

An Exploration into the Morphological Structure of the Names of Domestic Animals

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Abstract

Domestic animals are animals of the home or family. These animals have different names by which they are distinguished from one another. Although they have different names, the morphological structures of these names are not known. This paper seeks to investigate the structure of various domestic animals' names. To accomplish this, the different names of domestic animals will be subjected to structure rules or context-free grammar /morphology, in which all rules apply, regardless of the context.

1. Introduction

The word 'morphology' has been defined differently by many scholars. Matthews (1991:01) defines morphology as 'the branch of grammar that deals with internal structure of words'. In a word such as *mu-ḡi* 'one who comes' he believes that it is formed by morphemes such as Naf *mu-* and Nst *-ḡi*. He further explained that words are formed by morphemes which are commonly classified into free forms (morphemes which can occur as a separate words) and bound morphemes (morphemes which cannot occur alone mainly affixes).

In the word *kudambwana/kulambwana* *ku-* is noun 20 class prefix, whereas *-dambo/-lambo* is a noun root, followed by *-ana* which is a suffix.

Nafmu-+Nr-lamb-+Naf-ana

Mulamboana>mulambwana'rivulet'

The above morphemes cannot stand alone. They are bound morphemes whereas free morpheme could be in *hone*, which is an absolute pronoun of class 15/16/17 and 18. The word could be found in *vhuhone*, which is a class 14 nouns. The noun consists of Naf *vh-* + Nst-*hone*. The stem *-hone* is termed a free morpheme since it can stand alone as *hone*.

This preceding definition is supported by Crystal (1991:225), who defines morphology as "the branch of grammar which studies the structure or form of words primarily through the use of morpheme construct". He further defines morphemes as the minimal distinct unit of grammar and the central concern of morphology.

The above authors concluded that the noun is formed by an affix which is a prefixed morpheme that is also known as a prefix. This is a morpheme which precedes the stem or root of a word. Alternatively these are the morphemes which appear to the left of a stem or root. A prefix is generally suitable for a format attached at the beginning of the root.

The second morpheme is the stem. Mokgokong, et al (1985:24) states that the stem of a word consists of the root plus all suffixed morphemes, i.e. the suffix or the ending *Naf mu-+Nst -thu*

The third morpheme is the root.

Poulos (1990:152) defines the root as “the core element of a word, the part which carries the basic meaning of a word. He is supported by Hughes (1962:2002) when he says that “the root is frequently a word in its own right, e.g. *Naf mu- +Nst-shum-o*

The fourth part is the suffix

Mokgokong et al (1985:22) believe that suffixal morphemes, also known as suffixes, are morphemes which occur after or behind word roots. Alternatively they are morphemes which occur to the right of the roots. They also indicate that when the final (last) suffixed morpheme in a word consists of a vowel.

In the word mulimisi ‘*agriculturist*’ we find the following morphemes that form the word:

Mulimisi -is a noun

mu- Class prefix for noun class 1= (Naf)

-Limisi-Noun stems (Nst)

-lim- noun root (Nr)

-isi is a suffix (Naf)

-is -is an extension/infix(Naf)

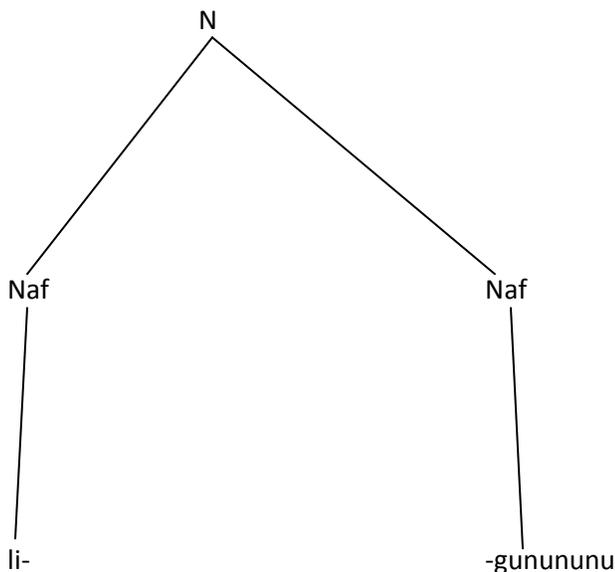
-i. is an ending or terminating vowel (Naf)

2. The structure of the domestic animals’ nouns

As domestic animals are nouns, it is expected that they should be consists of noun prefixes, stems, and roots, extensions, ending or terminating vowels. This section will explore the distribution of the names domestic animals according to their morphological structure.

3. Domestic animals’ names formed by prefix and stems only

The following domestic animals’ names show that they are formed by Naf and Nst, although other nouns were borrowed from foreign languages. These nouns do not show the gender in which those nouns are classified. Therefore, the nouns could be made male or female but there is no indication of the gender in the names of the animals.



Class 5 Naf li-+Nst-gunununu ‘beast without horns’

Class 6 Naf ma-+Nst-khulu

Class 7 Naf tshi-+Nst- mange ‘cat’

Class 9 Naf N-+ Nst-bere ‘horse’

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-donngi ‘donkey’

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-holomo/kolomo 'head of cattle,bovine'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-meila 'mule'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-mbwa 'dog'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-phwidzi 'original name for a sheep before it borrowed from Northern Sotho'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-ngu 'sheep'

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-nguluvhe/-huluvhe 'domestic pig'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-ḡamana 'calf'

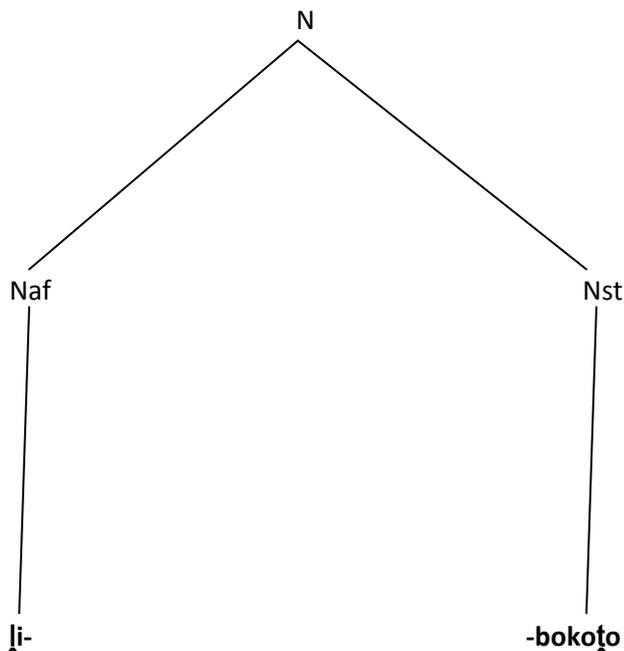
4. Domestic animals ‘ names formed by prefix and stems:

Male animals

Class 9 Naf N-+ Nst-vhoho/mboho 'bull'

Class 9 Naf li-+Nst-bokoṭo 'he-goat'

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-pulu/fhulu/phulu 'castrated ox/animal'

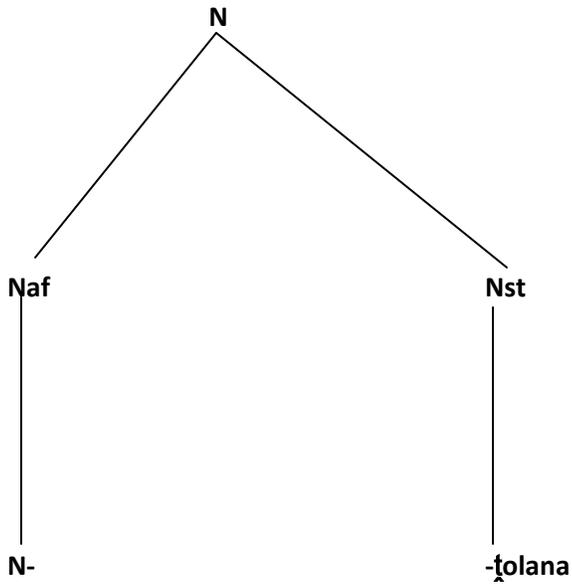


Female animals

Class 9 Naf N- + Nst-pambala 'adult female goat that has not yet had kids or cattle of female gender'

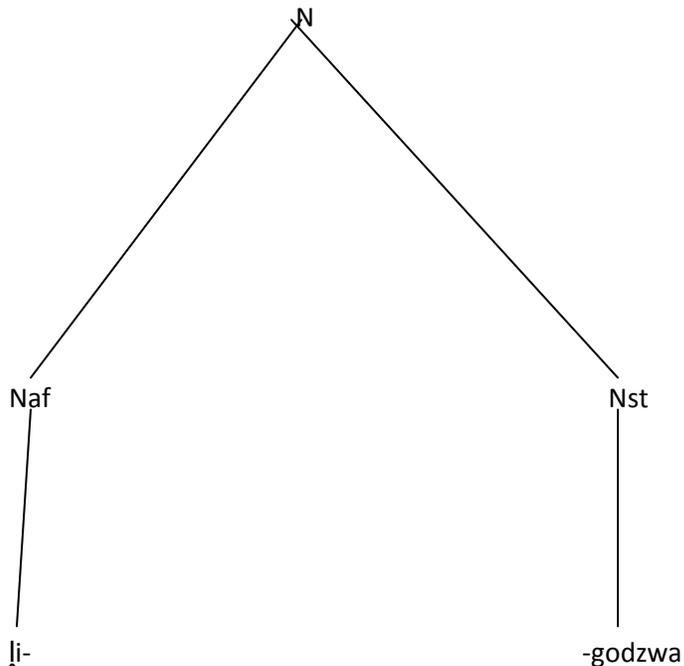
Class 9Naf N --+ Nst-panzhe 'barren cow, goat or sheep '

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-ṭolana 'heifer'



Domestic animals' names according to their colour

The following domestic animals' names are males. Their structure is prefix plus stem. They consist of a class prefix which is not recognizable in singular form. However, it can be recognized from the concord if the name is used in context. The next part is a stem. The plural form of the noun is recognizable because it takes the plural prefixes in Tshivenda.



Class 5 Naf li- +Nst-godzwa 'male head of cattle, white with small specks'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst-dala 'head of cattle with blue or white with small black specks'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst-dilu 'male head of cattle with dark strips running across the body'

Class9 Naf N-+ Nst-dzothwa 'male head of goat

Class9 Naf N-+ Nst-khudzwa 'male goat, red all over with white band around its middle'

Class9 Naf N-+ Nst-khunweu 'male head of cattle, red all over

Class9 Naf N-+ Nst-ṅala 'male head of cattle, red all over but white on the belly and legs'

Class9 Naf N-+ Nst-swu >nswu 'male head of cattle, black male/bull all over'

Class 9 Naf N-+Nst -budzwa+Naf-**ana**'female of budzwa.A female head of cattle, blue with black or white patches'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-godzwa+Naf-**ana**'female of godzwa or gwevhu.

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- dala+Naf-**ana**'female head of cattle, blue or white with small black specks'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- dilu+Naf-**ana**>diluana>dilwana'female head of cattle, brown with dark stripes running across the body

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- dzothwa+Naf-**ana**>dzothwana 'female head of cattle or dark brown all over'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-dzuguda+ Naf-**ana**>dzugudana 'female head of cattle, black with speck ears, throat and belly'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-khunweu+ Naf-**ana**>khunweuana>khunwana'female head of cattle, red all over'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- tshubwa+Naf-**ana**'>tshubwana'female head of cattle without horns'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-khwera+ Naf-**ana**>khwerana 'female head of cattle, white all over with black head'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- tsheka+Naf-**ana** >tshekana'female goat ,black with white band around its middle'

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- thomu+Naf-**ana**>thomuana>thonwana 'female head of cattle ,white with black patches all over ,blue and white mottled

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-swa+ Naf-**ana**>tswana'female head of cattle ,red all over but white on belly and legs

Class 9Naf N-+Nst-seha+ Naf-**ana**>tsehana'

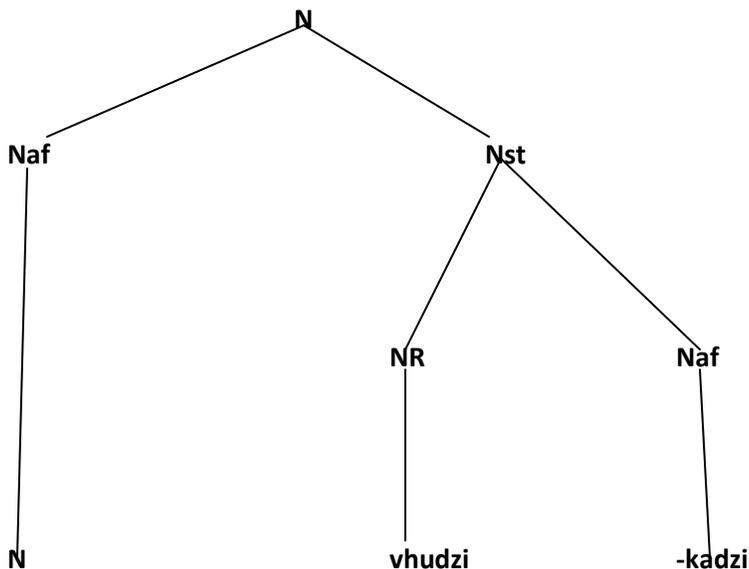
Class 9 Naf N-+Nst-swu+Naf-**ana** >ntswuana>tswana

Class 9Naf N-+Nst- khudzu+Naf-**ana**>khudzuana 'female goat'

Domestic animals with indicating gender-kadzi

There are domestic animals with stem **-kadzi** which indicates that the animal is a female

Naf N-+Nst budzi/vhudzi+Naf-kadzi>mbudzi**kadzi**



Domestic animals' names are compound nouns

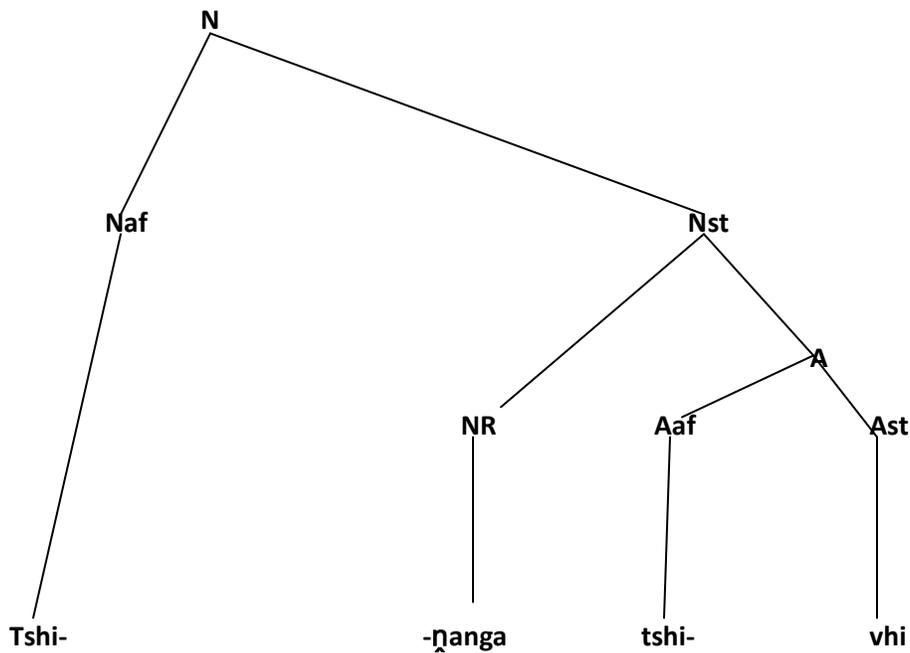
Some animals' names are compound words. These are formed by two categories which when conjoined and form a noun with characteristics of a compound. The following nouns are found in Tshivenda:

tshinangatshivhi

The above noun is formed by a noun followed by an adjective. The structure will be as follows:

N+A

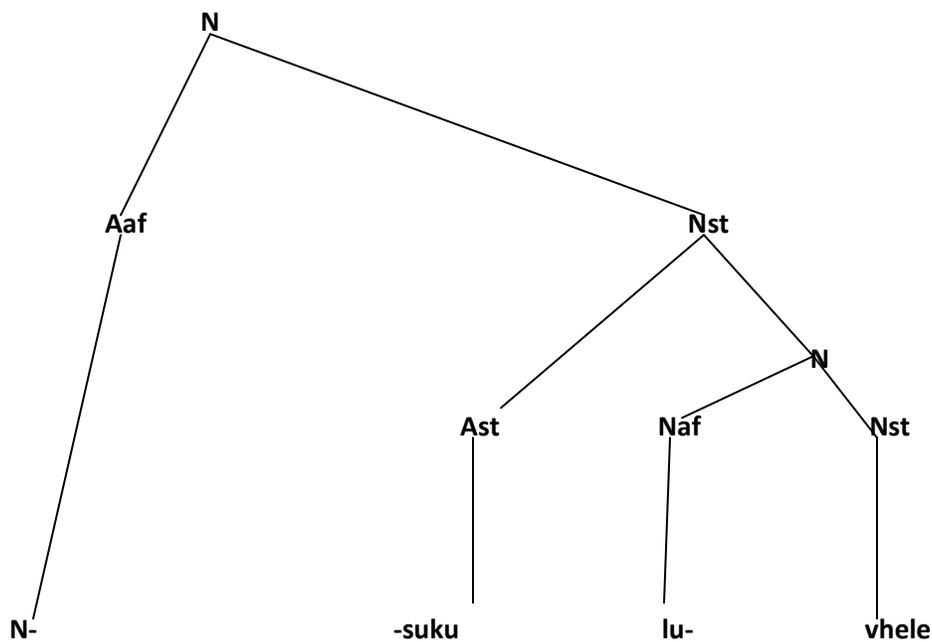
i.e Naf+Nst+Aaf+Ast



A

Compound noun formed by adjective and noun

The following domestic animals' name is formed by an adjective followed by a noun
Tswukuluvhele'



Ambiguity of dimunitising male animals with female animals according to colour

There is the possibility of ambiguity in the dimunitivising of male animals' names with the suffix –ana and bring about diminutive nouns which resemble female animals according to colour. The diminutives will be similar in spelling and pronunciation .

The difference is that the diminitivised **-ana** has the dual function. One of function is to indicate the gender and the other is to diminitivise, thereby indicating the gender with the suffix **-ana** which cannot be split into smaller units. The following animals' names are male nouns that have been diminitivised to resemble female animal nouns.

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- budzwa-+Naf-**ana**'>budzw**ana**' young or small male budzwa. A small or young head of male cattle, blue with black or white patches'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- godzwa-+Naf-**ana**' young or small male godzwa or gwevhu>godzwana or gwevhana.

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- dala-+Naf-**ana**' young or small male head of cattle, blue or white with small black specks'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- dilu-+Naf-**ana**'>dilu**ana**>dilw**ana**' young or small male head cattle, brown with dark stripes running across the body

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- dzothwa-+Naf-**ana**'>dzothw**ana**' young or small head of cattle or dark brown all over'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- dzuguḍa+ Naf-**ana**'>dzuguḍ**ana**' young or small head of male cattle, black with speck ears, throat and belly'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- khunweu+ Naf-**ana**'>khunweu**ana**>khunw**ana**' yopung or small male head of cattle, red all over'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- tshubwa+ Naf-**ana**'>tshubw**ana**' young or small male head of cattle without horns'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- khwera+ Naf-**ana**'>khwer**ana**' small or young male head of cattle, white all over with black head'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- tsheka+ Naf-**ana**'>tshek**ana**' small or young male goat, black with a white band around its middle'

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- thomu+ Naf-**ana**'>thomu**ana**>thonw**ana**' small or young male head of cattle, white with black patches all over, blue and white mottled

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- swu+ Naf-**ana**'>tswu**ana**' small or young male head of cattle, red all over but white on belly and legs

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- seha+ Naf-**ana**'>tseh**ana**' small or young

Class9 Naf N-+Nst- khudzwu+ Naf-**ana**'>khudzu**ana**>khudzw**ana**' small or young male goat, red all over with white band around its middle'

Conclusion

The paper showed that **domestic** animals' names have different morphological structures. There are nouns that are formed by prefixes and stems. Some names of domestic animals are chosen because of their colours. These are formed by prefixes followed by the stems, which indicate that the nouns are males. Male animals' names are formed by prefixes followed by stems and suffixes which indicate that they are males. The suffix **-lume** indicates that it is a males.

In addition it has been shown that indicate that females are formed by prefixes followed by stems. There are also nouns that indicate the animal is a female, whose morphological structures are distinguished as prefixes followed by stems. In addition, females are denoted by f colour. These are formed by a prefix and stem followed by the suffix **-ana**, which indicates the female gender. These are a few animals whose names are compound nouns .e.g. One is formed by adjective **tswuku-** and noun **-luvhele** whereas the other noun is formed by a noun followed by an adjective, e.g noun- **tshinanga** and the adjective **tshivhi**.