound system of isiXhosa, where it is expected that the succession of two consonants should be separated by a vowel. For instance, between the consonants */t/*, */ll/* and */n/* there appear the vowels */i/* and */e/* respectively.

It is recommended that the second version be recognised as the standard form in isiXhosa, since it is based more closely on isiXhosa word structure, where a consonant in a syllable is always followed by a vowel. Secondly, the spelling of the second version should be used, as it does not involve the trill, which is foreign to the sound structure of isiXhosa.

4.2.2.6.5 iteksi / itekisi (from English: “taxi”)

In the writing of the first version the consonant */k/* (which is the voiceless ejective velar explosive) is succeeded by the consonant */s/* (which is the voiceless alveolar fricative), without a vowel between them, as required in terms of the sound system of isiXhosa.

In the second version the consonant /k/ is separated from the consonant /s/ by the vowel /i/. The second version is written exactly according to the sound pattern of isiXhosa, where a syllable in a word may be made up of a single vowel or of a combination of a consonant and a vowel.

The consonant combination: /ks/ is not common to the sound system of this language, because it is made up of sounds that belong to different places of articulation. This may explain why the user of the second version has decided to separate these two consonants by a vowel. Enough to say that the spelling of the second version should be recognised as the standard isiXhosa form.

4.2.2.6.6 uskolpati / usikolpati (from Afrikaans: “skilpad”) (tortoise)

In the first version of this term, there is a combination of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ and that of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/, whereas in the second one this juxtapositioning does not occur, owing to the presence of the high close front vowel /i/ between them. The sound pattern of the second version coincides fairly closely with the traditional sound pattern of isiXhosa, except for the omission of a vowel after the voiced alveo-lateral sound ///. The suggested standardised spelling of this word therefore is usikolipati.

The use of this borrowed term is not encouraged, since there is an authentic isiXhosa term which should rather be used, viz.: ufudo.

4.2.2.6.7 itishara / itishala / ititshala (from English: “teacher”)

In the selected texts, three different isiXhosa versions of the English term “teacher” were identified. The consonant in the third syllable of both the first and the second versions is the voiceless palatal fricative /sh/, whilst the consonant in the third syllable of the third version is the voiceless aspirated palatal affricate /tsh/. Furthermore, the consonant of the last syllable in the second and the third versions is ///, although that of the first version is /r/. Whereas the sound /r/ is foreign to isiXhosa the recommended version of this word is ititshala.

The discussion of these terms, which are characterised by their alveolar sound attributes will be succeeded by the discussion of those words which are classified by their palatal sound attributes.

4.2.2.6.8.1 uJanyuwari / uJanywari (from English: “January”)

The consonant of the third syllable in the first version is the voiced palatal nasal /ny/, while that of the second version is a combination of the voiced palatal nasal /ny/ and the voiced velar semi-vowel /w/ which together form /nyw/. The spelling of the first version is based on the sequence: /CV/CV/CV/, which is in accordance with the traditional sound structure of isiXhosa. The sound pattern of the second version is based on its pronunciation English, its source language. Since the majority of the selected texts have used the spelling of the first version, and since its sound structure is more closely related to that of isiXhosa, namely /CV/CV/, this version should be recognised as the standardised form.



4.2.2.6.8.2 umdyaro / umdyarho (from Afrikaans: “jaag”) (race)

The last syllable of the first version of this borrowed term has been spelled differently than that of the second version, namely /r/, not /rh/. The consonant of the last syllable in the first version is written as the voiced alveolar trill or roll /r/ whilst that of the second version is written as the voiceless velar fricative /rh/.

It has been noted that there used to be no differentiation in isiXhosa orthography between the symbol representing the voiced alveolar trill or roll and that representing the voiceless velar fricative, both being represented by the symbol /r/. This can still be seen in the writing of the following isiXhosa surnames:

- Rangula
- Rungqu
- Mrubatha

At the same time, this same symbol was also used for the spelling of the following words: iṛanti (rand), iṛula (ruler) etc.

The revised orthography of isiXhosa does however, make provision for effective differentiation regarding the representation of these sounds in the written form of the language. In the present orthography of the language, the voiceless velar fricative is written as /rh/, whilst the trill or roll is written as /r/. As stated above, the term umdyaro / umdyarho is derived from the Afrikaans term *jaag*. Since the last consonant of this Afrikaans term is [x], the corresponding consonant in the isiXhosa derivation should also be [x]. Therefore, the second version should be recognised as the standardised isiXhosa term.

Following upon the discussion of the above words which are characterised by their palatal sound qualities, the discussion of the words which have been categorised as those with velar sound qualities will follow.

4.2.2.6.9 iKrismesi / iKrisimesi (from English: “Christmas”)

The combination of /k/ and /r/ in the writing of the above versions should be taken note of, as it coincides with the writing of a different sound, namely the voiceless ejective velar affricate /kr/ as found in the word /ikrele/ (sword). In order to ensure effective differentiation between these two sounds in the writing of isiXhosa, it is recommended that the word ikrele (sword) should be written as it is, but that the spelling of the words /iKrismesi and /ikrisimesi/ should be amended (see below).

Furthermore, it has been observed that the spelling of the first version, is based more closely on the English term, where the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ is not necessarily followed by a vowel in English. The syllable /s/ ends with a consonant not succeeded by a vowel. The second version consists of a consonant succeeded by a vowel: /si/. It is recommended that this version be recognised since it has been written according to the traditional sound system of the language. This is the only difference between the spelling of these versions.

Since most texts use the spelling of the second version, the correct spelling of this version in order for it to be different from that of /ikrele/ (sword), the introduction of an apostrophe is recommended as follows:

iK'risimesi

(Christmas)

Although the traditional sound system of isiXhosa (namely /CV/CV/) has been observed as closely as possible with regard to the above recommendations, it has also been observed that the introduction of borrowed words into isiXhosa has also brought about a change in the consonant-vowel sequence (CV-sequence) in some instances. That is, where in the writing of this language it used to be common for a consonant to be separated from another consonant by means of a vowel, it has now been noticed that in the writing of the borrowed words, the clustering of two consonants of different places of articulation is also possible. That leads into a discussion of consonant clustering in the spelling of borrowed words.

4.2.3 Consonant clustering within borrowed words

Hock (1991:380) comments as follows on lexical borrowing: “languages and dialects do not exist in a vacuum. There always is at least some contact with other languages or dialects. It is only the degree of that contact which may differ from language to language or dialect to dialect. A very common result of linguistic contact is vocabulary or lexical borrowing, the adoption of individual words or even of large sets of vocabulary items from another language or dialect.”

Hock’s view that there is always some contact between languages or dialects as they do not exist in isolation certainly obtains for isiXhosa. The existence of linguistic contact leads to the adoption of individual words from other languages or dialects which are situated in the vicinity of the area where isiXhosa is spoken.

Weinreich (1970:56) comments as follows about borrowing:

The vocabulary of a language, considerably more loosely structured than is phonemics and its grammar, is beyond question the domain of borrowing *par excellence*. In exploring the causes of lexical borrowing, it may therefore be well to inquire first as to the reasons which motivate any speaker – unilinguals included- to accept new loan-words in his

vocabulary, i.e. to be an agent in their diffusion; and then to consider bilinguals as but a special type of speaker. Also, since loan-words are in many cases not recognizable as such to the unilinguals, one must look first for the reasons of lexical innovation in general.

When a language does not have enough vocabulary in its lexicon, it develops a tendency to borrow. An investigation into the spelling of borrowed words should be preceded by an inquiry into the reasons which motivate speakers to accept new loanwords in their vocabulary. A study of this nature however, belongs to the field of socio-linguistics, which is beyond the scope of this particular research.

Since language is not static but developing, this phenomenon of lexical borrowing has brought about unusual forms of consonant clustering in the spelling of isiXhosa that are not in accordance with the normal sound qualities of the language. This development has, in turn, introduced new challenges with regard to the revision of the spelling rules of the language and even the introduction of new sets of rules. These new sets of consonant clustering have been classified according to place of articulation in the following manner:



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4.2.3.1 Bilabials

/br/ - ibrashi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xxvi)
(a brush)
(from English: “brush”)

/bhr/ - libhrukhwe ziyasipitsa (Saule, 2006:15)
(Pairs of trousers squeeze us)
(from Afrikaans: “broek”)

/pr/ - iprojekthi (PanSALB, 2008:11)
(a project)
(from English: “project”)

/pt/ - Ukapteyini welo qela wayekhokela (Isigidimi, 17 July 2008:2)
(The captain of that team was leading)
(from Afrikaans: “kaptein”)

/mpy/ - Ikhompyutha iluncedo (Mbontsi, 2006:28)
(A computer is helpful)
(from English: “computer”)

4.2.3.2 Denti-labials

/ft/ - isikhaftina (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:26)
(lunch box)
(from unknown language): “isikhaftina”

4.2.3.3 Alveolars

/dr/ - idroph (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007:Rule 13.1)
(drop kick)
(from English: “drop”)

/ndr/ - unondrokhwe (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:686)
(petticoat)
(from Afrikaans: “onderrok”)

/ns/ - Uziswe yiambhulensi (Saule, 2006:97)
(He was brought by an ambulance)
(from English: “ambulance”)

/nsh/ -I-inshorensi yakhe imbhatalele (Bona, July 2008:44)
(His insurance compensated for him)
(from English: “insurance”)

/rbh/ - ikarbhatsi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:13)
(whip)
(from Afrikaans: “karwats”)

/st/ - Waya estishini (Saule, 2006:33)

(He went to the station)
(from English: “station”)

/sty/ - ikhosttyum (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:93)
(costume)
(from English: “costume”)

/sk/ - ikhaskethi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:52)
(casket)
(from English: “casket”)

/sp/ -Uthanda ukulima ispinatshi esitiyeni sakhe (Bona, July 2008:37)
(He likes to plant spinach in his garden)
(from English: “spinach”)
ikhaspa (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:52)
(casspir)
(from English: “casspir”)



/trl/ -Kukho ke nabo basuka babize intloko yetreyini (Mkonto, 2004:5)
(There are also those whose prices are high)
(from English: “train”)

4.2.3.4 Prepalatals

/zh/ - ithelevizhini (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xiii)
(television)
(from English: “television”)

/nsh/ -I-i-nshorensi yakhe imbhatalele (Bona, July 2008:44)
(His insurance has paid for him)
(from English: “insurance”)

4.2.3.5 Velars

/gl/ - iglasi (G.Dic. of Xh. Vol.3, 1989:xxvii)

(glass)
(from English: “glass”)

/gr/ - Apha abantwana bafumana igranti (Bona, July 2008:34)
(Here the children receive a grant)
(from English: “grant”)

/kl/ - iloko (PanSALB, 2008:81)
(clock)
(from English: “clock”)

/kr/ - ikriva (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xxvii)
(wheelbarrow)
(from Afrikaans: “kruwa”)

/khr/ - ikhrashi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol 3, 1989:xxvii)
(crushed maize)
(from English: “crushed maize”)

/ks/ - Adutyulwa omabini amawele eseteksini eya eMtata (sic) (Mkonto, 2004:94)
(Both twins were shot in a taxi which was going to Mtata)
(from English: “taxi”)

/kth/ - Kukho iiprojekthi ezintsha (iDike-lethu, April 2008:2)
(There are new projects)
(from English: “project”)

/ktr/ - Le yifektri yomqhaphu (Isigidimi, 17 July 2008:8)
(This is a cotton factory)
(from English: “factory”)

/kp/ - ibhakpoti (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 1, 2006:125)
(baking pot)
(from Afrikaans: “bakpot”)

The above consonants will be discussed according to their places of articulation in the following manner:

4.2.3.5.1 Discussion of the clusters /br/ and /bhr/

The spelling of the word /ibrashi/ (a brush) is based more on the spelling of English. In the second syllable there is a combination of the partially voiced explosive [b̥] and the voiced alveolar trill [r] and it ends with the low back open vowel [a]. The /br/ sound is not a common sound combination in isiXhosa; in fact it is foreign. In order for this word to be regarded as consonant with the requirements of isiXhosa spelling, it should be written as /ibh'rashi/. Then it follows the /CV/CV/CV/-sequence while the apostrophe represents the high back close vowel [u]. The combination of the partially voiced bilabial explosive [b̥] with the voiced alveolar trill [r] in the writing of the word /ibhrukhwel/ (a pair of trousers), does follow isiXhosa spelling because of the combination of the symbols /b/ and /h/ in the representation of the partially voiced bilabial explosive although the use of an apostrophe to represent a vowel to separate of these two sounds is still lacking. Although this is so the word should be written as /ibhulukhwel/, as already recommended in paragraph 4.2.2.1 above.

4.2.3.5.2 Discussion of the clusters: /pr/, and /pt/

Although the cluster /pr/ in the writing of the word /iprojekthi/ (project) is of foreign origin, this clustering of the voiceless ejective bilabial explosive and that of the voiced alveolar trill can be accepted in the writing of isiXhosa only when it is accompanied by the use of the apostrophe (') in this manner : /ip'rojek'thi/. This apostrophe usage should also be applied in the clustering of the voiceless ejective bilabial explosive /p/ with the voiceless ejective alveolar /t/ and the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ in the writing of the words /ikap'teyini/ (captain). It should be noted that the use of the apostrophe in the writing of these words indicates omission of the vowel /u/ which should have met the requirements of the CV-sequence.

4.2.3.5.3 Discussion of the cluster: /mpy/

The clustering of the nasalised voiceless ejective bilabial explosive /*mp*/ with the voiced palatal semi-vowel /*y*/ as in /ikhompyutha/ (computer), is foreign to the writing of this language. Therefore, in order to meet the principles of this language, the use of an apostrophe is recommended as follows: /ikhomp'yutha/, to compensate for the omission of the vowel /*i*/, which should have been used to meet the requirements of the CV-sequence.

This discussion of the bilabial consonants cluster will now be followed by that of the denti-labial consonants cluster.

4.2.3.5.4 Discussion of the cluster: /ft/

It was noted that the clustering of the voiceless denti-labial fricative /*f*/ with the voiceless ejective alveolar explosive /*t*/ in the writing of the word /isikhafftina/ (lunch box) is foreign to isiXhosa. To be written correctly, it is recommended that an apostrophe be used as follows: /isikhaff'ina/. This is because the consonants which have formed a cluster, are of different places of articulation. They should be separated by means of a vowel /*i*/, in accordance with the typical sound structure of the language. The insertion of an apostrophe compensates for the omission of the vowel.

This discussion of the denti-labial consonants cluster will be followed by that of the next cluster of consonants, the alveolars.

4.2.3.5.5 Discussion of the clusters: /dr/, /ndr/ and /ns/

It was noticed that the clustering of the above consonants as found in the writing of /idroph/ (drop kick), /unondrokhwe/ (petticoat), /iambulansi/ (ambulance) and /i-inshorensi/ (insurance) is that of sounds that belong to the same place of articulation, being the alveolar. The clustering of the partially voiced alveolar explosive /*d*/ with the voiced alveolar trill /*r*/, in the word: /idroph/, that of the nasalised fully voiced explosive /*nd*/ with the voiced alveolar trill /*r*/, in the word: /unondrokhwe/ and that of the voiced alveolar nasal /*n*/ with the voiceless alveolar fricative /*s*/ in the words: /iambulansi/ and /i-inshorensi/ is that of sounds that belong to the same place of articulation, being the

alveolar. The clustering of two consonants (CC) represents a deviation from the normal sound structure of the language namely /CV/ CV/. It is better to separate the consonants from one another by means of a vowel. However, since these consonants belong to the same place of articulation namely the alveolar, the insertion of a vowel is not required. Accordingly an apostrophe is not to be used here as in the case of the words discussed above.

It was also noted that the clustering of the nasal /n/ with that of the fricative /s/ in the words: /iambulansi/ and /i-inshorensi/ caused prenasalisation rather than nasalisation. Prenasalisation of the fricative does not change the status of the fricative, as in cases of nasalisation when it becomes an affricate. Although the spelling of these words as found in the texts under discussion is not in accordance with the basic sound structure of isiXhosa, it is recommended that this spelling be accepted owing to the presence of interlanguage influencing, as outlined in paragraph 4.2.2.6.2 above.

4.2.3.5.6 Discussion of the cluster: /rbh/

Since the clustering of the voiced alveolar trill /r/ with the partially voiced bilabial explosive /bh/ in the word: /ikarbhatsi/ (whip), has been formed up of sounds belonging to different places of articulation, being the alveolar and the bilabial, the use of an apostrophe is recommended in its writing as it compensates for the omission of a vowel. It should therefore be written as follows: /ikar'bhatsi/.

4.2.3.5.7 Discussion of the clusters: /st/, /styl/, /sk/ and /sp/

The clustering of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless ejective alveolar explosive /t/ is that of consonants belonging to the same place of articulation, being the alveolar. Although both consonants belong to the same place of articulation, one is a fricative, the other a plosive. Due to this difference the insertion of a vowel (i) between these sounds is recommended as in the writing of the word /istishi/ (station). It is therefore recommended that the spelling of the word /istishi/ be amended to read /istishi/.

The clustering of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless ejective palatal explosive /ty/ in the writing of the word /ikhostyum/ (costume), calls for insertion of an apostrophe, since this cluster is made up of a combination of two sounds of different places of articulation, being the alveolar and the palatal. Therefore, in order to align this borrowed term with the typical sound pattern of isiXhosa (viz.) : /CV/CV/CV/, the word should be written as /ikhoss'tyum/. In its full form of writing however, it has to be written as /ikhosi'tyum/.

In the case of the clustering of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ in the writing of the word /ikhaskethi/ (casket), the usage of the apostrophe is recommended as this cluster also consists of the combination of sounds of different places of articulation, being the alveolar and the velar. Therefore, this word should be spelled as /ikhass'kethi/ to indicate the omission of the vowel /i/ which would normally be between these consonants in isiXhosa.

The combination of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless ejective bilabial explosive /p/ is found in the writing of the words /spinatshi/ (spinach) and /ikhaspa/ (casspir). Here too the use of the apostrophe is recommended, as this cluster also consists of sounds of different places of articulation, being the alveolar and the bilabial. These words should be written as /s'pinatshi/ and /ikhass'pa/ as an indication of vowel omission. The vowel /i/ should have come between the two consonants in this manner: /ispinatshi/ and /ikhasispa/, in recognition of the typical sound structure of isiXhosa.

4.2.3.5.8 Discussion of the cluster: /tr/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective alveolar explosive /t/ with the voiced alveolar trill /r/ in the writing of the word /itreyini/ (train) is that of sounds of the same place of articulation, being the alveolar, and the spelling of this word may remain as it is. But as noticed in the selected documents some writers have written this word as /itileni/, and we would recommend this to be the sole spelling of the sound /r/, which does not exist in the sound system of isiXhosa, has now been avoided.

This discussion of the sound clusters which have been classified as the alveolars, will now be followed by the discussion of the sound cluster which has been classified as the prepalatals.

4.2.3.5.9 Discussion of the cluster: /zh/

Although the above cluster appears to be made up of two distinct sounds, as in the writing of the word /ithelevizhini/ (television), this cluster consists of a single sound, described as the voiced prepalatal fricative /zh/. This sound is foreign to isiXhosa and only occurs in the writing of the above word in isiXhosa. The counterpart of this new cluster in the writing of this language is the voiceless prepalatal fricative /sh/ as found in the writing of authentic words such as /ishushu/ (it is hot), /igusha/ (sheep), etc. It is recommended that the spelling of this word be accepted as found in the text under discussion.

4.2.3.5.10 Discussion of the cluster: /nsh/

The clustering of the voiced alveolar nasal /n/ with the voiceless prepalatal fricative /sh/ in the writing of the word /i-nshorensi/ (insurance), does not represent a nasal compound, as the sounds /n/ and /sh/ are sounds of different places of articulation, being the alveolar and the prepalatal. The combination of these two sounds into a single cluster only leads to a process of prenasalisation, rather than one of complete nasalisation. Since this word is a new addition to the vocabulary of isiXhosa, its spelling should remain as it is, in recognition of the lexical development of this language.

It has already been mentioned that the mutual exposure of different languages to one another may lead to certain changes in the writing of the languages involved.

4.2.3.5.11 Discussion of the cluster: /g/

The clustering of the partially voiced velar explosive /g/ with the voiced lateral sound // in the writing of the word /ig/asi/ (glass), is not according to the principles of isiXhosa orthography, where the juxtapositioning of two consonants with different places of articulation should be avoided by the insertion of a vowel between them. In order for this word to be written according to the way it is pronounced, the use of the apostrophe is necessary. This word should be written as /ig'asi/. However, some writers have spelled this word as /ig//asi/. This spelling is recommended as it follows the principles of the writing of this language.

4.2.3.5.12 Discussion of the cluster: /gr/

The clustering of the partially voiced velar explosive /g/ with the voiced alveolar trill /r/ in the writing of the word /igrama/ (grammar), is made up of sounds of different places of articulation, being the velar and the alveolar. It is recommended therefore, that an apostrophe be inserted between the /g/ and the /r/ to compensate for the omission of the vowel: //i/. This term should be written as /ig'rama/.

4.2.3.5.13 Discussion of the cluster: /kl/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ with the voiced alveo-lateral sound // in the writing of the word /ik/oko/ (clock) is common in the writing of this language, although it does not accord with the principles of its writing. For example, in the writing of this language, there are also the following words: /ik/asi/ (class), ik/abhu (club), /ik/imati/ (climate), etc. Since isiXhosa orthography, does not encourage the clustering of consonants of different places of articulation, it is recommended that an apostrophe be inserted as follows: /ik'ok/oko/. This compensates for the omission of the vowel //i/ between these two consonants. For this word to be regarded as written accurately, it should be written as /ikil'ok/oko/.

4.2.3.5.14 Discussion of the cluster: /khr/

The clustering of the voiceless aspirated velar explosive /kh/ with the voiced alveolar trill /r/ in the writing of the word /ikhrashi/ (crushed maize), is made up of sounds of different places of articulation, being the velar and the alveolar. In order to adhere to the typical sound pattern of isiXhosa, the vowel /i/ should be inserted between these consonants. It is recommended that an apostrophe be inserted between the /kh/ and the /r/, to compensate for the omission of the vowel. Alternatively, this word should be written as /ikhirashi/.

4.2.3.5.15 Discussion of the cluster: /ks/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ with the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ in the writing of the word /iteksi/ (taxi), calls for the use of an apostrophe as follows: /itek'si/. The apostrophe substitutes for the omitted vowel /i/ which should have been inserted between these two consonants as they are of different places of articulation. Therefore, the correct spelling of this word is /itekisi/, which is in full accordance with the traditional sound structure of isiXhosa.

4.2.3.5.16 Discussion of the cluster: /kth/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ with the voiceless aspirated alveolar explosive /th/, as observed in the writing of the word /iprojekthi/ (project), combines sounds of different places of articulation, being the velar and the alveolar. The insertion of an apostrophe is therefore recommended, so that the word is correctly written as /iprojek'thi/. The writing of this cluster without the usage of the apostrophe is not encouraged, as it is important for this language to be written according to the conventional CV- syllabic structure where possible.

4.2.3.5.17 Discussion of the cluster: /ktr/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ with the voiceless ejective alveolar explosive /t/ and the voiced alveolar trill /r/ combination as observed in the writing of the word /ifektri/ (factory), has resulted in the combination of a set of sounds

with different points of articulation. Whilst the sound /k/ belongs to one area of the speech chart, the combination /tr/ belongs to another area of the chart. The insertion of an apostrophe is therefore recommended to compensate for the absence of the vowel /i/. In isiXhosa, the juxtapositioning of two consonants with different points of articulation requires insertion of a vowel. Therefore, it is recommended that this word should be written as /ifek'tri/. As already stated, the clustering of /t/ and /r/ does not require the insertion of the apostrophe, since these are sounds of the same place of articulation.

4.2.3.5.18 Discussion of the cluster: /kp/

The clustering of the voiceless ejective velar explosive /k/ with the voiceless ejective bilabial explosive /p/, as observed in the writing of the word /ibhakpoti/ (baking pot), requires the insertion of the apostrophe. Therefore, this word should be written as /ibhak'poti/. This recommendation emanates from the fact that the two elements of this cluster, namely /k/ and /p/, have different points of articulation, calling for use of the vowel /u/. The insertion of the apostrophe compensates for the absence of this vowel.

4.2.4 Borrowed words which have not become indiginised

It was noted that in some of the selected isiXhosa texts, there are foreign words whose spelling has not been subjected to the principle of code-switching. These words are the following:

iiphyla (PanSALB, 2008:33)

(phyla)

(from Latin: “phyla”)

ii-Orders (PanSALB, 2008:33)

(Orders)

(from Latin: “orders”)

ii-Genera (PanSALB, 2008:33)

(Genera)

(from Latin: “genera”)

ii-Species (PanSALB, 2008:33)

(Species)

(from Latin: “species”)

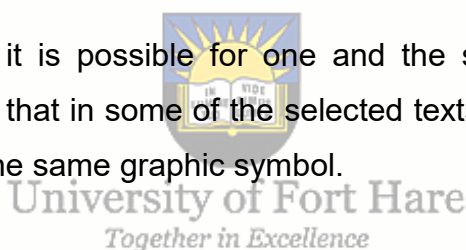
iavocado (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B. E. D., 2006:403)

(avocado)

(from English: “avocado”)

The reason for not changing the spelling of the above borrowed words may be to retain their meanings as they are, because there are generally scientific and highly technical terms that are not subject to adaptation when used within the context of a particular language.

As it was observed that it is possible for one and the same word to be spelled differently, so it is noticed that in some of the selected texts two different sounds are represented by one and the same graphic symbol.



4.2.5 Representation of two different foreign sounds by one and the same symbol

It was found that the selected texts show a tendency to represent two different foreign sounds by one and the same graphic symbol. The graphic symbol which has been used for both sounds is /r/.

The trill or roll has been identified and described by various linguists. Pittman (1949:24) for instance, says that in the case of some of the consonants where there is just the right kind of flexibility of the articulator, the consonants can be flapped by the point of articulation or trilled (semi-automatic reiterative flapping). The flap can be considered to be the basic sound, and the trill can be thought of as a modification of the flap. The voiced alveolar trill occurs in many languages.

The trill consonant is foreign to isiXhosa and appears only in borrowed words (Finlayson *et al.*, 1991:72). The two versions of this sound are described as follows:

voiced alveolar trill or roll [r]

alveolar trill with breathy voice [rʰ]

The alphabetic symbol /r/ has been assigned as follows to these sounds in the texts under discussion:

[r] becomes /r/, as in the following examples:

ika**r**bhatsi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:13)

(whip)

(from Afrikaans: “karwats”)

ilo**r**i (PanSALB, 2008:118)

(lorry)

(from English: “lorry”)



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[rʰ] becomes /r/ as well, as in the following example:

i**r**abha (PanSALB, 2008:118)

(rubber)

(from English: “rubber”)

To differentiate effectively between the writing of the words /ilo**r**i/ and /i**r**abha/ (as they sound differently but are represented by one and the same graphic symbol which is [r]), the voiced alveolar trill should be represented by the symbol /r/ as in /ima**r**i/ke/ (market), /iki**r**i/va/ (wheelbarrow), etc. By contrast, the symbol which should represent the alveolar trill with breathy voice is /rʰ/, as in /i**r**ʰu**l**a/ (ruler), /i**r**ʰa**b**ha/ (rubber), etc.

The selected isiXhosa texts also reveal use of one and the same graphic symbol to represent two different sounds, one of which is an authentic isiXhosa sound, while the other is found in the borrowed words.

4.3 Representation of two different sounds, one of which is authentic and the other of which is borrowed by the same graphic symbol

It has been observed that the same graphic symbol is used to represent two different sounds in the texts under discussion. Firstly, the authentic Xhosa sound [ɣ] (the voiced velar fricative) is represented by the graphic symbol /gr/, as in the following example:

Kukho /izigrogriiso/ kwabo baphangelayo bona (Isigidimi, July 2008:3)
(There are some threats to those who are going to work)

Secondly, the combination of the partially voiced velar explosive with the voiced alveolar trill or roll [gr] (which is foreign to isiXhosa), is also written as /gr/:

/igrama/ (PanSALB, 2008:17)

(grammar)

(from English: “grammar”)

Although Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:170) state that “there is as yet no way of distinguishing in spelling between /gr/ as a fricative and /gr/ as a combination of /g/ and /r/,” it was noted that in one of the isiXhosa newspapers, the voiced velar fricative is written as /grh/, instead of being written as /gr/; for example:

Kukho /ugrhogrhis/ kule ndawo (E.C.V., July 2008:1)

(There is terrorism in this place)

In this way, the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] has been represented clearly and effectively by means of the alphabetic combination /grh/. Although this is a good

attempt to standardise the spelling of this sound, it is recommended that in order to differentiate effectively between the voiced velar fricative and the combination of the partially voiced velar explosive, the latter sound be written as /g'r/ (eg. ig'rama). This recommendation is based upon the fact that the sounds /g/ and /r/ are consonants that belong to different points of articulation. In terms of the sound structure of isiXhosa, consonants that belong to different points of articulation are separated by a vowel. An apostrophe is used to indicate that a vowel should separate these consonants.

It is recommended that the graphic combination /gr/ be used to represent the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] (eg. izigrogriso).

Furthermore, in the texts consulted, the voiceless ejective velar affricate [kx'] and the combination of the voiceless ejective velar explosive [k'] with the voiced alveolar trill or roll [r] are both written as /kr/, e.g.:

ikrele (PanSALB, 2008:89)

(a sword)

ikriva (PanSALB, 2008:81)

(wheelbarrow)

(from Afrikaans: "kruwa")



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In order to differentiate effectively between the representation of the above two sounds, the first sound should be written as /kr/ and the second as /k'r/, as follows:

ikrele

(sword)

ik'riva

(wheelbarrow)

Here the use of the apostrophe arises from the fact that the vowel symbol has been omitted from the graphic combination. This is due to reasons already explained in the paragraphs above.

In this way, the anomaly of representing two different sounds by means of one and the same written symbol in the spelling of the above words has been removed.

Now that there have been some changes suggested for the sound representation as found in the writing materials of isiXhosa published from 2000 to date, another set of consonants has to be introduced. In addition to the symbols of the Roman alphabet, this study also recommends the use of certain symbols from the IPA, in order to provide an orthography that is as accurate as possible, where each and every sound is represented by its own unique symbol.

4.4 The suggested chart of consonants

Chart 3 below contains the suggested symbols mentioned during the course of the discussion in this chapter and the previous chapter. The chart therefore represents a summary of all the sounds that have been discussed.



Chart 3

Manners of Articulation	Bilabial	Dental-labial	Alveolar	Pre-Palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Lateral
Explosives: Voiceless ejective Voiceless aspirated voiced	p p' p'r ph bh bh'r		t tr th d dr			k k' k'r kh g g'r g'l		
Implosive: Voiced	ɓ							
Fricatives: Voiceless Voiced		f f'r f'l v	s z	sh /ʃ zh		rh gr	h	hl dl
Affricates: Voiceless ejective Voiceless aspirated Voiced			ts tsh dz n n'	tʃ tʃh j		kr		tl
Nasals: Plain Breathy Voiced	m mʰ	ɱ	n n'		ny nyʰ	ŋ		
Liquids:								
Vibrant:			r					
Semi-vowels: Voiced Breathy voiced					y yʰ	w wʰ		
Nasal explosive compounds: Voiceless compound Voiced compound	mp mb		nt nd		ty dy	ŋk ŋg		
Nasal Affricate Compounds: Voiceless compound Voiced compound		mf mv	nts ndz	tʃ j				ntl ndl
Clicks: Voiceless ejective Voiceless aspirated Voiced Nasal voiceless Voiceless nasal compound Voiced nasal compound		c ch gc nc nkc ngc		q qh gq nq nkq ngq				x xh gx nx nkx ngx

This discussion of the consonants of this language may be concluded by stating that the introduction of the borrowed words in isiXhosa writing proves the point that language is not static but developing. This development has reflected some changes in the orthography of this language.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the current status of isiXhosa spelling was evaluated and analysed. For the purpose of this investigation, the spelling of a number of words found in isiXhosa texts were critically analysed and interpreted.

The purpose of this investigation was to identify the anomalies and discrepancies that exist in isiXhosa spelling and to develop recommendations for a more accurate standardisation of the spelling of isiXhosa. In this chapter borrowed terminology was observed and analysed because of the fact that borrowed words often contain foreign sounds or combination of sounds that require specific attention.

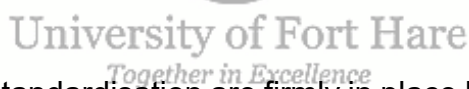
It was found that borrowed words are frequently used in the texts under discussion. These words are mostly derived from English but some are also borrowed from Afrikaans. This confirms the notion that languages do not exist in isolation from one another and there is always some form of contact between languages that coexist in the same geographical region.

In the texts under discussion, it was found that the same borrowed words were often spelled differently, either within a text or from one text to the next. The various pairs of variants were identified and discussed according to their respective places of articulation, as determined by the initial consonant of the first syllable of each pair of words. It was found that some words were more indigenised than others since their sound and form scheme was more closely in line with the distinctive sound pattern of isiXhosa. On the basis of this consideration some words could be recommended for use within standardised isiXhosa texts, e.g. itekisi (taxi) versus iteksi. The first version was identified as the most appropriate form, since its sound and form scheme conformed the closest to that of isiXhosa, which is /CV/CV/CV/.

It was found in the texts that the phenomenon of lexical borrowing has brought about a series of unusual forms of consonant clustering in isiXhosa. The various clusters were identified and discussed according to their respective places of articulation. It became clear that the majority of these clusters were not spelled in accordance with the distinctive spelling and form scheme of isiXhosa. Recommendations were consequently made in order to achieve closer alignment between the spelling of each of these clusters and the distinctive spelling scheme of isiXhosa. It was found for instance that the cluster /ft/, as found in the word /isikhaftina/ (lunch box) was counter to the unique sound pattern of isiXhosa. It was recommended therefore that an apostrophe be inserted as follows: /isikhaf'tina/.

The insertion of the apostrophe compensates for the omission of the vowel /i/ between /f/ and /t/.

In this chapter the various anomalies regarding the spelling of isiXhosa words were identified and discussed. Recommendations were made concerning the elimination of these anomalies and the standardisation of isiXhosa spelling. It is evident that the existence of these anomalies may be attributed to the following causes:



The rules of spelling and standardisation are firmly in place but isiXhosa authors seem to be ignorant of these rules or alternatively they prefer not to adhere to these rules under all circumstances since the current rules do not make adequate provision for the accommodation of the full spectrum of the distinctive sound system of isiXhosa.

In this chapter therefore, recommendations have been made to address these caveats and to improve the spelling of isiXhosa. In some instances 'new' symbols have been recommended based upon those already in use in the IPA. There is no doubt that it will be possible to print these symbols by means of modern advanced computerised word processing programmes. In fact, some of these symbols are already in use in language writing systems elsewhere in Africa. For instance, the Mandingo language in Senegal, West Africa makes frequent use of a combination of symbols which belong to the Roman alphabet, as well as symbols not found in the Roman alphabet (see annexure A). Amongst the Southern African languages such as tshiVenda and sePedi, a system of diacritics is in use. Some of these symbols can also be used in isiXhosa

spelling. Such a process can, however, only be driven by language authorities such as PanSALB and the Provincial Language Committees.

It is important that the anomalies that were identified in this chapter be eradicated from the language. There should be definite progress towards greater standardisation of isiXhosa. This will empower the language and will enable it to fulfil its role more effectively within the current constitutional environment where the principles of multilingualism and more comprehensive recognition of all the official languages within the spheres of education, trade and industry as well as science are being recognised.

The eradication of these anomalies will make isiXhosa texts more accessible, not only to adult first language readers, but also to juvenile first language readers whose reading and writing skills are still in the developmental stage. Finally, it will also serve to make the language more accessible to foreign readers who are in the process of acquiring basic reading and writing skills in the language.

In the orthography of isiXhosa there are also some more problematic aspects that need closer investigation in this study. These aspects will receive attention in the chapter that follows.



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CHAPTER 5

PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS OF THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF ISIXHOSA

5.1 Introduction

Now that comments have already been made about the spelling of isiXhosa, based on the selected isiXhosa texts, a discussion of various other problematic aspects of isiXhosa orthography is in order. In the process, some aspects which did not receive attention in Chapters 3 and 4 will be examined here. Where possible, each and every discussion of the aspects of isiXhosa orthography will be based upon a theoretical framework that is relevant to that particular aspect.

In this chapter, aspects such as concord usage, hyphen usage, word division, the use of capital letters versus lowercasing, apostrophe usage, tone marking, the principle of conjunctive versus disjunctive writing and abbreviations will be considered. The discussion will be based on identification of these matters in the selected isiXhosa documents as mentioned in Chapter 3. The various approaches to the principle of conjunctive versus disjunctive writing will receive attention. The aim of this chapter is to review the complete orthography of isiXhosa (excluding spelling) and to suggest remedies for the anomalies and discrepancies detected.

5.2 Concord usage

The aim of this section is to encourage an acceptable standard of concord usage in the spoken as well as in the written form of isiXhosa in order to give proper meaning to each and every statement. According to Robbins (1966:249):

Concord may be defined as the requirement that the forms of two or more words of specific word classes that stand in specific syntactic relationship with one another shall also be characterized by the same paradigmatically marked category (or categories). Some languages of Africa have a highly developed concord system, where nouns, verbs, and adjectives show category correspondences within sentences, marked by prefixes.

The Nguni languages of Africa have a highly developed concord system. It has been observed that isiXhosa is one of the languages of South Africa that has a highly developed concordial system. Two important concords in isiXhosa are the subject and object concords.

Concord usage in spoken as well as in written language plays an important role. For instance, if a person does not know isiXhosa well, this is shown by his / her usage of the incorrect concord. For example, instead of saying or writing, umntu uyabaleka (a person is running), he / she will say or write Umntu iyabaleka (A person it is running).

In the selected texts it was found that possessive concords in a particular context, were variously used. It was also noticed that in some places the possessive concords were not used at all. This was also true for the use of other forms, such as the locative *ku-* and the instrumental form *nga-* when used with numerals.

In the paragraphs below, the manner in which the different possessive concords were used with numerals will be discussed.



5.2.1 The usage of the possessive concord *ka-* with numbers or years

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It was observed in the texts that certain writers used *ka-* as a possessive concord with numbers or years, as follows:

Le yindoda yomnyaka *ka*-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16)

(This is a man of the year 1965)

AmaJiphutha ayelwenza ulwaluko kwangomnyaka *ka*-3000 (Mtumane, 2004:2)

(The Egyptians had been practicing circumcision custom as early as in the year 3000 (BC : sic)

Zininzi izinto ezenzeke emva kwevoti *ka*-1994 (Mbontsi, 2006:32)

(There are many things that have happened after 1994 elections)

The use of *ka-* as a possessive concord in the above examples is based on what is known as code-switching, the simultaneous use of more than one language. The

languages used in this case are English and isiXhosa. The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:

Table 1

1	<u>Possessive ka- preceding a numeral</u>	<u>Code-switching</u>	<u>Incorrect usage in isiXhosa</u>	<u>Correct possessive used</u>
2	yomnyaka ka-1965	yomnyaka “ ka-nineteen sixty-five ”	yomnyaka “ kawaka elinama-khulu alithoba anamashumi amathandathu anesihlanu”	yomnyaka “ wewaka elinama-khulu alithoba anamashumi amathandathu anesihlanu”
3	ngomnyaka ka-3000	ngomnyaka “ ka-three thousand ”	ngomnyaka “ kawaka amathathu”	ngomnyaka “ wamawaka amathathu”
4	ngomnyaka ka-1994	ngomnyaka “ ka-nineteen ninety-four ”  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	ngomnyaka “ ka-waka elinamakhulu alithoba anesine”	ngomnyaka “ wewaka elinama-khulu alithoba anamashumi alithoba anesine”

If ka- is used as a possessive concord as in the above instances, it may compromise grammatical correctness. When the respective numerals are pronounced in English, it is correct to use the possessive concord /ka-/. However, when these numerals are pronounced in isiXhosa, it is not correct to do so.

5.2.2 Use of the possessive concord we- with numbers or years

Some of the texts were seen to use the possessive concord we- as follows:

ukususela kowe- 1772 ukuya kowe-1777 (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol.3, 1989:xv)
(from the year 1772 to 1777)

unyaka wowe- 2006 (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 1, (2006:vii)
(the year of 2006)

ekuphetheni kowe-2004 (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol.1, 2006:vii)
(at the end of 2004)

The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:

Table 2

1	<u>Possessive we- preceding a numeral</u>	<u>Code-switching</u>	<u>Incorrect usage in isiXhosa</u>	<u>Correct possessive to be used</u>
2	ukususela kowe - 1772 ukuya kowe - 1777	ukususela kowe - seventeen seventy-two ukuya kowe - seventeen seventy-seven”		ukususela kowe - waka elinamakhulu asixhenxe anamashumi asixhenxe anesibini” ukuya “ kowewaka elinamakhulu asixhenxe anesixhenxe”
3	unyaka wowe - 2006	unyaka “ wowe - two thousand and six”	unyaka “ wowewaka amabini anesithandathu”	unyaka “ wamawaka amabini anesitha- ndathu”
4	ekuphetheni kowe - 2004	ekuphetheni “ kowe - two thousand and four”	ekuphetheni “ kowewaka amabini anesine”	ekuphetheni “ kowamawaka amabini anesine”

In the case of the first example above, the possessive concord we- has been used correctly regardless of whether these numerals are pronounced in English or in

isiXhosa. In the case of the two remaining examples however, the use of the possessive concord we- is correct when the numerals are pronounced in English, but incorrect when the numerals are pronounced in isiXhosa.

5.2.3 Use of the possessive concord wama-

In the texts, examples of the use of the possessive concord wama- were found. For example:

- (i) *ngowama-* 1977, (Madolo, 2005:20)
(in the year 1977)
- (ii) *unyaka wama-* 2003 (PanSALB, 2008:37)
(the year 2003)

The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:

Table 3

1	Possessive wama- preceding a numeral	Code-switching	Incorrect usage in isiXhosa	Correct possessive used
2	(i) ngow wama -1977	ngow wama - “nineteen seventy-seven”	“ngow wama waka elinamakhulu alithoba anama- shumi asixhenxe anesixhenxe”	“ngow wewa ka elinamakhulu alithoba anama-shumi asixhenxe anesixhenxe”
3	(ii) unyaka wama -2003	unyaka“ wama - two thousand and three”		unyaka “ wama - waka amabini anesithathu”

It should be noted that, the first example above, uses the possessive concord as if the numeral that follows it is in the plural form, while it is in fact singular. This use of the possessive concord is grammatically incorrect. Assuming that its usage is due to code-switching, this interpretation would however, be grammatically incorrect.

In the second example the possessive concord wama- is correctly used in agreement with the numeral that is in the plural form.

5.2.4 The use of the instrumental form nga-

A study of the consulted texts revealed that some writers used the instrumental form nga- as lwango-, ngo-, and ngoo- as in the following examples:

Uphumelele unyulo lwango-2004 (Government Departments, 2007:4)
(He won the 2004 elections)

Umnke ngo-1983 (Bona, August 2008:30)
(He left in 1983)

Wagqiba ngoo-1990 (Bona, August 2008:12)
(He completed in the 1990's)



The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:

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Table 4

1	<u>Usage of the instrumental form nga- as ngo-, ngoo- and lwango- preceding a numeral</u>	<u>Code-switching</u>	<u>Incorrect usage in isiXhosa</u>	<u>Correct usage</u>
2	Uphumelele unyulo lwango-2004	Uphumelele unyulo “ lwango -two thousand and four”	Uphumelele unyulo “ lwangowaka amabini anesine”	Uphumelele unyulo “ lwangowa-mawaka amabini anesine”
3	Umnke ngo-1983	Umnke “ ngo -nineteen eighty-three”	Umnke ngowaka elinamakhulu alithoba anamashumi asibhozo anesithathu”	Umnke “ ngowe -waka elinamakhulu alithoba anamashumi asibhozo anesithathu”
4	Wagqiba ngoo-1990	Wagqiba “ ngoo -nineteen ninety” 	Wagqiba “ ngoo waka elinamakhulu alithoba anamashumi alithoba akananto”	Wagqiba “ ngowe -waka elinamakhulu alithoba anamashumi alithoba akananto”

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It has been observed that in terms of standard isiXhosa, the above concords in row 2 are used correctly when the numeral is pronounced in English, but incorrectly when the numeral is pronounced in isiXhosa. This is also true of the examples found in rows 3 and 4. Accordingly all the examples in column 3 are grammatically incorrect, since the class of the concord used does not correspond with the class of the noun upon which it has a bearing. There is a lack of congruency between the concord and the corresponding noun.

It is assumed that the use of the above concords by these writers in column 2 is based on code-switching. In order for the above statements to be regarded as correctly written in isiXhosa, they should be written as in column 4 in the above table. It is also assumed that these authors have opted for code-switching, since the use of the isiXhosa numeral system is generally more time-consuming and tedious.

5.2.5 Non-usage of concords

It also appears, from the texts selected, that some writers tend to avoid the concord, as in the following:

umgaqo 21 (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007: Rule 18.5)
(rule 21)

Ufike apha kuMatshi 2004 (PanSALB Quartely Newsletter, 2004:14).
(He arrived in March 2004)

kwiminyaka 1795-1802 (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xv)
(in the years 1795-1802)

The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:



Table 5

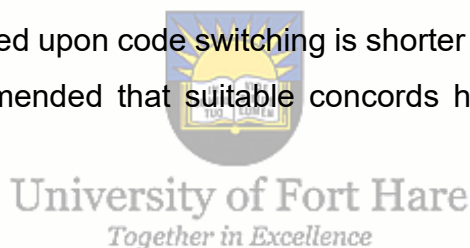
1	<u>Non-usage of concord</u>	<u>Code-switching</u>	<u>Incorrect usage in isiXhosa</u>	<u>Correct concord usage</u>
2	umgaqo 21	umgaqo “twenty-one”	umgaqo “shumi amabini ananye”	umgaqo “ wama -21”
3	Ufike apha ku-Matshi 2004	Ufike apha ku-Matshi “two-thousand and four”	ufike apha ku-Matshi “waka amabini nesine”	Ufike apha ku-Matshi “ wama -2004”
4	kwiminyaka 1795-1802	kwiminyaka “seventeen ninty-five ukuya ku-eighteen hundred and two”	kwiminyaka “waka elinamakhulu asixhenxe anamashumi alithoba anesihlanu ukuya...”	kwiminyaka ye -1795-1802

Admittedly the first example, above, is part of the text of a legal document. Legal documents often make use of a peculiar style of writing. Nonetheless, it is recommended that the basic rules of isiXhosa be adhered to, even here.

The concords that should be used in the writing of the above statements are those that are in column 4 in the above table. In written form they will be as follows:

- umgaqo **wamashumi** amabini ananye
- Ufike apha kuMatshi **wamawaka** amabini anesine.
- kwiminyaka **yewaka** elinamakhulu asixhenxe anama-
shumi alithoba anesihlanu, ukuya kowewaka elinamakhulu asibhozo anesibini

It is evident that the incorrect usage of the concords in the writing of this language results in the mixing of it with another language. This applies, in particular, to instances where concords are used in combination with numerals. Although it is acknowledged that the form which is based upon code switching is shorter and more practical to use, it is nevertheless recommended that suitable concords have to be used under all circumstances.



In the writing of this language there are also other means which have to be used in order for its orthography to become accurate.

5.3 Hyphen usage

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the existing guidelines that address the process of hyphenisation in isiXhosa orthography. The knowledge so gained will then be used to analyse the selected isiXhosa texts. The degree to which the phenomenon of hyphenisation in these texts agrees with, or deviates from these guidelines, will be determined and critically evaluated.

First of all, in order for any inconsistency in hyphen usage to be determined, some of the guidelines that have been drawn up by recognised scholars in the field of isiXhosa orthography need to be taken into consideration. For instance, the publication: Xhosa

Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:37), recommends that the hyphen should be used under the following circumstances:

- It is used optionally in compound words and duplicated stems that would be unduly long and thus difficult to read without it, e.g. *amasuka-ndihlale* (ups and downs), *umhlali-ngaphambili* (chairperson).
- To indicate a long drawn-out syllable, e.g.- *vi-i-i-tyo!* *si-i-i- !* etc.
- To indicate a glottal stop in similar vowels, e.g.- *i-inki* (ink), *ama-apile* (apples) etc.
- When prefixing concords to figures, e.g.- ngomnyaka *we-1955* (in the year 1955), *ama-20* (twenty) etc.
- To avoid ambiguity in the pronunciation of Xhosaized words, e.g. *uBhish-lam*, *eKir-hereshete*, etc.
- The hyphen may be used between the prefix (*i-*) and the letters representing abbreviations or initials, e.g.- *i-J.C.* (J.C.), *u-W.G.* Diko (W.G. Diko).



Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:19) agree with the above recommendations and add:

- When the adverbial formatives precede a number, e.g. a figure indicating an amount of money, a number of years, etc. for example, *ngo-2003* (in 2003), *nowe-1979* (and in 1979), unyaka *wama-2003* (the year of 2003).
- In all compound words, e.g. *iMpuma-Koloni* (Eastern Cape), *uMzantsi-Afrika* (South Africa), *iNtshona-Koloni* (Western Cape), *iziniki-maxabiso* (tenders), etc.
- Where two similar vowels, both of which are syllabic and are thus pronounced separately in speech, are juxtaposed, e.g. *i-inki* (ink), *ama-apile* (apples), *ngu-Unathi* (it's Unathi), etc.

What follows is a critical analysis of how these guidelines have been applied in the selected isiXhosa texts since 2000.

5.3.1 Hyphen usage when the possessive concords precede a number

These texts show a marked degree of inconsistency in the use of the hyphen. The following statements are in line with the second guideline of the Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:37) and the first guideline of Tyolwana *et al.* (2008) above:

Le yindoda yonyaka ka-1965 (Ngewu, 2000:16)

(This is a man of the year 1965)

Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967 (Mdlokolo, 2004:51)

(It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster occurred in 1967)

However, the hyphen has not been used in the following instances:

Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe1960 indoda...(Nzo, 2002:8)

(Did you know that round about 1960 a man...)

Kwalile ngo1955, umthetho woMzantsi Afrika... (Nzo, 2002:81)

(In 1955, the South African law...)

Unyaka u1868, awulibaleki kuye (Magona, 2006:20)

(The year 1868 is unforgettable to him)

The above statements can be paraphrased as follows in the form of a table:

Table 6

1	<u>Hyphen usage</u>	<u>Non- hyphen usage</u>	<u>Correct usage of hyphen and concord</u>
2	Le yindoda yonyaka ka -1965 (This is a man of the year 1965)		Le yindoda yonyaka we -1965 (this is a man of the year 1965)
3		Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe 1960 indoda... (Did you know that round about 1960 a man...)	Ubusazi ukuba malunga nowe-1960 indoda... (Did you know that round about 1960 a man...)
4	Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967 (It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster occurred in 1967)		Kwakuyintsasa yoLwesibini ukwehla kwale ntlekele ngowe-1967 (It was on a Tuesday morning when this disaster occurred in 1967)
5		Kwalile ngo1955 , umthetho woMzantsi Afrika... (In 1955, the South African law...)	Kwalile ngowe-1955 , umthetho woMzantsi Afrika... (In 1955, the South African law...)
6		unyaka u1868 awuli-baleki kuye... (the year 1868 is unforgettable to him...)	unyaka we-1868 awulibaleki kuye... (the year 1868 is unforgettable to him...)

From the above it is clear that a hyphen has been inserted between the possessive concord we- and the two sets of numerals. It is recommended that a hyphen be used to separate a morpheme from a numeral or from a set of numerals in a word construction.

5.3.2 Hyphen usage in compound words

According to Fromkin and Rodman (1998:84) “spelling does not tell us what sequence of words constitutes a compound; whether a compound is spelled with a space between the two words, with a hyphen, or with no separation at all is idiosyncratic.” It should be kept in mind however, that each language has its own set of orthographic rules. Fromkin and Rodman’s remark may hold food for the English language. For isiXhosa, the guidelines provided by Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3 and Tyolwana *et al.* above, do apply.

Some writers of the texts consulted did comply with the rules for hyphen usage in the writing of compound words, as in the following instances:

Umgaqo-siseko weli lizwe unomtsalane (Dept. of Ed., 2006:7)

(The constitution of this country is attractive)

Ayikho inkqubela-phambili kweli lizwe (PanSALB Quartely Newsletter, 2005:15)

(There is no progress in this country)

Iphondo leMpuma-Koloni (Isigidimi, July 2008:2)

(Eastern Cape Province)

In terms of the guidelines, the two elements of compound nouns should indeed be separated by a hyphen.

Examples of inconsistency in hyphen usage were identified in some of the consulted texts. The hyphen was not used in the writing of the following compound nouns:

Usuka eMntla Koloni (Isigidimi, July 2008:24)

(He comes from Northern Cape)

iNtshona Koloni (PanSALB, 2008:67)

(Western Cape)

In terms of the guidelines, the compound nouns should have been separated by a hyphen, as follows:

Usuka eMntla-Koloni

(He comes from Northern Cape)

iNtshona-Koloni

(Western Cape)

Furthermore, it was observed that some consulted texts evinced a lack of hyphen usage, as with the following repetitional compounds:

Awanamhlanje amakhwenkwe akhulela kwiimeko ezitofotofo

(Mtumane, 2004:49)

(Boys of today grow up under soft conditions)

Kwakukho amagingxigixi kolo hambo (iDike-lethu, April 2008:8)

(There were difficulties in that journey)

amadyungudyungu (Xh.-Eng., Eng.-Xh. B.E.D. Vol. 1, 2006:186)

(blisters)

The hyphen was seen to be used in the writing of the following words:

utshintsho-tshintsho (IRB Laws of Rugby, 2007:Rule 20.11)

(repeated changing)

ingxwaba-ngxwaba (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xlix)

(turmoil)

For repetitional compounds it is recommended that the hyphen be inserted between the two elements of the compound. There should be no difference between the writing of non-repetitional compounds and repetitional compounds.

It has also been observed that except for the acceptable conditions for hyphen usage as laid down by the linguists, there are other conditions where the hyphen has been used in the writing of certain words.

5.3.3 Miscellaneous instances of hyphen usage

It appears that the hyphen has been used somewhat randomly in the consulted texts, with slight regard for the rules as to where the hyphen should or should not be used. The texts have different versions of the isiXhosa equivalent for the term “South Africa.” The following versions were found:

Uhlala e-Mzantsi Afrika (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:8)
(He lives in South Africa)

U-Mzantsi Afrika lilizwe elihle (Mbontsi, 2006:32)
(South Africa is a beautiful country)

UMzantsi-Afrika lilizwe elikhululekileyo (Dept. of Ed., 2006:7)
(South Africa is a free country)

Lo mfo uhlala eMzantsi Afrika (Bona, september 2009:17)
(This man lives in South Africa)

The isiXhosa equivalent for the term “South Africa” is written in no less than four different ways. Mostly, this word was written without the hyphen (as in the last example listed above). The version uMzantsi-Afrika, as found in the second example above, suggests that its spelling is incomplete. From a purely linguistic viewpoint, the correct format would be: uMzantsi we-Afrika. However, since this is a constitutionally recognised term, the following format is regarded as the correct one: uMzantsi-Afrika. Here, the hyphen is used to compensate for the absence of the possessive concord: *we-*. Likewise the term “Southern Africa” may be written as follows in isiXhosa: “aMazantsi e-Afrika.”

For the sake of uniformity, hyphenation should be encouraged in the following instances:

1. In the juxtapositioning of vowels that are syllabic, whether they are similar or not.
(this matter was dealt with in the previous chapter, see paragraph 3.3.1.3)
2. In all compound nouns, whether they are repetitive or not.
3. When a grammatical formative precedes a numeral.

The examples above, without the hyphen, do in fact require it.

One instance of the use of the hyphen was found where a pre-prefix precedes a capital letter:

U-Mbulelo uye kudliwano-ndlebe (E.C.V., July 2008:1)

(Mbulelo has gone to the interviews)



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However, it should not be used in the following instances:

(a) When a pre-prefix precedes a capital letter as in the following examples:

uMbulelo

(Mbulelo)

uMzantsi-Afrika

(South Africa)

The use of a hyphen causes a term to become semi-divided. In isiXhosa however, a word may be written conjunctively or disjunctively. The principles of word division in isiXhosa will now be discussed in the paragraph below.

5.4 Word division

Orthographically, it is very important to determine the role of the written word that forms its basis. There can be no orthography without words put into writing.

5.4.1 Information about a word as a unit within a sentence

Lyons (1974:194) states that “the word is the unit *par excellence* of traditional grammatical theory. It is the basis of the distinction which is frequently drawn between morphology and syntax and it is the principal unit of lexicography (or ‘dictionary-making’). Hartley (1986:153) says that a common definition of a word is “a group of characters occurring between two spaces. Although this may be expedient for some counting processes, it overlooks the fact that there are groups of characters which include a space or hyphen yet which we intuitively class as a single unit.”

An earlier linguist, Grout (1893:50) suggested that “a word, in respect to orthography, is one or more syllables written together, as the sign of some idea, or some relation of ideas.” This argues that the coming together of sounds in the formation of a word must create a meaning. In the writing of isiXhosa, a noun is commonly formed of a pre-prefix, a prefix-proper, a root and a terminative vowel, e.g. /u/m/nt-/u/ (person). Here, the meaning of the word (person) is conveyed by the root and the terminative vowel.

In isiXhosa the word stem may either be monosyllabic or polysyllabic. In the case of most syllables the sequence /CV/ or /CV/CV/ is maintained, depending on the number of syllables that constitute the word.

Abercrombie (1974:73) adds that “a syllable is a product of the way the pulmonic air-stream mechanism works. Its basis is a chest-pulse, on which are superimposed the articulatory movements, and the allied movements of the vocal cords and velum, which produce segments.” Schlauch (1967:100) is of the opinion that “a syllable is usually defined as a segment of speech consisting of a vowel (or vocalic consonant) with or without consonants attached to it. The simplest form is obviously a vowel alone. But a syllable may be made up of a vowel flanked by clusters of consonants.” This statement obviously does not apply to isiXhosa.

Todd (1987:49) believes that “we can isolate four of the most frequently implied meanings of a word: the orthographic word, the morphological word, the lexical word and the semantic word”.

In this study, the emphasis is primarily on the orthographic word, which is based on the practical orthography of a particular language, in this case, isiXhosa. In this language the concept of a word was first identified and described by the early missionaries in the Eastern Cape. Appleyard (1850:67) who was one of the main philologists of this period, states that isiXhosa nouns generally consist of a root which contains the leading idea and a prefix. He further states that isiXhosa is essentially a polysyllabic language, monosyllables being less common.

The ideas of the early missionaries were further refined and developed by linguists who arrived later, such as the well-known Bantu linguist, C.M. Doke. Doke (1935:220) believes that “the Bantu word is dependent upon the Bantu law of stress and may be defined as that sound or group of sounds which is subject to one main stress and one only.”



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It is evident that a word in Bantu is made up of a group of sounds with the aim of producing a particular meaning. Doke (1955:2) later explains that “words are meaningful units of speech, consisting of one or more syllables, adhering together in a unity of enunciation, by the attractive force of a fully stressed syllable.”

Louwrens and Poulos (2006:389) state that “the question of what constitutes a word in the African languages has been a controversial issue ever since African languages were committed to writing by the early missionaries, and yet it still remains at the very core of the most recent approaches to linguistic analysis including typological, cognitive and computational linguistics.”

In the section below, the debate about conjunctive writing and disjunctive writing of words will be reviewed.

5.4.2 Conjunctive writing versus disjunctive writing

As stated above in paragraph 5.3.2, Fromkin and Rodman (1998:84) are of the opinion that words may either be written separately or as one word, there is no definite rule that governs this phenomenon. Whilst it was pointed out that this observation applies mainly to the English language, it must also be recognised that there is a lively debate taking place in applied linguistic circles concerning conjunctive writing versus disjunctive writing.

The development of the orthographies of the Southern African languages was mainly driven by the missionaries during the 19th century. Whilst some of them preferred the use of a conjunctive system, others were in favour of a disjunctive system. In Lesotho for instance, the French missionaries at Morija were in favour of a disjunctive system. The effects of this can today still be observed in the orthography of Southern Sotho, where words are often written disjunctively.

Guthrie (1970), tells us that in isiXhosa, there are two ways of writing words. Some are written conjunctively, others disjunctively.

5.4.2.1 Conjunctive writing



Taljar and Bosch (2006:428) state that “the Nguni languages, i.e. Xhosa, Swati and Ndebele are conjunctively written languages.” This applies to isiZulu as well, as one of the Nguni languages.

Conjunctive writing refers to the way in which all the morphemes of a word are joined together in its composition. A difference between conjunctive writing and disjunctive writing may be demonstrated by comparing isiXhosa, written conjunctively, and Sesotho, written disjunctively, in the following statements:

isiXhosa: uyathetha

(he/she is speaking)

Sesotho: o a bua

(he/she is speaking)

There are cases where word constructions should be written conjunctively. These cases have been identified in Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:29-35), and the guidelines are as follows:

(a) The present tense formatives in all its forms, as in the following examples:

Ndiyabona

(I see)

Ndiyathetha

(I speak)

Ndiyemka

(I am leaving)

Niyahamba

(You are going)



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(b) When *nge-* is joined by *w*, *y*, or *l*, to the complementary verb, as in the following examples:

Ngewulele

(You should have slept)

ngeyizuzile

(he should have got it)

ngelibonile

(he should have seen it)

(c) After a possessive concord as in the following examples:

isifo *sikagawulayo*

(HIV and AIDS disease)

ubuso *bukankosikazi*

(madam's face)

(d) In the combination of two place names as in the following examples:

eDikeni *naseQonce*

(in Alice and in King William's Town)

ekhaya *nasesikolweni*

(at home and at school)

(e) When *phi* (where) is written with prefixed formatives as follows:

Luphi ubisi

(Where is milk?)

Kuphi?

(Where is it?)



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(f) When *nje* acts as an adverbial suffix, as follows:

Namhlanje

(today)

Kutshanje

(recently)

(g) When adverbial formatives: *nje* and *nga* act as prefixal formatives, as follows:

Njengam

(like me)

Ayinganganto

(it is unmeasurable)

(h) When *kwa* is prefixed to a word beginning with a consonant, as follows:

Kwangoko

(Immediately)

Kwakhona

(Again)

(i) When *kwa* is prefixed to words beginning with different vowels, as follows:

Kwaiinkosi

(even chiefs)

Kwaukumbamba

(even to go)



(j) When the vocative suffix *ndini* is joined to the noun, as follows:

Mfondini!

(colleague!)

Siyathandini!

(You stupid!)

(k) When in class 9, singular *ni* as an adjective or pronoun is attached to the preceding word or formative as follows:

Yintoni?

(What is it?)

Ubonani?

(What do you see?)

(l) When adjectives have been used similarly as follows:

Ndlelantle

(go well)

Oonyawontle

(Preachers)

Furthermore, guidelines are provided by Mbadi and Ngcanga (1993:97 & 98) who state conjunctive writing is in order when /kha/ is used as a plea, when copulatives are derived from /kho/ and when /nje/ is a terminative conjunctive. These authors provide the following examples:

Xa u/**kha**/ esetyenziswa njengesicelo ubhalwa ngokuhlangeneyo, umz.:
Khawundiphe ukutya.

(When /kha/ is used as a plea it is written conjunctively, e.g.: Please give me some food.)



Izibanjalo ezakhiwe ku/**kho**/ ziyahlanganiswa, umz.:

Ababangakho entlanganisweni

(Copulatives which are derived from /kho/ become conjunctive, e.g.:

They were absent at the meeting.)

U/**nje**/ osisimamva sihlomelo uyahlanganiswa, umz.:

Namhlanje.

(/-nje/ which is a terminative conjunctive become conjunctive, e.g.:

Today)

Analysis of the texts has revealed that the guidelines as set out above have not been adhered to satisfactorily. Some word constructions that should have been written conjunctively are written disjunctively as in the following examples:

ndiya bona instead of *ndiyabona* (E.C.V. July 2008:3)

(I see)

Ndine themba instead of ndinethemba (E.C.V. July 2008:1)

(I have a hope)

isifo sika gawulayo instead of sikagawulayo (E.C.V. July 2008:1)

(HIV and AIDS disease)

Uye kwa Zwelitsha nase Qonce instead of kwaZwelitsha naseQonce

(E.C.V. July 2008:1)

(He has gone to Zwelitsha and King William's Town)

These examples indicate a tendency towards disjunctive writing of the following:

- The long form ya- followed by the verb
- The associative copulative na- followed by the noun
- The possessive ka- followed by a noun
- The locative morphemes kwa- and e- followed by the noun

Since cases of disjunctive rather than conjunctive writing have been observed in newspapers published since 2000, it can be assumed that this is caused by various reasons. These reasons will be discussed more comprehensively in the final chapter of this study.

It should be emphasised however that the guidelines on conjunctive writing as found in Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972) and in the textbook on isiXhosa grammar (1993), referred to above, are the only ones that should be recognised in the writing of this language.

5.4.2.2 Disjunctive writing

Doke, argues that:

Disjunctive writing in Bantu is built upon the principles which govern the grammatical word-division in modern European languages, especially those in English, German, French and Portuguese. Is this a sound basis? Is not this an accidental method of writing, due to the fact that the first persons to deal with the grammar of the Bantu languages were English-speaking, German-speaking, French-speaking and Portuguese speaking missionaries? (in: Van Wyk, 1958:36)

Doke correctly notes that the disjunctive writing of isiXhosa derives from the European languages, since it was British Missionaries who reduced isiXhosa into writing. Although disjunctive writing is more commonly used in European languages than in the African languages, these also require it themselves. Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:135-137) has, for instance, remarked that:

“The demonstrative in isiXhosa is a distinct part of speech hence it must be written separately from the word that follows it, e.g. biza /oo mntu (call that person), /e nto (this thing).



The long, unconstructed form of the future tense auxiliary is written disjunctively from the main verb which follows it, e.g:

ndiya kuhamba ngomso (I will leave tomorrow),
baza kuphumla ngoku (they will have a rest now)

The auxiliaries *-kha*, *-khe*, *-ze*, *-de*, are always written separately from the complementary verbs, whether preceded by subjectival concords or not, e.g:

wakha washumayela (he once preached)
ndikhhe ndimbone (I used to see him /her)
maze ufike (you should come)
ade abuye (till he /she comes back)

When preceded by a concord and not followed by /w/, /y/, or /ll/, nge- is written separately from the complementary verb, e.g. ange ehamba (he/she should have been leaving) singe sinduluka ngoku (we should have been leaving now)."

Noted in the selected texts is that some words of the kind above were written conjunctively. Here are some instances found, with their correct form in view of the guidelines:

Uhlala kulo mmandla wethu instead of kulommandla (iDike-lethu, April 2008:10)

(She lives in this region of ours)

olu dliwano-ndlebe instead of oludliwano-ndlebe (iDike-lethu, April 2008:2)
(this interview)

loo nto instead of lonto (iDike-lethu, April 2008:2)
(that thing)

lo kaDyasi instead of lokaDyasi (E.C.V., July 2008:1)
(this one of Dyasi)

ze babaxelele instead of zebabaxelele (iDike-lethu, April 2008:7)
(they should inform them)

liza kuphelela phi? Instead of lizakuphelelaphi? (iDike-lethu, April 2008:7)
(where will it end?)

Although isiXhosa is generally known as a language which is written conjunctively, it does require disjunctive writing also.

The selected texts contained many instances of the demonstrative being written conjunctively with the noun that follows it. Moreover, the future tense auxiliary was often written conjunctively with the main verb. Finally, in some cases the auxiliary ze was written conjunctively with the main verb.

It is clear that the guidelines on word division have not been applied strictly enough in the texts under discussion. Since these texts cover only the period 2000-2013, it

cannot be stated with certainty what the position was prior to this period, and whether the standard of isiXhosa orthography has degenerated over the years.

It is also evident that these anomalies are mainly found in isiXhosa newspapers that were published during the period 2000-2012. This points to an unacceptable standard of journalistic editing of these newspapers. The editors seem not to have sufficient training with regard to isiXhosa orthographic rules and standardisation to enable them to execute their duties effectively.

It has also been observed that there are instances where a certain letter that belongs to a word has to be written as a capital letter.

5.5 Capitalisation versus lower casing

The aim of this section is to provide a brief overview of the theoretical framework as well as the practical guidelines that inform and regulate the capitalisation process in isiXhosa. The isiXhosa texts under discussion will then be analysed and evaluated according to this set of guidelines. The outcome of this process will be extrapolated to provide information on the current status of capitalisation within the full body of isiXhosa orthography and will assist with the standardisation of the language in its written form. In the conclusion, proposals will be made concerning the revision of the existing guidelines (if necessary). The extent to which the existing guidelines are adhered to by isiXhosa authors will be determined and the causes for the lack of adherence to the guidelines regarding capitalisation will be investigated.

5.5.1 General information about capitalisation

Capitalisation is the writing of a word with its first letter in uppercase and the remaining letters in lowercase. Capitalisation rules vary by language and are often quite complex, but in most modern languages that have capitalisation, the first letter of the first word

of every sentence is capitalised, as well as the first letter of all proper nouns that occur within a sentence.

The rules of capitalisation are not the same for all languages. In the writing of isiXhosa, the first letter which is at the beginning of a sentence as well as the first letter of the name of a person or place, are always capitalised although the first letter of the name is not always the first letter of the word itself, as will be shown below. Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:124), agree:

“The first letter at the beginning of a sentence is capitalised, e.g.

Ubuxoki buyabambisa (Lies take one to jail).

When the initial vowel preceding the name of a person or a place, or of any other proper noun, is the first letter of the sentence, it is written in capital even though the following letter which begins the proper noun must also be a capital. In such cases two capital letters will therefore follow each other, e.g.:

UThemba uza kugoduka (Themba will go home).”

Jones, Podile and Puttkammer (2005:7) argue that:

In isiXhosa the language which has a conjunctive writing style, there are usually prefixes before the proper nouns, which means that capital letters may occur either in the basic prefix or in the first letter of the stem, for example, uMphathiswa wezeMfundo “Minister of Education.” Here the ‘M’ of Mphathiswa occurs after the class prefix, and the ‘M’ of Mfundo occurs in the third syllable of the word. A similar example is the name uMaDlamini “woman of Dlamini clan,” where Ma- is capitalized as it is regarded as part of the name or proper noun. In the latter example there are also two capital letters following one another at the beginning of the word. This convention is used when the proper noun occurs at the beginning of the sentence.

In the remainder of this section, the extent to which Tyolwana and others’ guidelines have been adhered to in the texts under discussion, will be determined.

5.5.2 Capitalisation of place names

As observed earlier there seems to be a problem with regard to the capitalisation of the name of this country (The Republic of South Africa) as it has been capitalised in the following different ways in the texts under discussion:

uMzantsi-Afrika (Mkonto, 2004:11)

u-Mzantsi Afrika (Dept. of Arts & Cul., 2003:8)

umZantsi Afrika (Mtumane, 2004:1)

The list above contains three different orthographic versions of the name of this country, as used by three different authors. It is observed that capitalisation in the writing of the first two versions is the same namely that the prefix-proper has been capitalised. The second version, has a hyphen between the pre-prefix and the capitalised prefix-proper /M/. Capitalisation in the third version occurs in the initial letter of the noun stem of the first noun, instead of being in the prefix-proper.

Tyolwana *et al.* (2005:19-20) are of the opinion that “where the prefix ends in a nasal (as in the um- classes), or the stem begins with a nasal, it is this nasal that is capitalized.” According to the above statement, the correct version of the writing of the name of the country is the first one, namely uMzantsi-Afrika. This interpretation is based upon the fact that the prefix ends in a nasal.

Again, in the selected texts, the isiXhosa versions of “African” and “European” were capitalised as follows:

Wena mAfrika nawe Myurophu (Dept. of Com. & Info. Syst., 2007:1)

(You, African and you, European)

Here, the author’s use of capital letters is inconsistent, since capitalisation in /mAfrika/ has taken place in the first letter of the noun stem, whereas in /Myurophu/ it has taken place in the prefix-proper, that is, in the nasal which precedes the stem.

For the sake of uniformity, the acceptable form of capitalisation should be that as found in /mAfrika/ as it has taken place in the first letter of the noun stem. /Myurophu/ should also be capitalised in the same manner as /mYurophu/ (European). Mbadi and Ngcanga (1993:96) agree. They say: “Kumagama alatha isizwe, uhlanga, ulwimi nesiko liqabane lokuqala lesiqu sibizo elingunobumba omkhulu, e.g. umXhosa, umZulu, amaBhaca, etc.” (“In words denoting a nation, ethnicity, language and custom it is the initial consonant of the noun stem which is capitalised”).

It has also been observed that some writers write ‘Eastern Cape’ in isiXhosa, conjunctively as follows:

Iphondo leMpumaKoloni (E.C.V., July 2008:10)
(Eastern Cape Province)

It is noted that although this word has been written conjunctively, as a compound word, the initial consonant of the second component has also been capitalised. Correct capitalisation in the above word, is as follows:

Iphondo leMpuma-Koloni
(Eastern Cape Province)



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Here, hyphenation has taken place in accordance with the principles formulated in paragraph 5.3 above. The capitalisation suggested in the case of the letters /M/ and /K/ in the example above, is due to the components of the compound being place names.

In instances where the place name appears at the beginning of the sentence, the initial vowel should be capitalised as well, e.g.:

IMonti ikufutshane nolwandle.
(East London is situated along the coast.)

5.5.3 Capitalisation of clan names of women

The texts selected contained various references to the clan names of isiXhosa women. In one instance, the clan name of a woman was capitalised as follows:

uMadlamini (Isigidimi, July 2008:7)

Capitalisation in the writing of the above word took place in the initial letter of the first noun: “*Ma-*” (the term “*Ma-*” is an abbreviation of the full form: “*Mama*”). However, in Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:25) it is said that “in the case of clan names of women compounded with *Ma-* both the *M* of *Ma* and the initial letter of the stem are capitalized, e.g. *uMaMfene*, *uMaDlamini*, etc. Mbadi and Ngcangca (1993: 95-96) agree: “Amagama abafazi okanye iintombi asekw kwiziduko okanye igama lesizwe anoonobumba abakhulu ababini; owegama nowesiduko okanye isizwe, e.g. *uMaDlamini*, *uMamTshawe*, *uNomaMpondomise*.” (Women’s or girls’ names based on clan or nation’s name have two capital letters; that of the name and that of the clan or nation).



Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:125) however, do not agree:

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In the case of clan names of women used with prefix, */Ma-/*, both the */M/* of */Ma-/* and the initial letter of the stem of the clan name are capitalized, e.g. *uMamCirha*, *uMaMaduna*, *uMaDlamini*.

Tyolwana *et al.* see */Ma-/* as a prefix not a noun. When the compound noun is converted into the plural form, it becomes *ooMaDlamini*. Since the word */Ma-/* undergoes no change during the transition from the singular to the plural form, it cannot be regarded as a prefix. Therefore the interpretation of Tyolwana *et al.* is not correct.

According to the guidelines for capitalisation as found in Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:25) and in Bhala Ngokukuko (1993:95-96), in the writing of clan names of this kind, capitalisation occurs twice in each and every name. Both the */m-/* in the initial letter of the first stem and the initial letter of the second stem are capitalised. Therefore, all clan names of women should be capitalised in this manner. In the selected texts, some instances following these guidelines were found:

MaMNtlane (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:1087)

MaMpinga (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 2, 2003:1087)

In instances where the clan name appears at the beginning of the sentence, the initial vowel should be capitalised as well, e.g.:

UMamNtlane uhlamba iimpahla.

(MamNtlane is washing the clothes.)

5.5.4 Capitalisation of the names of the days of the week

Some writers were found to have capitalised the names of the days of the week, as follows:

iCawe (PanSALB, 2008:127)

(Sunday)

uMvulo (PanSALB, 2008:70)

(Monday)



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ngoLwesibini (PanSALB, 2008:70)

(on Tuesday)

ngoLwesithathu (PanSALB, 2008:127)

(on Wednesday)

ngoLwesine (PanSALB, 2008:127)

(on Thursday)

uLwesihlanu (PanSALB, 2008:127)

(Friday)

ngoMgqibelo (PanSALB, 2008:127)

(on Saturday)

Earlier we noted capitalisation of one of the names of the days of the week as follows:

ngolwes/Hlanu (Marwanqa, 2006:63)

(on Friday)

Since the majority of the consulted texts show a uniform capitalisation of the names of the days of the week, there is no problem with it whatsoever. Some of the names of the days of the week are derived from numerals. These days are: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. In these instances, the first letter of the possessive concord should be capitalised, as follows:

- uLwesibini
- uLwesithathu
- uLwesine
- uLwesihlanu



The isiXhosa equivalents for “Saturday” and “Monday” are derived from the verbs “vula” (open) and “gqibela” (end) respectively, hence the names: “uMvulo” and “uMgqibelo.” In these instances, the rule as formulated by Tyolwana *et al.* (see paragraph 5.5.3 above) is applicable: “where the prefix ends in a nasal (as in the um-class), or the stem begins with a nasal, it is this nasal that is capitalised.” Therefore the names of these days should be capitalised as follows:

uMvulo

(Monday)

uMgqibelo

(Saturday)

The isiXhosa equivalent for the English word “Sunday” is an exception, since it does not form part of either of the two categories above. Here it is recommended that the first letter of the stem be capitalised, as follows:

iCawe
(Sunday)

Following this discussion concerning capitalisation in the writing of isiXhosa, the part played by the apostrophe, has already been seen to be indispensable for the standardisation of the orthography of this language.

5.6 Apostrophe usage

The aim of this section is to provide a brief overview of the theoretical framework as well as the practical guidelines that inform and regulate apostrophe usage in isiXhosa. The use of the apostrophe in the isiXhosa texts under discussion will be evaluated according to this set of guidelines. The outcome of this process will be extrapolated to provide information on the current status of apostrophe usage within the full body of isiXhosa orthography and will assist with the standardisation of the language in its written form.

The apostrophe is the superscript sign used to indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word, the possessive case, or the plurals of numbers, letters, and abbreviations (<http://www.answers.com/topic/apostrophe>) (Accessed on 27/06/2008).

An apostrophe is a diacritic sign placed above an open space to indicate the omission of a letter. This observation was made with the English language in mind; the use of the apostrophe in isiXhosa is somewhat different. In the writing of isiXhosa, its function is only to indicate the omission of a letter (vowel) in compound words as in the following examples:

ingom'emnandi vs *ingoma emnandi*
(a nice song)

indod'endala vs indoda endala
(old man)

This observation tallies with guidelines presented in Terminology and Orthography No. 3 (1972:35), which states that in the writing of isiXhosa, the apostrophe is used to indicate phonetic elision, e.g. *bonk' abantu* (all people), *int' entle* (beautiful thing), etc. In these examples the apostrophe has been used in the place of omitted letters, the last vowels of the first words in both statements. These statements in full, should be read as *bonke abantu* and *into entle*.

Tyolwana *et al.* (2008:156-157) also state that:

“the apostrophe is the most troublesome punctuation mark in isiXhosa. It is used in the following instances:

- 
- (i) Contractions which are shortened forms of words from which one or more letters have been omitted. They are different from abbreviations.
 - (ii) Clipped forms which are full words which happen to be derived by chopping a piece off a longer word, usually one with the same meaning.”

Unfortunately no examples of apostrophe usage could be found in the texts under discussion. Therefore, the existing guidelines, as quoted above, are found to be in order.

The apostrophe is not the only diacritic required for the writing of isiXhosa. There are also other diacritics which need to be used to reflect differentiation of tone in the writing of words whose spelling is similar although they differ in meaning.

5.7 Tone marking

The aim of this section is to provide a brief overview of the theoretical framework as well as the practical guidelines that inform and regulate the tone marking process in isiXhosa. The isiXhosa texts under discussion will then be analysed and evaluated

according to this set of guidelines. The outcome of this process will be extrapolated to provide information on the current status of tone marking within the full body of isiXhosa orthography and will assist with the standardisation of the language in its written form.

It has been observed that tone is one of the prosodic features of phonology, along with stress, length, etc. Fromkin and Rodman (1978:86), state that “it is probably safe to say that most of the languages in the world are tone languages. There are more than 1000 tone languages in Africa alone.” Most languages in the world and in Africa are tone languages, including the Nguni languages.

Pike (1948:3) as quoted by Hyman (1975:213) defines as tonal any language “having significant, contrastive, but relative pitch on each syllable. In tone languages, there are sometimes restrictions on the occurrence of tones, which can be either phonological or grammatical.” This observation provides a good indication of what a tonal language is. It states that the tonal features are found in the individual syllables of a word and in the form of pitch.



Doke (1967:95) observed that “tone is very complicated in Nguni languages covering a range of nine pitches with rising and falling varieties. It can be accurately indicated only by graphs or by a system of numbers.”

In writing it is necessary for the sake of accuracy, transparency and clearness, that the tone of a syllable should be marked in isiXhosa.

Bennie (1953:32), for instance, says:

In ordinary circumstances, it is sufficient to mark relative tone; i.e. to show whether the syllable is higher or lower than the corresponding syllable from which it is to be distinguished. This is simply and clearly done by inserting a thin vertical line before the vowel of the syllable, or before syllabic m: above the line for a high tone, and below the line for a low tone. If a glide is to be marked, this is conveniently done by putting the high tone mark before the vowel and the low after it to denote a falling tone. If greater accuracy is required as in writings on languages, it may be desirable to

distinguish high and low tones. For this purpose, for the mid-tones a dot may be used, instead of vertical line.

As stated above, isiXhosa as one of the Nguni languages is regarded as a tone language. It has also been observed, this language has three tone sequences:

- high tone
- low tone
- rise-falling tone

The conventional tone markings of the above tone sequences are as follows:

/ˈ/ - high tone

/ˌ/ - low tone

/˥/ - rise-falling tone

Roux (1995:23) makes use of Pahl's view of tone in isiXhosa:

Pahl (1977:19) identifies two main tonal dialects for Xhosa with some regional or dialectal variations. The two main dialects are said to be Tshiwo Xhosa (Gcaleka & Rharhabe) also known as HT (high-toned) Xhosa as distinct from non-Tshiwo Xhosa (Mfengu & Thembu) being LT (low-toned) Xhosa. This distinction is maintained in the tonal marking in *The Dictionary of Xhosa* (Pahl, 1989).

Although Pahl identifies two main tonal dialects for isiXhosa, this study focuses on the tonal features of one particular group, namely the Tshiwo-Xhosa dialect group.

It has also been observed that in the writing of isiXhosa, it is possible to find two or even three words having the same spelling although each is pronounced differently and has a different meaning from the other. This phenomenon tends to confuse especially the foreign reader, as it can lead to the incorrect interpretation of the meaning of a particular term. According to Westermann and Ward (1964:133):

If every language has its own tone sequences, it follows that a failure to use the characteristic 'tunes' will betray the foreign speaker of the language however well he knows the grammar and constructions, and even how well he may pronounce the sounds. Moreover, it can be shown that even in non-tone languages like English, meaning is very often dependant on tone and on tone alone.

To avoid confusion, the above-mentioned tone markings were used in the writing of the following words as found in our selected texts:

- (i) úmhlúzi (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xl)
(gravy) versus:
Ùmhlùzi
(sorter)
- (ii) úkúhlúthá (G.Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xl)
(to be enough) versus:
Ùkùhlùthà
(to confiscate)
- (iii) ùkùsindà (G. Dic. of Xh. Vol. 3, 1989:xl)
(to smear) versus:
Úkúsindà
(to escape)



This study acknowledges that isiXhosa is essentially a tone language. Tonal features play the most important role in the pronunciation of every word in this language. Therefore, there is a strong argument to be made for the use of tone marking in the writing of the language. Although this is certainly the case, it is not recommended that tone marking should be done with respect to each and every word that is written in isiXhosa texts. This orthographic procedure would be too time consuming and expensive.

However, where two words are spelled the same, but differ in meaning as well as in pronunciation the use of tone marking is mandatory. In the case of isiXhosa texts that are written for foreign language readers, the use of tone marking for each and every word in the text is recommended.

It has been observed that there are times when words have to be abbreviated.

5.8 Abbreviations

The aim of this section is to establish whether there is sufficient uniformity in the writing of abbreviations in the consulted isiXhosa texts. Recommendations will be made to promote the achievement of more satisfactory levels of uniformity in the use of abbreviations. In writing, an abbreviation is any shortened form of a word or phrase. An abbreviation of a word consists only of the first part of the word. It is often used where certain words must be written (and read) consecutively. Examples: Tues. = Tuesday; Dec. = December; Minn. = Minnesota; Eur = Europe, European (<http://www.lyberty.com/encyc/articles/abbr.html> (Accessed 19/10/2012)).

IsiXhosa too employs a number of abbreviations. In the consulted isiXhosa texts, various abbreviations were identified, but it was observed that uniformity is lacking as far as the use of a full stop in the writing of these abbreviations is concerned. These examples illustrate the point:

Abbreviation without accompanying full stop:



Finy isifinyezo (PanSALB, 2008:60)
(abbreviation)

Vum isivumelanisi (PanSALB, 2008:60)
(concord)

Bumb khul oonobumba abakhulu (PanSALB, 2008:60)
(capital letters)

Sivak Phel isivakalisi esingaphelelanga (PanSALB, 2008:60)
(incomplete sentence)

Sime! isimelabizo (PanSALB, 2008:60)
(pronoun)

Abbreviation with accompanying full stop:

Imp. impinda (PanSALB, 2008:61)
(repetition)

nksk. nkosikazi (PanSALB, 2008:71)
(madam)

mnu. Mnumzana (PanSALB, 2008:71)
(master)

njing. Njingalwazi (PanSALB, 2008:71)
(professor)

prof. Profesa (PanSALB, 2008:71)
(professor)

o.kt. oko kukuthi (PanSALB, 2008:72)
(that is to say)



umz. Umzekelo (PanSALB, 2008:72)
(example)

njl.njl. njalo njalo (PanSALB, 2008:76)
(etcetera)

In order for the above abbreviations to be written uniformly, it is recommended that the period should be used in every case. It is argued that the presence of the period serves to indicate that a word has been shortened. The use of the period will assist younger readers who are not yet fully literate to interpret the written text (including abbreviated words) more accurately.

Finally, when an initial (i.e. first) letter is used to represent a word, the full stop should not be used after that letter. In the case of first names the abbreviation will be as follows:

Lindile Themba Mhambi will become *LT Mhambi*.

5.9 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to conduct a critical review of the complete orthography of isiXhosa (excluding spelling) and to advance recommendations concerning the rectification of anomalies and discrepancies that were identified during this investigation.

The importance of correct concord usage in isiXhosa, was affirmed in this chapter. It was found that concords when used with numbers (the possessive concord in particular) were often used incorrectly in the texts under discussion, resulting in a lack of congruency between the concord and the accompanying noun. In most instances, concord usage was informed by the principle of code-switching which is the concurrent use of more than one language in conversation, rather than by the recognised principles upon which standard isiXhosa is based.

It is evident that incorrect usage of the concord in the writing of this language results in the mixing of it with another language and it also results in confusion in meaning. This applies, in particular, to instances where concords are used in combination with numerals. Although it is acknowledged that the version that is based upon code switching is shorter and more practical to use, it is nevertheless recommended that the pure isiXhosa version be used under all circumstances.

The aim of the section on hyphenation was to provide an overview of the existing guidelines that address the process of hyphenation in isiXhosa orthography. The knowledge that was gained in this process, was then used to analyse the isiXhosa texts under discussion. The degree to which the phenomenon of hyphenation, as

found in these texts agrees with, or deviates from these guidelines, was determined and critically evaluated.

It was found that the publication: Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:37) provides clear guidelines in this regard. A later publication by Tyolwana *et al.* (2008) also makes an important contribution towards the process of hyphenation in isiXhosa. In terms of these guidelines, a number of anomalies and inconsistencies concerning the process of hyphenation in the texts under discussion were identified. This applies in particular, to the writing of compound nouns (whether repetitive or not), to instances where two similar vowels, both syllabic, are juxtaposed and finally, also where adverbial formatives precede a number.

It is therefore recommended that in order to further the process of orthographic standardisation of isiXhosa, hyphenation should be encouraged in instances of the juxtapositioning of vowels that are syllabic, whether they are similar or not, in all compound nouns, whether they are repetitive or not and finally, when a grammatical formative precedes a number.



Regarding the concept of word division, it was affirmed that isiXhosa is a language that is generally written conjunctively. In terms of the recognised set of guidelines that was consulted, it was however; also found that a reasonable number of words should be written disjunctively. A critical assessment of the texts under discussion brought to light that there are a number of deviations from the recognised guidelines in these texts as far as word division is concerned. Some instances were identified where words that should have been written conjunctively, were written disjunctively instead. This includes the use of the continuous present tense construction /-ya-/, as well as the use of the possessive concord /ka-/.

Again, some words that should have been written disjunctively were written conjunctively. This includes, in particular, the use of the demonstrative form, as well as the use of the future tense construction: /-ya-/ and /-za-/. It is clear that the existing guidelines on word division have not been applied strictly enough in the texts under discussion. The reasons for this will be discussed in the final chapter of this study.

Various matters were attended to with regard to the aspect of capitalisation in this chapter. This includes the capitalisation of female clan names, days of the week and place names. A number of inconsistencies were identified with regard to the capitalisation of these terms. This may be attributed to, amongst others, the fact that the existing guidelines are silent on the manner in which some of these terms should be capitalised. In one instance, a guideline was even based upon an incorrect premise regarding the capitalisation of clan names of Xhosa women. As a result, important proposals were made concerning the capitalisation of terms in the future.

Tone is one of the main prosodic features of phonology, together with the other prosodic features, such as stress, length, etc. Most of the languages in the world and in Africa in particular, can be regarded as tone languages, including the Nguni languages. African linguists are generally in agreement that tone is very complicated in Nguni languages since it covers a wide range of pitches with rising and falling varieties. Therefore, it is necessary, for the sake of accuracy, transparency and clearness, that the tone of a syllable should be clearly marked in isiXhosa. In isiXhosa, it is possible to see two or even three words having one and the same spelling, but with each one having a different meaning. This phenomenon, if not dealt with in the correct manner orthographically, tends to confuse the reader. It certainly is not recommended that tone marking should be done with respect to each and every word that is written in isiXhosa texts. This orthographic procedure would be too time consuming and expensive. However, with regard to those cases where two words are spelled the same, but differ in meaning and in pronunciation, the use of tone marking is mandatory. IsiXhosa texts written for foreign language readers should use tone marking for each and every word in the text.

This chapter is concluded by stating that it has been observed that there are still too many inconsistencies in the orthography of isiXhosa. These inconsistencies in the orthography of this language have been observed in areas such as the writing of concords, capitalisation, hyphen usage, consonant clustering, word division, etc. The causes for the occurrence of so many inconsistencies and anomalies will be attended to in the final chapter of this study. A number of recommendations have been made to address the situation and contribute to a more satisfactory, standardised isiXhosa orthography.



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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It should be stated that prior to the commencement of this study, several weaknesses in the existing “standardised” orthographical system of isiXhosa had already been identified, one of them being a lack of orthographic consistency. Preliminary investigations into this phenomenon suggested the existence of a significant range of discrepancies in the writing of this language. This phenomenon has far-reaching implications for accurate and effective written communication. In view of this challenge the aim of the study would be to make a scientific analysis of the existing standardised orthographical system of isiXhosa and to propose measures that would lead to the improvement of the orthography of the language. To achieve this purpose various written isiXhosa texts were to be analysed.

It was also indicated that this study would be based upon a specific framework within the fields of general as well as applied linguistics. Within the area of general linguistics, the theoretical models of recognised linguists such as De Saussure and other more contemporary linguists would be considered. At the level of applied linguistics, the concepts of scholars such as Smalley would provide the main framework for this investigation.

The aim of this study was to contribute towards the development of the orthography of isiXhosa in order for it to be equal to any other official standardised language with a uniform system of writing. The isiXhosa language can then be used more effectively as a medium of instruction also in higher education.

Whilst there were many ancient cultures with their own unique symbols and alphabets, none were as spectacular as that of the Egyptians with their hieroglyphics. These writing systems were fundamentally different from the system now being used in Western societies. But this period was followed by the introduction of orthographies for the individual European languages. These societies use an alphabetic system based on the premise that one graphic symbol (a letter) should correspond to one significant sound in the language (a phoneme) in order to achieve uniformity. It is

mandatory for an academic study of this nature to align itself with a particular theoretical framework and the main theory that has therefore been recognised in the writing of this research is that of De Saussure. The theories of other linguists were also recognised. The characteristics or principles of a good writing system / orthography as outlined by Smalley (1963), also received attention in this chapter (Chapter 2).

In Chapter 2, cognisance was also taken of the concerns of isiXhosa linguists. These linguists suggest that, for the purposes of the isiXhosa document, the following definition of the concept *orthography* be adopted: “The art of spelling of individual words and the writing of groups of words correctly.” During the course of the chapter an attempt was made to provide a description of the individual characteristics of a good orthography, including its general and specific requirements. Karl Meinhof stated that an orthography should be simple and clear enough for a reader not to experience any problems when reading. He also states that since many African languages contain sounds which cannot be written by means of the Latin alphabet, it is necessary for new symbols to be introduced.



In Chapter 3 the orthographic features of a number of isiXhosa texts published from 2000 to date were observed and analysed. The texts under discussion included literary texts, newspaper reports, translated texts, dictionaries as well as official Government publications on isiXhosa orthography.

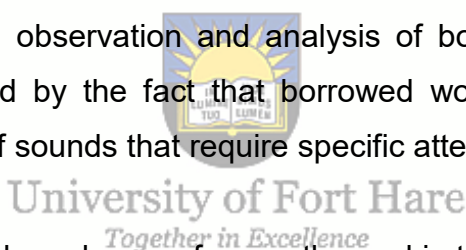
In these texts, the spellings of authentic isiXhosa lexical items were examined. The graphic representation of vowel sounds and that of consonant sounds was also dealt with. Since it was impossible, for practical reasons, to list all the lexical items, only a limited selection of the relevant examples were identified and mentioned.

It became clear that there are a large number of inconsistencies regarding the orthographic representation of various lexical items across the various publications that were examined. The analysis of the spelling of isiXhosa vowels reveals that all authors made use of only five graphic symbols in their respective texts. A deeper analysis of the isiXhosa sound system, however, revealed the existence of no less than seven (7) vowel sounds. The Roman alphabet only makes provision for five vowel

symbols. This means that two of these vowel sounds are currently not represented in the writing system of isiXhosa.

During the discussion on consonants in this chapter, it was found that in some instances a specific sound is represented by different alphabetic symbols (or, a combination of symbols) in the texts under discussion. Furthermore, the analysis of the spelling of isiXhosa consonants has revealed that in some instances different sounds were being represented by the same graphic symbol or symbols. The Roman alphabetic system which is currently being used, should be expanded by the introduction of more symbols that can be derived from the IPA. The new symbols recommended for adoption were identified and described in this chapter. This recommendation supports Meinhof's view that, since many African languages contain sounds which cannot be written by means of the Latin alphabet, it is necessary for new symbols to be introduced.

Chapter 4 consists of an observation and analysis of borrowed terminology. This analysis was necessitated by the fact that borrowed words often contain foreign sounds or combinations of sounds that require specific attention.



It was found that borrowed words were frequently used in the texts under discussion. These words are mostly derived from English but some are also borrowed from Afrikaans, confirming the notion that languages do not exist in isolation from one another and that there is always some form of contact between languages that coexist in the same geographical region.

In the texts under discussion, it was found that the same borrowed words were often spelled differently, either within a specific text, or from one text to the next. It was also found that some words were more indigenised than others, since their sound and form scheme was in closer agreement with the distinctive sound pattern of isiXhosa.

In this chapter it was found that the phenomenon of lexical borrowing as found in the texts under discussion has produced a series of unusual forms of consonant clustering in isiXhosa. It became clear that the majority of these clusters were not spelled in accordance with the distinctive spelling and form scheme of isiXhosa.

Recommendations were consequently made to achieve closer alignment between the spelling of each of these clusters and the distinctive spelling scheme of isiXhosa.

The aim of Chapter 5 was to execute a critical review of the complete orthography of isiXhosa (excluding spelling) and to advance recommendations concerning the rectification of anomalies and discrepancies that were identified during this investigation. Various issues ranging from concord usage and hyphenation to word division and abbreviation were dealt with.

It was found that concords (the possessive concord in particular) were often used incorrectly in the texts under discussion, resulting in a lack of congruency between the concord and the accompanying noun. In most instances, concord usage was informed by the principle of code-switching, rather than by the recognised linguistic principles upon which standard isiXhosa are based.

The aim of the section on hyphenation was to provide an overview of the existing guidelines that address the process of hyphenation in isiXhosa orthography. It was found that the publication: Xhosa Terminology and Orthography No. 3, (1972:37) provides clear guidelines in this regard. A later publication by Tyolwana *et al.* (2008) also makes an important contribution towards the process of hyphenation in isiXhosa. In terms of these guidelines, a number of anomalies and inconsistencies concerning the process of hyphenation in the texts under discussion were identified.

Regarding the concept of word division, it was affirmed that isiXhosa is a language that is generally written conjunctively. In terms of the recognised set of guidelines consulted, it was, however, also found that a number of words should be written disjunctively. A critical assessment of the texts under discussion brought to light that there were a number of deviations from the recognised guidelines in these texts as far as word division is concerned. Some instances were identified where words that should have been written conjunctively, were written disjunctively instead.

The manner in which words are capitalised in isiXhosa received full attention in this chapter. A number of inconsistencies were identified with regard to the capitalisation of female clan names, days of the week and place names. The existing guidelines are

clear enough on the manner in which most of these terms should be capitalised. Important proposals were however made concerning the capitalisation of some of these terms (and female clan names in particular) in the future.

The important role played by tone as a prosodic feature in isiXhosa was acknowledged in this study. In this language, it is possible to see two or even three words having one and the same spelling, but with each one having a different meaning from the other. Therefore it was recommended, for the sake of accuracy, transparency and clearness, that the tone of a syllable should be clearly marked in isiXhosa. However, for practical considerations, this requirement should rather be waived, except in the case of lexical items that are identical in spelling but are different in pronunciation as well as in meaning. In these cases the use of tone marking should be mandatory.

A critical analysis of the abbreviations that were used in the texts under discussion, clearly showed that the period was used in some instances, whilst it was not used in other instances, which points to a lack of consistency in the use of the period in these texts. In order for isiXhosa abbreviations to be written uniformly, it is recommended that the period should be used in all the abbreviated words as it serves as an indication of a word that has been shortened. This recommendation however, does not apply to instances where the first letter is used to represent that word. In such instances the period should not be used after that letter.

Findings and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to determine the accuracy of the orthography of isiXhosa in this new, post 1994 dispensation, as one of the officially recognised languages. Prior to the commencement of this study, indications of a significant range of weaknesses in the existing “standardised” orthographical system of isiXhosa had already been identified provisionally, one of them being a lack of orthographic consistency. In the light of these challenges, it was indicated that the aim of the study would be to make a scientific analysis of the existing standardised system of isiXhosa in order to confirm the existence of possible weaknesses and to point out any weaknesses that were not identified earlier.

One may agree with the statement made by Tyolwana *et al.* (2008: 99) as quoted in Chapter 1 of this study:

It should be noted that there are still quite a number of aspects of the orthography of isiXhosa that need more attention. This can be fulfilled by way of research that will entail verification by the knowledge as well as institutions of the speakers of the language and other isiXhosa language practitioners.

During the course of this study, the existence of a wide range of anomalies regarding the orthography and the spelling of isiXhosa was identified. It is evident that there are still too many inconsistencies in the orthography of isiXhosa. These inconsistencies have been observed in areas such as the writing of concords, capitalisation, hyphen usage, consonant clustering, word division, etc. The investigation undoubtedly confirms the commonly held perception regarding the existence of a significant range of discrepancies in the writing of this language. The well-known Xhosa linguist Dyubhele (2001:1), quite rightly refers to the sad neglect of the orthography of isiXhosa. To its speakers all seems well, although the conventional spelling of this language is characterised by uncertainty, confusion and inconsistencies.

It is evident that the occurrence of such a wide range of anomalies and inconsistencies may be attributed to the following causes:

- the rules of spelling and standardisation are in place, but many isiXhosa authors and editors seem to be ignorant of these rules. There is large-scale confusion and lack of knowledge with regard to isiXhosa orthography and the manner in which the existing guidelines should be interpreted and applied, in order to represent the sound system of the language as accurately as possible. In some instances, it may even be assumed that they deliberately prefer not to adhere to these rules;

- although the isiXhosa rules of spelling and standardisation are largely in place, there are still certain caveats. The current rules do not make adequate provision for the accommodation of the full spectrum of the distinctive sound system of isiXhosa. In some instances, it is even evident that the existing guidelines are flawed. Although sets of orthographical rules are in place, these rules appear to be inconsistent and this causes isiXhosa authors to be uncertain as to which rule to apply, and when.

In this study, recommendations have been made to address the caveats and anomalies that were identified and to improve the standardisation of isiXhosa orthography. In some instances 'new' symbols have been recommended based on those already in use in the IPA. There is no doubt that it will be possible to print most of these symbols by means of modern, advanced computerised word processing programmes. In fact, some of these non-alphabetic symbols were already used in isiXhosa orthography as far back as 1926. The hymn-book of the Methodist Church of that year, clearly reflects the use of these symbols in the lyrics found in this publication, as can be witnessed in the following examples:

- the voiceless ejective prepalatal affricate [tʃ'] is written as follows in hymn 57 verse 4:

Lalivaliwe isango, Kungekho /sitʃixo/;
(The entrance was closed and there was no key)

- the nasalised voiceless ejective prepalatal affricate [ntʃ'] is written as follows in hymn 58 verse 1:

Phambi kwezo /ntʃaba/ zaKho
(In front of those enemies of yours)

- the voiced bilabial implosive [ɓ] in the same hymn and verse as the above, is written as follows:

Phambi kwezo /ntʃaba/ zaKho
(In front of those enemies of yours)

- the voiceless prepalatal fricative [tʃ] in the same hymn as the above, verse 4, is written as follows:

Ukuzaliseka kwayo, Wena ukushumayeleye.
(Its fulfilment you have preached)

“Kugqityiwe” /watʃ ho/ Yena
(It is finished, He said)

Naasi /isitshaba/
(Here is the crown)
(Curmick, 1926)

Furthermore, various non-alphabetic symbols are currently in use in language writing systems elsewhere in Africa. For instance, the Mandingo language in Senegal, West Africa makes use of a combination of symbols belonging to the Roman alphabet, as well as other symbols not found in it. This can be witnessed in the Mandingo syllabus of June - August 2010, where the IPA voiced velar nasal symbol [ŋ] has been used as it is, in the following words:

/keerɪn/

/fen/

/Fansun/

/anɪŋ/

/laŋo/

(Massaly, 2010:1-3)



Amongst Southern African languages such as tshiVenda and sePedi, a system of diacritics that does not form part of the Roman alphabet is also in use. This serves as proof of the fact that non-alphabetic symbols can be used successfully in the orthography of a language, including isiXhosa orthography. The implementation of such a process can, however, only be initiated and driven successfully by language authorities such as PanSALB and the Provincial Language Committees.

In addition to the recommendations already made in this study, it is proposed that the following measures be implemented to ensure that isiXhosa orthography is fully standardised in the near future:

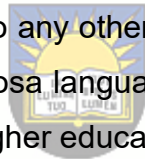
- The role that statutory language bodies such as the National Language Board for isiXhosa, PanSALB and the Xhosa National Language Unit have played in the past regarding the standardisation of isiXhosa orthography, is fully recognised and appreciated. However, it is evident that this is an iterative, ongoing process that is not completed yet. The continued involvement of these bodies with the process of standardisation is therefore strongly advocated.
- Education and training of authors and editors – The offering of short in-service training courses for authors and editors has to be encouraged to enable them to write more correctly.
- Formal education – It is clear that the reading and writing skills of primary and secondary school learners are not being developed satisfactorily. Many of these learners are unable to read and write isiXhosa correctly. The curricula of school syllabi have to be expanded and should accommodate the re-introduction of courses in phonetics that will enable learners to familiarise themselves with the IPA.
- Research projects – The expansion of academic research projects at universities has to be encouraged in order for the orthography of African Languages to be studied more intensively. This should be made possible by making the necessary funding available. Bodies such as the Provincial Arts Councils as well as the National Arts Council can play an important role in this regard.
- Workshops and in-service training programmes – The Provincial Department of Arts and Culture and the Department of Education, should regularly hold workshops as well as in-service training programmes in order to improve the standardisation of African languages.

A fully standardised orthography will have far-reaching implications for accurate and effective written communication. It is important that the anomalies that were identified in this study be eradicated from the language. There should be definite progress

towards greater standardisation of isiXhosa. This will empower the language and will enable it to fulfil its role more effectively within the current constitutional environment where the principles of multilingualism and more comprehensive recognition of all the official languages within the spheres of education, trade and industry as well as science are advocated. Xhosa orthography is in need of further revision and standardisation in order to serve the isiXhosa speaking community as effectively as possible.

The eradication of the anomalies referred to above will make isiXhosa texts more accessible; not only to adult first language readers, but also to juvenile first language readers whose reading and writing skills are still in the developmental stage. Finally, it will also serve to make the language more accessible to foreign readers who are in the process of acquiring the basic reading and writing skills in the language.

It is trusted that this study will contribute towards the development of the orthography of isiXhosa, so as to make it equal to any other official standardised language with a uniform system of writing. The isiXhosa language can then be used more effectively as a medium of instruction also in higher education.



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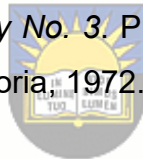
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