

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



An examination of how loanwords in a corpus of spoken and written contemporary isiXhosa are incorporated into the noun class system of isiXhosa

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____

Signed by candidate

Date: 26 November 2018

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Below is a typical dialogue between two modern isiXhosa-speakers. In this case, it happens to be between myself (aged 48) and my daughter (aged 16) here referred to as UL. The loanwords are all in italics, and the loanword nouns are in bold italics.

UL: ***Itshomi*** yam, umfutshane, *and thin*. Benenwele ezinde *but* ngoku uzichebile *so* une-***S-curl***, uRefeloe. (My friend, Refeloe, is short and thin. With long hair but now she has cut it so she as an S-curl.)

Me: Nizawunxiba ntoni ke xa nisiya khona kule ***party***? (What are you (plural) going to wear when you go to this party?)

UL: Uzaw'zinxibela ***ijjin*** zakhe, ***netop*** yakhe, ***neeteki*** zakhe, ... ama, ama ... *what you call it*, ***inecklace***, nemi... namacici. (She will wear her jeans, and her top, and her takkies, ama-, ama-, what you call it, a necklace and earrings.)

Me: Wena, unxibe ntoni? (And you, what are you wearing?)

UL: Hay', ndizaz'nxibela ***ilokhwe*** nees***sandal*** zam. (No, I will just wear a dress and my sandals.)

Me: Aniyisebenzisi ***imake-up***? (Don't you wear make-up?)

UL: *No*, *ieyelin*er ***nelipstick***, qha. (No, just eyeliner and lipstick.)

It is clear from the above extract that all the loanwords which happen to be nouns have been afforded Class 9 prefixes, with the plural in Class 10. Some of the prefixes are not visible because of preceding demonstrative or because of vowel coalescence due to the use of the associative formative *-na-* (have). A list of the nouns reveals the predominance of the Class 9 prefix *i-* and its plural Class 10 prefix for loanwords *ii-* in this dialogue:

itshomi
i-S-curl
iparty (le party)
ijjin
itop
iiteki (neeteki)
iisandal (neesandal)
imake-up
*ieyelin*er
ilipstick (nelipstick)

The proliferation of loanwords in Classes 9 and 10 in this dialogue would lead one to suspect that all loanword nouns in isiXhosa would be given the Class 9 prefix, with their plurals in Class 10. However, this is not, and has not, always been the case.

For example, the following sentence was taken from a 2016 news report on the topic of women farmers in urban areas in Western Cape:

Ekhaya ndikhule kulinywa imifuno, amazambane, *amakhaphetshu*, amatswele *nesipinatshi*¹
(At home as I was growing up we grew vegetables, potatoes, cabbages, onions and spinach)

In the above we can see the word for ‘cabbage’ is in Class 5, which is given here in its plural form in Class 6 *amakhaphetshu* ‘cabbages’. *Isipinatshi* ‘spinach’ would appear to be prefixed with the Class 7 prefix (*isi-*). The loanword nouns in this extract, unlike those in my dialogue with my daughter, do not fall into Class 9.

I started teaching isiXhosa as a 2nd language to English-speaking students in 2017 and was constantly asked questions like “What noun class do loanwords go into?” and “Why do you say “*Ivili alisebenzi* but *Irediyo ayisebenzi*”². Both *ivili* and *irediyo* are loanwords but they are using different concords. Why?” I realized that (as is evidenced by the students’ examples and by the two extracts above) the answer was not that simple – I could not just answer categorically that all loanwords go into Class 9. In addition, as a student of language I became increasingly aware of how many English words featured in daily isiXhosa conversations, and that this phenomenon required close academic scrutiny. The first question I needed to ask myself, before focussing on the question of class allocation of loanwords, was “Is the use of loanwords in isiXhosa a sign of language change?”

1.1.1 Language change

Research into the topic of language change as a global phenomenon has been extensively covered (see Aitchison, 2004; Blommaert, 2010; Martin-Jones, 1989; Machin & Van Leeuwen, 2005). These studies, while broad in their scope, sometimes lack insights into linguistic change in the languages of Africa, so we get erroneous statements like:

It is, however, rare to borrow ‘basic’ vocabulary – words that are frequent and common, such as numbers (Aitchison, 2004:142).

¹ <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Local/City-Vision/bazakulima-nasesichithini-20160420>

² The wheel is not working, the radio is not working

The phenomenon of loanwords being used for numbers in Bantu languages is, contrary to Aitchison's generalized claim, widespread, and has been acknowledged by the editors of *The Greater Dictionary of isiXhosa*, who state:

the adoption of English numerals probably constitutes the biggest inroad into the language made in recent years, not only for mathematical purposes but also in ordinary everyday speech (Pahl et al., 1989, p. xxxii).

The incorporation of new words has been seen by some scholars of urban language varieties in South Africa as important for bringing people together and “essential to the functioning of the community” (Ditsele and Mann, 2015:163) and evidence of linguistic innovation which could lead to strengthening local languages (Ditsele, 2014). Interesting new studies on language change, with a particular focus on loanwords, are those that suggest there is a connection between new lifestyles and the frequency of borrowed words in speakers' conversations (Kowner and Daliot-Bul, 2008; Saxena, 2014). I will cover these studies more extensively in my Literature Review but now suffice to say that the adoption of words from other languages into the lexicon of isiXhosa is not an entirely new phenomenon, and in fact dates back more than 100 years as is evidenced by the inclusion of *ukubhedesha* ‘pray’ from the Dutch *bidden* in Kropf and Godfrey's dictionary (1915:28) and *ibhola* ‘fall’ from the English ‘ball’ (Kropf and Godfrey, 1915:39).

Putting aside the fact that the adoption of words from other languages into the isiXhosa language has clearly been around for a good many years, the question I want to focus on in this study relates specifically to contemporary loanword nouns in isiXhosa and whether it is possible to predict which noun class they will fall into. Is it a random process, or are there certain morphological or semantic properties of the word that is being loaned that will predispose speakers to assign it a particular prefix in Bantu languages, and in isiXhosa specifically?

1.1.2 Variation in language change

Heath discusses the “productive processes” that speakers use to introduce new words into the L1³ (Heath, 1984:372) and refers to these processes as “routines”. It could be

³ L1 in this thesis refers to the speaker's first language and L2 to the second language

argued that using the Class 9 prefix for loan nouns is a routine employed by speakers of isiXhosa, but then Heath goes on to argue that even these routines are subject to variation:

when large numbers of L2 borrowings have entered LI, in different periods and different dialects, there may be considerable variation in the procedures which have been used to adapt the forms (Heath, 1984:376).

This observation by Heath could explain why not all speakers use Class 9 all the time for new loanword nouns. Heath further observes that:

There is often a tendency for one LI gender category to become productive (absorbing most new borrowed nouns unless there is a particular semantic or phonological connection with another gender category) (Heath, 1984:375).

This observation leads one to consider the semantic and phonological connections that might present themselves with isiXhosa loan nouns and the noun prefixes of the different classes (for example nouns starting with 's' might be seen to be connected to the Class 7 noun with its *isi-* prefix). This factor will be considered later in the thesis but first a more detailed examination of what we mean by loanword.

1.1.3 Loanwords

Loanwords are words that are embraced by the speakers of one language (in this case isiXhosa) from another language (the source language) (O'Grady et al., 1996:511). They (loanwords) can be also be referred to as borrowed words because they come from another language and are now being used by a different one, the speakers of which might not realize that the word is not originally from their L1. The term 'loanword' is preferred by linguists to 'borrowed word' because:

'Borrowing' is a somewhat misleading word since it implies that the element in question is taken from the donor language for a limited amount of time and then returned, which is by no means the case. The item is actually copied, rather than borrowed in the strict sense of the term (Aitchison, 2004:141).

In this thesis, for want of better terminology, we will use the verbs 'loan' and 'borrow' interchangeably.

Some languages occasionally loan verbs and adjectives, but generally, nouns are the most borrowed words (see Brown, 2003) and in Bantu languages these borrowed

nouns are given prefixes of the noun class system. Some scholars of Bantu languages have categorically stated which noun classes are preferred for loanwords:

Loanwords that denote persons have been allocated to classes one and two, while most other nouns denoting things and animals have been allocated to classes 6 and 9. There is a high concentration of loanwords denoting inanimate objects in class 9 (with its plural class counterparts). From this perspective, one can predict which noun class will host a loanword (Kayigema & Davie, 2011:317).

While much of the above statement is true for isiXhosa, the notion of being able to “predict which noun class will host a loanword” is, in my opinion, not as straightforward as Kayigema and Davie suggest. It is true that when using noun loanwords, isiXhosa speakers apply the method of using prefixes to make these (loanwords) belong or sound functional in isiXhosa. These prefixes thus make it possible for speakers to allocate the loanword to a certain noun class, but if one examines the following isiXhosa examples, we cannot categorically say that all inanimate objects (as suggested by Kayigema and Davie) are hosted by Class 9:

umasipala ‘municipality (Class 1a)

inatshisi ‘naartjie’ (Class 5)

isitupu ‘stoep’ (Class 7)

Apart from prefixes, loanword nouns in isiXhosa sometimes use suffixes as well. These suffixes allow the speaker to adapt the new word to the phonology and morphology of the language. For example, ***umkorekisho*** ‘correction’. Here we have a process whereby a loanword verb *-korekisha* has been assigned to Class 3 via the prefix ***um-*** and the nominalizing suffix for Class 3 ***-o***.

According to Haspelmath (2008:45) “it is now customary to use the terms recipient language for the language that acquires a loanword and donor language for the language that is the source of the loanword.” This (borrowing) is done by speakers not knowing that these languages that people borrow from, for example, English and Afrikaans, also borrow from other languages like French, German and Arabic, to name but a few. Below are a number of words that English also adopted from other languages:

Word	Language borrowed from
anchor, kettle, wine	Latin
attorney, plaintiff, lounge	French
tsunami, judo, karaoke	Japanese
coyote, guitar, vigilante	Spanish
noodle, schnitzel, lager	German
vodka, icon	Russian

These words above⁴ and more (that are not listed) are proof that all languages, particularly English (see McWhorter, 2008) borrow words from other languages and, after a while, even use them as if they were their own. IsiXhosa-speakers borrowed nouns like *iketile*, *ivodka* and *ijudo* thinking they were originally from either English or Afrikaans, whereas in fact, these words have a far more complex history.

1.1.4 Prestige and loanwords

People have a tendency of only borrowing from languages that they look up to, one of the main incentives for borrowing words being the prestige of the donor culture (Field 2002; Hogan 2003; Weinreich 1953).

In South Africa the languages that are regarded as having a higher status are English and Afrikaans (Alexander, 1997:84).

In their book *Globally speaking: Motives for adopting English vocabulary in other languages*, Rosenhouse and Kowner note that “the penetration of English as a second (or third) language strengthens the use of English vocabulary in the local language” (Rosenhouse and Kowner, 2008:15). This comment is particularly pertinent in South Africa where English is not only the medium of instruction from Grade 4, but is also the second or third language of the majority of the population, most of whom speak a Bantu language.⁵ Bylund (2014) also states that:

In schools whose pupils are predominantly L1 speakers of a Bantu language (e.g. isiXhosa), English is typically introduced as a medium of instruction in Grade 4, replacing the previous language of instruction. The extent to which English replaces the former language of instruction, however, varies depending on the school and the teacher (Bylund 2014:433).

⁴ See <https://www.etymonline.com/> for explanations of the etymology of English words

⁵ See: http://www.statssa.gov.za/census/census_2011/census_products/Census_2011_Census_in_brief.pdf

It is possible that because English becomes the medium of instruction after four years of schooling in South African schools some teachers introduce code switching in their class rooms. Hence one will get from a teacher statements like, “*ilesini yanamhlanje iza kuqala kupage 10*” (Today’s lesson will begin at page 10) (see Probyn, 2015; Grobler, 2018 for more in-depth discussion on language use in South African schools). This leads us to the issue of code mixing and code switching.

1.1.5 Code mixing, code switching and lexical borrowing

Studies show that children tend to code mix and code switch from a very young age because of the way the brain is structured and how it responds to different language inputs – “the efficiency with which each language structure can be applied when necessary” (Rosenhouse & Kowner, 2008:9).

They go further to describe lexical borrowing as a:

widespread activity, practised ever since the first encounter between people speaking different languages in prehistoric times. It occurs when speakers of a language begin to incorporate into their own lexicon, or metaphorically ‘borrow’ (without the need for permission) a foreign word (‘loanword’) (Rosenhouse & Kowner, 2008:12).

According to O’Grady et al. (1996:341) “language contact over time can result in an important source of new words, borrowing.” These authors identify three types of linguistic influence in the borrowing process: “substratum, adstratum and superstratum” and explain that substratum influence happens when a non-dominant language influences a dominant one (O’Grady et al., 1996:341). An example of this can be found in South African English, in which isiXhosa and isiZulu words like *indaba* (news, matter), *mahala* (free) and *imbizo* (meeting) are used by English speakers without requiring glossing. The opposite of this kind of borrowing is superstratum influence when lexical items from a politically and culturally dominant language like English become part of the vocabulary of the less dominant language. Examples abound in South African Bantu languages, just a few from isiXhosa which has loaned extensively from English and Afrikaans, are *itispuni* (teaspoon), *ivili* (from Afrikaans ‘viel’), *ijaji* (judge) and *isteyidiyam* (stadium). Adstratum influence happens when neither of the languages is more powerful than the other one and they merely influence each other. Good examples of these in South Africa are the way in which isiZulu

lexical items are sometimes used by isiXhosa speakers, for example, the nouns *indaba* and *imbizo* (in isiXhosa these nouns would have originally been *udaba* and *ubizo* in the singular noun class 11). Phrases like “*Ayisekho indaba*” (isiZulu for ‘there is no issue’), “*Indaba yakwamkhozi*”, (which literally means ‘a matter of the in-laws’ but figuratively refers to ‘a secret’ in isiXhosa) then get brought into isiXhosa discourse. The extent to which this new version of *udaba* (*indaba*) has been entirely incorporated into the isiXhosa lexicon is apparent in the online version of *I’solezwe lesiXhosa* (2016), in which a reporter, commenting about football club secretiveness uses the term:

*Emva kokuthiwa paha kokuthengwa kweMpumalanga Black Aces, kwabakho isiphithiphithi ngabadlali abahamba neqela nabo bangafunwayo. Lo nto yayibangelwa kukwenziwa indaba yakwamkhozi kwalo mba ngabaphathi beMpumalanga Black Aces bangaphambili.*⁶ (After the announcement about buying of Mpumalanga Black Aces there was chaos among players that were staying and those that were not wanted. This was caused by the fact that the former leaders of Mpumalanga Black Aces were secretive about the issue.)

There are also Zulu words like *isikhathi* (time) and *thola* (find/get) which are used by some speakers of isiXhosa as synonyms for the isiXhosa equivalents *ixesha* and *fumana*. For example, the announcers in uMhlobo weNene (the national radio station for isiXhosa) often humorously use word play with the similarity of the syllables in the English verb ‘tolerate’ with that of the codeswitching isiZulu phrase *thola later* (‘find later’) to create a fun catch phrase:

Either *uyayi-tolerate-a* or *uzoyithola later*.⁷
Either you tolerate it or you will find it later.

According to Pretorius and Bosch, “The process also inherently relies on similarities between the languages, and therefore the challenge is to model the dissimilarities accurately” (Pretorius and Bosch, 1999:99).

Setati (1998) believed that teachers who participated in her research used code-switching even though they knew that English was the official language for learning. Setati (1998:34) discovered that most teachers did not opt for mother-tongue learning because they associated language policies that stipulated the use of languages other than English with Bantu education and thus with inferior schooling. Their code-

⁶ <https://www.isolezwelesixhosa.co.za/ezemidlalo/ucomitis-ulithiye-igama-iqela-lakhe-5319825>

⁷ See <https://twitter.com/AmosMbalo> for an example of this phrase being used

switching was thus a conscious choice and not forced by immigration or language contact, but by educational and social imperatives. They saw English as a “gateway to better education” (Setati, 1998:34).

1.1.6 Bilingualism

The most obvious sociolinguistic factor favouring borrowing is widespread bilingualism. When Poplack (1993) talks about combining two languages this is mentioned: “juxtaposition of sentences or sentence fragments, each of which is internally consistent with the morphological and syntactic (and optionally, phonological) rules of the language of its provenance” (Poplack 1993:255).

According to Hapelsmath (2008) this is often called “intensity of contact” because the more people interact, the quicker or easier it is for them to borrow from each other’s language (Hapelsmath 2008:52). Apart from the grammar inherent in the adopting language, sociolinguistic, cultural, economic and educational factors may contribute to the way people use loanwords – these words are in fact indicative of different cultures and societies coming together and sharing their different world views and indeed lexicons. The fact that modern South Africans identify with a number of different cultures and identities is neatly captured by Deyi (2018:36) who argues that languages “are inclusive of our different cultures and identity”. Seema (2016) argues that even if we look at African names in the course of South African history, we will see the influence of colonial powers on our cultures “Basotho children were given new names such as Puxley, which signifies a Western identity, while their original identity was destroyed” (Seema, 2016:207). With specific reference to the culture of the Basotho Seema argues that the missionaries successfully “separated the Basotho from their culture” and, more importantly, particularly in terms of where we find ourselves linguistically, borrowing words and concepts from European languages, he points out the state of “limbo” that resulted – where people find themselves “between two worlds and belonging to neither” (Seema, 2016:207).

Could this “limbo” also refer to the state our languages are in? Where the lexicons of indigenous African languages (particularly as spoken in urban areas) are so invaded

by foreign words and concepts that they are becoming indeterminate as languages? Could it be argued that this convergence of languages is, in fact, a separation of a people from their culture? Or is bilingualism resulting in language convergence and dual identities? It has been pointed out that while historically language contact would have given rise primarily to phonetic and lexical change “today in the urban areas all linguistic levels show the effects of contact: phonology, morphology, syntax and discourse” (Slabbert and Finlayson, 2002:236). The fact that many South African children are becoming bilingual testifies to the fact that they will be identifying with diverse cultures and will become increasingly bilingual to reflect these identities in their speech patterns. To what extent this bilingualism also contains some kind of linguistic “limbo”ism, is a topic that would require more in-depth research.

1.1.7 Dynamic nature of language

Koopman, in his introduction to *Zulu Language Change* argues that people are not always aware of the fact that language is always subject to change:

Many people do not recognise the dynamic nature of language. They believe that the language that they were taught when they were young is the only “correct form” of the language, and they complain about the way their language today is being ‘mutilated’ by the younger people (Koopman, 2000:1).

With some speakers the phonology of loanwords is hardly altered (e.g. *iTV*, *idrink*), and remains the same as that of the source language, but there is generally still a morphological adaptation that allows the adopted word to suit the structure of the borrowing language (e.g. *igeri/igiye* for ‘gear’ and *ikhabhathi* for ‘cupboard’). Adopting a noun from another language is different from code switching which happens when a borrowed word is pronounced as it is in the source language, without any morphological or phonological adaptation to the borrowing language. An example of this is seen in Koopman when he discusses fashion and culture, where some nouns stay as they are, for instance, *i-sweatshirt*, and *i-tracksuit* (Koopman, 2000: 20) while others change their phonology to adapt to the phonology of the borrowing language, e.g. *ikhompyutha*.

1.1.8 Dynamic nature of language

Morphological assimilation

Generally, morphological assimilation, which is the way structural units are organized in word forms, with verbs, takes the final vowel 'a' to form the verbal stem. It (assimilation) has an effect of a sound on a borrowed noun that makes the noun to become similar to isiXhosa or even sound the same as isiXhosa. Compare, for example, the following sets of nouns and their corresponding verb forms: *idans* (dance) which, as a verb, becomes *danisa*; *ifowuni* (phone), which becomes *ukufowuna* (to phone). Interestingly for borrowed nouns morphological assimilation takes or uses all isiXhosa vowels (a,e,i,o,u). For example, 'paper' becomes *iphepha*; 'apple' becomes *iapile*; the Afrikaans word for 'mirror' *spieël* becomes *isipili*, while 'straat' (street) becomes *isitalato*, and 'half' becomes *ihafu* (see Oosthuysen: 2016; 32).

Phonetic assimilation

Phonetic assimilation is when a word from one language is taken with its spelling, pronunciation and meaning, and goes through adaptation to align with the phonetic rules of the borrowing language (see Vendelin and Peperkamp, 2004). As a result, the sound of the borrowed word can be substituted by the corresponding sound of the borrowing language. In some cases, the structure of the word that has been borrowed changes, and this is subject to the phonetic system of the borrowing language, and at times even the meaning of the borrowed word changes. It (phonetic assimilation) is the influence of a sound on a borrowed noun, that makes it possible for the two to become similar or the same. For example, if we borrow an English noun with /ʃ/ as in 'machine' (mə'ʃi:n), it will have to be changed in isiXhosa to /tsh/ as in *umatshini*. Other examples are: *udrayiva* (a driver), *iPalamente* (Parliament), *uMasipala* (Municipality). (Koopman 2000:15). O'Grady et al. make the point that:

When English borrowed the word *pterodactyl* from Greek, it reduced the onset cluster [pt], which is well-formed in Greek but not English. However, no such change was made in the word *helicopter* (also from Greek) since it already complied with the phonological pattern of English (O'Grady et al., 1996:511-512).

In *The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Vol. 3* there is a discussion of phonological adaptation in isiXhosa, with the example of the voiced palatal fricative being a new sound in isiXhosa, pronounced “zh as in *ithelevizhin*” (Pahl et al., 1989:xxxv). About this phoneme /zh/ Mtuze (1999:172) also added that, in terms of lexicography: “Most people are not aware of the phoneme, zh, for words like *ithelevizhini*” and Saul (2013) is in agreement with this statement because he argues that even after the 1969 revision of isiXhosa’s orthography to include new speech it was not possible to resolve all the issues: “Unfortunately this development was not successful, since it did not resolve all the challenges that isiXhosa orthography faced then and still today” (Saul 2013:28). The fact that most participants opted to use *iTV* instead of using the noun ‘*ithelevizhini*’ also shows how unpopular the full noun is to the speakers, just as saying ‘TV’ is more common amongst English speakers than ‘television’. Elaborating more on this Saul goes on to explain that:

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 (Saul 2013:158).

Another example of this kind of phonetic adaptation is the word *ibhantinti*, which is recognized as ‘*bandido*’ (a male robber) in Portuguese. In English *ibhantinti* is ‘bandit’ and in Afrikaans it is ‘*bandiet*’ (which refers to jail bird or inmate). With this noun (*ibhantinti*), something deeper happens. For instance, one can generate verbs, *ndakukubhantintela* which literally means ‘I will do something to you, that will get me arrested for you’, for instance, beating up someone and be willing to go to jail for that, or, *uyabhantinta*, which means the person is serving time in jail. *Ibhantinti* is also described as *umuntu obuya ejele, oboshiwe noma oseke waboshwa isikhathi eside invamisa owazi ukusuka nokuhlala ngejele*.⁸ This can be translated as ‘a person who comes from jail, or who had been imprisoned for some time, and knows a lot about jail’.

Calques

A calque is a word-for-word (or morpheme-for-morpheme) translation of some foreign words or expressions, or as Hapelmath (2009:39) describes it, a calque is a “complex

⁸ <https://zu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibhantinti>

lexical unit (either a single word or a fixed phrasal expression) that was created by an item-by-item translation of the (complex) source unit.” Some examples of calques in isiXhosa are *iphepha-ndaba* (newspaper – literally: paper-news), *isandisi-lizwi* (loud speaker – literally: sound-maker-voice) and *umgcini-xesha* (time-keeper – literally: keeper-time). The isiXhosa and isiZulu word *umatshingilane* is derived from the English phrase ‘march in line’ which is what supervisors on the mines used to call out to mine workers – “March in line!” *Umatshingilane* was thus used to translate ‘supervisor’ and is more of a metaphorical calque than a direct morpheme by morpheme translation of ‘supervisor’.

IsiXhosa calques are also used when trying not to use a borrowed word when “relexifying subject area textbooks” (Hunt, 2007:93) and this sometimes can create confusion as one expert noted about the calque word for ‘oxygen’ (*umongo-moya* – essence-air):

It’s confusing – we have a Xhosa word for oxygen but not for hydrogen. When you teach them in grades 2 and 3 they have to say *umongamoya*, but from grade 4 they have to say oxygen, and it becomes difficult to understand (Hunt, 2007: 93).

Sometimes semantic translation is preferred over word-for-word translation:

When using loan translations, either a literal (i.e. word-for-word) translation or semantic translation may be used. Semantic translation seems preferable since, unlike word-for-word translation, it does not lead to violation of the grammatical or syntactic structure of the target language. Loan translation may be used as an interface between the borrowing phase and the indigenisation phase (Madiba 2001:68).

It has also been argued that “a calque is a lexical borrowing that often has the guise of a superstrate word, but which has the structure and meaning of a substrate word for which it is a calque” (Alsagoff, 1998: 227).

Semantic loans/semantic change

Semantic borrowing or semantic change is when one borrows an existing unit from another language and the unit thereafter gets a new meaning in the borrowing language. It occurs when there are two relative languages which have common words with different meanings – for example, in English, the word ‘pioneer’ was taken from Middle French to mean ‘digger, foot soldier’ and then gained the meaning of ‘early

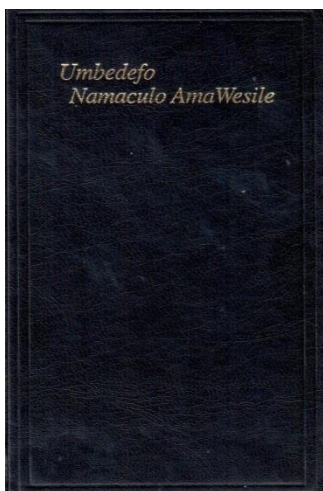
colonist, innovator' and this new meaning was then re-borrowed into French (Durkin, 2009: 212-215). Drame (2000:238) also describes semantic shift as when “(the meaning of the loan-word from English or Afrikaans changes in the process of integration into isiXhosa, sometimes considerably, resulting in false friends).” An example is the isiXhosa word *intaka* (bird) which in isiZulu means ‘finch’ and does not refer to all birds as does *inyoni* (Koopman, 2000:38). Also, in isiXhosa the same noun *intaka* can refer to fear that one is experiencing, for example, *lo mfo unentaka* (this guy is afraid). Another example, from my own experience, is the loanword *ipullover*, for which the English definition is “a piece of woollen clothing that covers the upper part of your body and your arms⁹” but for me, and many isiXhosa-speakers, refers to a sleeveless, or very short-sleeved jersey. There is also the isiXhosa verb *fola* (queue up / look for work) from the English ‘fall in line’ which now generally refers to conforming to others. Further investigation of the English phrase ‘fall in line’ (from which the isiXhosa verb *fola* is derived) reveals that it was used in army pay parades (Epstein 1968:327). These are all examples of semantic change that needs to be considered with all loanwords – when they enter the language their meanings might shift, and in fact, sometimes the semantic link “between the meaning of the source word and the adoptive is not so easy to see” (Koopman, 2000:39).

Integrating borrowed nouns

When one integrates a borrowed noun, the process depends largely on the medium in which the borrowed noun will appear. For instance, is it going to be written or is it just going to be used in a conversation? One also needs to check how often and frequently the borrowed word is currently used in the borrowing language, and also to see how long the noun lives in the language, because the longer it lives, the more the users will adopt it although it is natural for even borrowed words to suffer lexical attrition (Ehret, 2011: 95). For example, the isiXhosa word for ‘shop’ *ivenkile*, borrowed from the Afrikaans *winkel*, is now being used alongside the English borrowing, *ishop* in the lexicons of some speakers. *Ivenkile* still remains current in standard isiXhosa: a recent Google search revealed 4630 instances of *eshop* ‘at/to/from the shop’ but the

⁹ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/pullover>

standard form of *evenkileni* had double the occurrences (9340), indicating that the original borrowing is still preferred by most speakers. A borrowed word like *bhedesha* ‘pray’ taken from the Dutch word for ‘pray’ ‘*bidden*’ (see Koopman, 2000:50) however, is no longer used. *Bhedesha* has long since been replaced by the isiXhosa *thandaza* which is now used in almost all cases. Interestingly, although the noun *umthandazo* ‘prayer’ is also preferred, the noun *umbhedesho* (from the verb *bhedesha*) appears on the Methodist Hymnbook as *Umbhedesho namaculo aseWesile* ‘Prayer and songs of the Methodists’, a text which is still used by the Methodists and some other churches as part of their worship.



10

So *bhedesha* is not totally lost.¹¹ In the context of prayer, *bhedesha* or *umbhedesho* is used to mark a sense of deep worship which suggests that although borrowed words often refer to a straightforward object or activity, in certain other instances they can be elevated in the lexicon to refer to more spiritual, profound matters.

Perception of borrowed nouns amongst L1 and L2 speakers

For much of the time speakers are not aware that they are using words borrowed from another language and completely assimilate them into their lexicons. Dowling (2011) refers to the case of a Xhosa child asking a friend (in isiXhosa) what the Afrikaans word for *snaaks* ‘strange / funny’ was. The child had so completely accepted *snaaks* as an isiXhosa lexical item that she was not able to see it as originating in Afrikaans (Dowling 2011:363). Likewise, few English-speaking South Africans would question the etymology of *trek* (pull) which originates from Dutch but is now a totally accepted English word.

¹⁰ Image located at <https://christianbooks.co.za/shop/xhosa-methodist-hymn-book/>

¹¹ Incwadi yombedesho, kunye neminye imibedesho, namaculo : emiselwe i-bandla lama-wesile aseSouth Africa, Cape Town: Methodist Book Depot and Publishing House, 1926.

Speakers (unlike professional linguists) are not constantly interrogating the etymology of their lexicons because “language is perceived by the general public as just one aspect of the total social reality with which they are seeking to cope” (Madiba 2001:58). Part of this coping strategy lies in the versatility of speakers – their ability to expand their lexicons to incorporate new lifestyles, technologies and concepts and this results in some borrowed nouns being only partly assimilated. This partial assimilation into the L1 means the new words symbolize objects and notions peculiar to the language from which they were borrowed. For example, English speakers living in the Eastern Cape might not know any isiXhosa, or very little, but will use the word *makweta* to refer to Xhosa initiates (*abakhwetha*) as there is no culturally equivalent term in English. Also, while in the past birthdays were not celebrated by amaXhosa, *ibirthday* is now used by speakers of isiXhosa since it is now common practice to acknowledge and celebrate a person’s date of birth. The isiXhosa words *bhafa* ‘celebrate a birthday’ and *bhafisa* ‘wish someone a Happy Birthday’ are also traceable to the English lexical item ‘birthday’ (see Tshabe and Shoba, 2006:123).

Ndlovu, on talking about the Ndebele dictionary of musical terms, is of the view “that “the treatment of borrowed nouns presents challenges to users in deducing their word categories ...” (Ndlovu, 2009:91). Ndlovu discusses the pros and cons of entering borrowed words in dictionaries using the initial vowel (prefix). He is of the opinion that:

lemmatising using the initial vowel of the prefix enhances information retrieval strategies, being in line with user-perspective and -preference because it presents the noun in a way familiar and common to the user (Ndlovu, 2009:99).

Borrowed nouns can also be non-assimilated grammatically, for example, nouns borrowed from another language which retain their plural forms, like *iitships* in isiXhosa, taken from the plural ‘chips’ and never used in the singular in the isiXhosa. Koopman notes how the English word ‘monkey nut’ is translated into isiZulu as *inkinathi* because the ma- sound of **mon**key is assumed to be a Class 6 noun prefix and therefore a plural, *ama-nkinathi* (Koopman, 2000:45).

IsiXhosa is the second most widely spoken first-language in South Africa and apart from the fact that there are over 8 million first language speakers of the language¹² there are also 11 million L2 speakers¹³, those who have learnt to speak the language by either picking it up from other speakers or by learning it at school (unfortunately, there are no statistics yet for this group of speakers). It is popular for its clicks mainly dental *c*, post-alveolar *q*, and lateral *x* and besides these clicks, it also has bilabial implosives like *b* and *p*. IsiXhosa is also a tonal language where a tone can be high or low, for example, one can use a high tone and say '*abadlali*' referring to 'players', or one can use a low tone and say '*abadlali*' meaning 'they are not playing'. The language also possesses a variety of dialects such as Ngqika, Mpondo, Bhaca, Hlubi, Mpondomise, Xesibe, Cele and Ntlangwini (Nyamende: 1996). As stated by Nyamende, Theodorus van der Kemp, who was the first missionary to settle among the Xhosa, stayed with Ngqika and that is how the Ngqika dialect was 'learnt, written down and taught at school by all the missionaries who succeeded van der Kemp resulting in the Ngqika dialect becoming the standardized version (Nyamende, 1996:202). The standardization of the Ngqika dialect was not uncontroversial, "speakers of the other variants still regard Ngqika, Ndlambe and Thembu as dialects of the isiXhosa language which to them has the same status as their variants" (Nyamende, 1996:203). Nyamende goes further to say that because of these various dialects 'young school people often use their home variants playfully and in imitating certain members of the communities (Nyamende, 1996: 213). Therefore, because of the existence of so many dialects, children and even adults, who mix with other children at school or other adults at work, would use a borrowed noun, or even classify it, depending mostly on the dialect that the person speaks or his/her background, and will thus differ from one another. An example of a noun that is borrowed which is differently pronounced by different dialects is the isiXhosa word for 'salt'. For instance, if there is a work lunch function and one makes the request 'please pass me the salt', one can say *khawundigqithisele ityiwa* or *khawundigqithisele ityuwa* depending on whether one is Mpondo or Bhaca or Hlubi. Maseko argues that that speakers use

¹² See: http://www.statssa.gov.za/census/census_2011/census_products/Census_2011_Census_in_brief.pdf

different nouns depending on their backgrounds and notes that even when isiXhosa was initially codified there were different varieties, spoken by different groups:

The other aspect to note in the development of isiXhosa is that of the variety, which was selected for codification. The people known as amaXhosa, who speak isiXhosa, consist of various societies or tribal groups, who speak differing varieties of isiXhosa. The missionaries, who are the pioneers in the development of isiXhosa, when they first came to South Africa they were accommodated by, and settled among amaRharhabe (also known as amaNgqika)” (Maseko 2017:85).

If even within the unborrowed lexicon of isiXhosa there is variation, we can safely predict therefore that loanwords will also be pronounced differently by different groups, and indeed that even within the field of these non-native words, there will be morphological and even lexical variation. Thus, although most people use the word *itreyini* ‘train’ (clearly borrowed from the English word ‘train’) older speakers might still refer to *uloliwe* (from the English ‘railway’) – the latter word having undergone greater phonological assimilation than the former. Variation is also useful to speakers when they are speaking euphemistically (for example when using *isihlonipho sabafazi* – the Xhosa women’s language of respect – see Finlayson, 1982). It is interesting to also note that, young wives who use euphemism (*isihlonipho*), use neither *ityiwa* nor *ityuwa*, but refer to ‘salt’ as *imuncu*. Loanwords have also found their way into the *isihlonipho* vocabulary, with women using words like *umilisi* (from the Afrikaans ‘mielies’) to refer to ‘maize’ (the isiXhosa word being *umbona*), and *peya* (from the English ‘pay’) instead of the isiXhosa *hlawula* (see Finlayson, 2002:293).

When talking about euphemism, Deyi (2018) contends that it is an integral part of an African language speaker’s discourse:

An African language is not just a series of words but includes certain African nuances that emerge in the form of idioms, metaphors and euphemisms, as well as praises. Language is therefore tied intrinsically to a sense of belonging, which is in turn linked to society and its values.

The history of loanwords in isiXhosa cannot be studied without some reference to Khoisan languages. Branford and Claughton (2002:201) argue that:

Xhosa in its earliest form was without clicks. Most Khoe words contain clicks, and when Xhosa borrowed words from Khoe, it took over the clicks in them, thereby extending not only its vocabulary but its phonemic inventory too. We can thus assume that most words containing clicks have been borrowed from Khoe.

Branford and Claughton (2002:203) therefore argue that “when we turn to borrowings from Afrikaans and English we turn to a process that began in the eighteenth century and continues to the present day”. Earlier Herbert (1990:304) had argued that hlonipha “itself is the essential part of the explanation for click incorporation in Southern Bantu” since the Khoisan phonological inventory gave Nguni women a way of substituting consonants.

The dynamic nature of isiXhosa therefore can be traced far back in history, and its ability to grow and adapt is continuing apace:

Like all living languages Xhosa is not static but is constantly growing and changing. The second half of this century has witnessed the capitulation of what for more than a hundred years was regarded and preserved as literary or standard Xhosa, as exemplified by the writings of the Sogas, Mqhayi, Sinxo and others (Pahl, et al., 1989:xlii).

One of the biggest areas of growth and change has been in the lexicon, which is constantly expanding the isiXhosa-speaker’s repertoire:

A veritable explosion in vocabulary is now taking place ... Scientific, technological, administrative, etc, terms are needed immediately, and in general English terms are adopted and adapted with little change except to wrap them in Xhosa form with prefixes and Xhosa spelling, with or without suffixes (Pahl et al. 1989: xlii – xliii).

This “explosion of vocabulary” can be seen from two different media extracts, one from one of the earliest isiXhosa newspapers, *Imvo Zabantsundu* (the extract is from 22nd December 1892), the other from *Iincwadi eziya kuMhleli* (Letters to the Editor) of the isiXhosa version of *Isolezwe* (12-18 eyeKhala 2018:9). I have circled the loanwords.



(Translation: 1892 Cricket Season. Cricket bats with exceptional cane. The cricket bats that we have are double

cane. New gauntlets, new wicket gloves – new stumps-cricket balls double sewn and “gut sewn”- they come from outstanding producers.)

Asihoywanga kodwa siyavota!

MOLO mhleli weli phephandaba! Siyakhala singabahlali bakuMbozwana neelali ezingqongileyo, asihoywanga kodwa siyavota minyaka le.

Asinandlela, kunzima ukuba kungene iimoto ngakumbi itaxi ngenxa yongabikho kwendlela, izindonga, yagqityelwa ngoku yayisenziwa maybe +15 years ago.

Kodwa uceba ukhona, siyacela rhulumente ngenelela.

- Umhlali waseMankone

(Translation: We are neglected but we vote!

Hello editor of this newspaper! We, the residents of Mbozwana and the surrounding villages are complaining, we are neglected but we have been voting every year. We do not have roads, it is difficult for cars to enter, especially taxis because of the absence of roads, it (the road) is walls, it was last

touched maybe plus minus 15 years ago. But there is a counsellor, we ask the government to get involved.)

The loanwords in both newspaper extracts are noticeable, but the earlier extract clearly reveal that the text was penned by a copywriter inexperienced in isiXhosa. The advert was most probably conceived in English and was then translated with the help of an isiXhosa speaker, who would no doubt not have been a qualified translator. There is little attempt to use phonology of the isiXhosa language to render the loanwords more isiXhosa in their look and orthography. With the recent letter to the editor, however, apart from *iitaxi* and the phrase 'maybe +- 15 years ago' the loanwords have been incorporated phonetically into isiXhosa.

Finally, there might be a new kind of loanword lexicon that the youth, especially those active on social media, are playfully experimenting with: creating words like *zalwa day* for 'birthday' for example as can be seen on the following Facebook posts:

HAPPY ZALWA DAY CC, UBAWO AKUPHINDE AKUTHI JIZE NGEMINYE EMININZI.

(Translation: Happy birthday, cc, may Father [God] give you some more [years]).

Happy Zalwa day sis'Noxy many more to come.¹⁴

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/mhlobowenenefm/videos/1992949987424608/>

1.2 Research questions

Having given a background to the global phenomenon of loanwords in other languages, with a specific focus on Southern African Bantu languages and isiXhosa, I will now focus on the research questions of this thesis.

My primary research question is:

- How do contemporary speakers of isiXhosa assign new loanwords to specific noun classes?

My secondary research questions are:

- Are there any specific properties of the adopted noun (whether semantic, phonological or morphological) that will predispose a noun from a language other than isiXhosa, to being assigned the prefix of particular isiXhosa noun class?
- Do all speakers assign adopted nouns to the same noun classes or is there some degree of variation?
- Do speakers use loanwords differently depending on the context, for example, in their conversations, social media texts, different domains such as schools and shops, in magazines and learner textbooks, activity sheets, and government public information sheets and so on?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to establish whether there is any pattern in the way in which contemporary speakers of isiXhosa assign new loanwords to specific noun classes. A secondary objective is to ascertain whether there any specific properties of the adopted noun that predisposes it to being assigned to a particular noun class and whether speakers assign adopted nouns to noun classes in the same way, or whether there is some variation. Another objective of the study is to try to find out whether speakers use loanwords differently depending on the context or situations in which their conversations occur.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature on the Global phenomenon of Loanword adoption

The last decade has witnessed extensive research into loanwords as a global phenomenon (see Haspelmath & Tadmor, 2009; Haspelmath, 2009; Durkin, 2014; Paradis & LaCharité, 1997; Peperkamp & Dupoux, 2003) but more recently scholars have focussed on specific languages such as Kay's (1995) study of loanwords in Japanese, Moira's (1993) article on Cantonese loanwords and Cacoullos and Aaron's (2003) investigation into English-origin nouns in Spanish.

Discussing how Dutch loanwords were acquired, Van der Sijs (2009), indicates that Dutch is a west Germanic language that is related to English and that it originated after the Germanic migrations of the fifth century. Just like isiXhosa, Dutch is said to have a variety of dialects such as Holland, Zeeland, etc. Van der Sijs refers to the fact that there were also sociolinguistic differences and some dialects in the Netherlands were losing more ground because they were spoken by certain classes. "In Belgium and in the Southern Dutch regions ... dialects are stronger ...". Van der Sijs (2009:342). It happened that some citizens under the foreign domination of Spanish, Australian or French governments and this made it impossible for the people to develop their own language but instead developed a social pressure to use French and its culture. Van der Sijs mentions also that "In Belgium and in the Southern Dutch regions ... dialects are stronger ..." thus these (dialects) shaded off into each other gradually. Van der Sijs goes on to explain that because of post-war immigration "The varieties show some grammatical and lexical differences in which they deviate from standard Dutch." Young people with mixed backgrounds as a result used more of the "so called street language, ..." and mixed it with Dutch as its basis. In the process English loanwords were adopted and English replaced Dutch in some areas of language of communication (Van der Sijs 2009:343).

Van der Sijs (2009) groups loanwords into those that were borrowed in Germanic period and thus turned up in Dutch, and those that were borrowed after the breakup of the West Germanic unity. Germanic also borrowed a number of words from Celtic languages. When Germanic people became Christians and had some knowledge of

the Bible, this (knowledge) and that of some plants and animals was broadcast with Church Latin, and this also increased the borrowing of words.

Van der Sijs also indicates that the Dutch had contact with Portuguese and Spaniards who knew animals and plants and they took over the local names and that led to Dutch taking various Portuguese and Spanish terms into their language. When the Dutch colonists settled in Asia, while they were trading with Asians, it is said that they also took over some product names from the languages that were spoken in Asia. According to Van der Sijs, Dutch also borrowed international, political and cultural terms from Great Britain, it (Dutch) also gained more scientific terms from Latin which was then a written language and some words could not be understood by everyone and in such a case “literal translations into Dutch were made ...” (Van der Sijs, 2009:349).

More recent studies into loanwords argue that when people adopt new, Western lifestyles, the vocabulary of the L1 is likely to change (Saxena, 2014). Saxena’s study focussed on the indigenous languages of Brunei (a nation on the island of Borneo in Southeast Asia) and revealed language shift and attrition among the low status indigenous languages with the lexicon of English infiltrating even Malay (a higher status language than the indigenous languages). Saxena argues that this shift towards a lexicon with more English words is because:

the occupational shift from nature to commodity based activities, and the change of identity from rural to urban is creating the “lifestyle diglossia”. In the Bruneian context, modern ways of living are perceived as more prestigious than the traditional ones and the younger generations are leading the change (Saxena, 2014:110-111).

Hultgen (2013) investigates the loss of vocabulary in certain domains in Denmark, with specific focus on the sciences, particularly the domain of computer science. She concludes that although it is an indisputable fact that Danish has more loanwords of English origin than it did ten years ago, it is probably not wise to call it vocabulary “loss” if the words or concepts did not exist in Danish in the first place. She argues that instead of “loss” one can talk of “additions” since the new words “denote new concepts that have not previously existed, and which have come about because of the significant advances in computer technology over the past decades” (Hultgren, 2013:176).

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that linguists are even starting to explore the existence of loanwords in social media and Twitter specifically (Dashti and Dashti, 2017). Researchers discovered that young people in Kuwait preferred to use loanwords in Whatsapp and Twitter rather than Arabized social media language since “Arabization does not appeal to them as young people” (Dashti and Dashti, 2017:237). The same research revealed that young people felt that English words allowed them to talk about feelings or describe situations which might be difficult to express in Arabic (Dashti and Dashti, 2017:237). Interestingly, some interviewees in the same study said that the way they wrote in Twitter had a detrimental effect on their Arabic, leading them to become less aware of the errors they were making (Dashti and Dashti, 2017:238). These tensions between the necessity to incorporate loanwords and the concomitant possible loss of the standard language, are important issues to consider for scholars of contemporary Bantu languages.

2.2 Literature on Loanword adoption in Bantu languages

After studying loanwords closely, Knappert (1970), as echoed later by Aitchison (2004) could not help but describe how unsatisfactory the terms ‘loanword’ and ‘borrowed word’ are, in the sense that, according to him, “a word that people have ‘borrowed’ cannot be returned after use”, and in fact, the way in which it is incorporated into the borrowing language often obscures its language of origin. Understanding Bantu noun prefixes allows linguists to uncover the adaptation process. For example, Knappert explains how he found the word *mushete* which means ‘a box’ in Luba but once he found the same word in Kimbundu he was certain that it must be a loanword with Portuguese origin because the Portuguese word for ‘a box’ is *caixete*, and this (*caixete*) would thus become *kashete* in a Bantu language. Knappert reasons that “... the Bantu speakers seem to have rejected this form of the word since the first syllable *ka-* has the shape of the prefix in class 12, which denotes only small things, for big things and for things made of wood, the *mu-* prefix is used and has therefore been substituted” (Knappert 1970:79). Knappert goes on to say that in order for one to know the loanwords, one has to know the way these are formed phonetically, then it will be easy to “determine the direction of loaning”. He further mentioned that ‘sometimes it is obvious that a borrowed word is from European languages, “most frequently

borrowed word is from English, French, Portuguese or Dutch (in order of frequency), but it is not always clear from which language” (Knappert 1970:84). This doubtfulness is explained in my research where it is mentioned that a number of words that we get from English or Afrikaans are sometimes borrowed by these languages from other languages like French, German and even Japanese.

Schadeberg (2009:87) in his extensive discussion on loanwords in Swahili notes that English influence is “concentrated on the semantic field Modern World including (modern) clothing and the (modern) legal system”.

2.3 Bantu Noun Class Classification and the Adoption of Foreign nouns into Bantu languages

Katamba (in Nurse and Philippson, 2006:116) notes that Class 9/10 contains loanwords referring to non-humans while Demuth (2000:279) points out that in Sesotho, English loanwords are classified “on the basis of either phonology or semantics (e.g. humans – classes 1 /2 or 1a/2a). When neither is applicable, nouns are assigned to the ‘default’ class: in Sesotho this is class 9/10, whereas in languages like Zulu this is class 5/6.” Swahili loanword nouns are also invariably placed in Class 9/10 since there is no change required of the loanword in this class which has no segmentable nominal prefix (Schadeberg, 2009:90) although Class 5/6 is also popular for adoptives since Class 5 generally has a zero prefix in Swahili (Schadeberg, 2009:90).

When talking about the treatment of borrowed nouns in a music dictionary, Ndlovu (2009), explains that, any dealing with borrowed nouns should be in an acceptable way to the speakers who borrowed them. If the borrowed noun commences with a vowel, for instance, it should be able to be mutual among other nouns that are used in the language and be operational to the users both when conversing and writing. Ndlovu used as an example words like ‘iron’ where he says sometimes a hyphen is used in order to break the vowel sequencing, as a result it (iron) becomes *i-ayini*, or *i-oats*, as some of the participants in my research responded for ‘oats’. He also mentioned that there are cases where this was not the case as in *iyunivesiti* from ‘university’. Ndlovu goes on to state that Classes 5 and 9 were most popular for using

borrowed nouns in isiNdebele. He also mentioned that most of class 9 plural are found in class 10 and class 6. Ndlovu also states that: “Lemmatising noun headwords using the initial vowel of the prefix is more user-friendly, making the information in the dictionary more accessible to users. It provides a mode of access that is convenient for and common to them. Consulting a dictionary does not require any prior linguistic knowledge and training for users, therefore making it easy and quick to access the information in the dictionary. ...” Ndlovu (2009:97). This will prove to be difficult in finding borrowed nouns like ‘poloneck’ in isiXhosa, where participants in my research used prefixes i- (*ipolo*) and prefix u- (*upolo*), for the same noun. Ndlovu goes on to say that:

Use of the initial vowel of the prefix in lemmatising noun headwords represents the noun in its original form in the language and in the way in which users utter and write the Ndebele noun. It leads to an unambiguous retrieval of information presented in both the macro- and microstructure of the dictionary. The approach is in line with the morphological structure of the Ndebele noun. Above all, it reflects the semantic value of the initial vowel, indicating that it is not merely a syntactic feature” (Ndlovu, 2009:98).

Again in the case of a class noun allocation of a borrowed noun *ibhanti* (belt), this will prove to be difficult to allocate a noun class for, in the sense that, until one uses the noun in a sentence can one be able to allocate it to either Class 5 or Class 9 as shown by the way participants translated the sentence (page 60 below) with this noun.

As has already been discussed, Bantu languages are grouped according to their noun prefixes, which some scholars refer to as their genders (see Katamba 2006). Katamba discusses how these noun prefixes / genders arose historically, what their purpose was and muses that “gender marking on nouns might have arisen from nouns whose original function was to render an abstract idea more concrete” (Katamba, 2006:106). Katamba also refers to Mufwene’s earlier (1980) claim that noun prefixes were derivational in function and argues that “When a prefix is combined with a root, the outcome may be a new lexical item with an unpredictable meaning” (Katamba, 2006:106). This observation is very important for my study which hopes to interrogate the reason behind the assignation of a particular prefix with an adopted root. Whatever the history of Bantu Noun Prefixes, it is important to examine them in contemporary spoken and written forms to see whether their form and function is further evolving.

On elaborating more on using prefixes, Ndlovu (2009:99) states:

The fact that the noun class prefix and the noun stem are bound morphemes means they cannot stand separately as entries because in this form they do not constitute words. It is therefore linguistically proper to lemmatise using the initial vowel of the prefix for the entries to be called words and more precisely Ndebele noun.

Researchers and scholars have discussed the fact that many of the nouns used in Bantu languages are borrowed or adopted from English or Afrikaans or other languages. For example, in her paper entitled *'Stressed and sexy': lexical borrowing in Cape Town Xhosa*, Dowling (2011), interviewed community members who were isiXhosa speakers, and who had migrated from the Eastern Cape province, where isiXhosa is mainly spoken, to the Western cape, where English is generally the language of communication at work. Dowling's participants used several English words which they did not regard as borrowed but rather considered to be isiXhosa vocabulary items. Dowling notes that many participants interviewed, "seemed to know that there was a Xhosa word for 'weather' but could not remember it ..." (Dowling, 2011:350). A similar phenomenon of extensive lexical borrowing has been noted by Mahlangu (2014) who observes that even creative authors, writing in the medium of isiNdebele, often discard indigenous Ndebele words (2014:188). Mahlangu notes that "most common loanwords in isiNdebele are channelled to the Class 9 nasal class which is a singular class of Class 10" (Mahlangu, 2014:190).

Mahlangu (2014:191) provides the following examples of Singular / Plural pairing of loanwords in isiNdebele.

Class 9	Class 10
iBhayibheli 'Bible'	iimBhayibheli/amaBhayibheli 'Bibles'
ibhigiri 'mug'	limbhigiri/amabhigiri 'mugs'
ikopi 'cup'	linkopi/amakopi 'cups'
itanka 'tank'	lintanka/amatanka 'tanks'
iraba 'rubber'	linraba/amaraba 'rubbers'
itende 'tent'	lintende/amatende 'tents'

Mahlangu argues that isiNdebele speakers' prolific borrowing is affected by the close proximity of Setswana, Sepedi, Sesotho sa Leboa, Afrikaans and English which are the languages in the surrounding regions (Mahlangu 2014: 188). She also argues that

while most languages tend to largely adopt nouns and verbs, isiNdebele has also adopted adjectives from other languages like Afrikaans (Mahlangu: 2014). This phenomenon is not exclusive to isiNdebele however, since research as shown that even a language like isiXhosa has adopted many contemporary adjectives such as 'stressed' and 'sexy' from English (Dowling, 2011). As O'Grady et al. (1996:317) observe "although borrowing can affect all components of the grammar, the lexicon is typically the most affected".

In his MA thesis on Kikamba nativized loanwords, Mutua (2013) investigates how the phonology of Kikamba (a Bantu language spoken in the Eastern Province of Kenya) has been affected by the integration of borrowed words into the lexicon of the language. Mutua, acknowledging Whiteley's pioneering work on the topic (Whiteley, 1963), examines the phonological adjustment that words borrowed from English, Kiswahili and Gikuyu have on Kikamba.

Mutua observes that English /p/, /b/, /f/, and /v/ are all realized as /v/ in Kikamba and gives the following examples "fees /fi:z/ → viisi /vi:si/, book /buk/ → ãvuku /evuku" (Mutua, 2013:18). He also gives the example *ivokisi* for 'box' (Mutua, 2013:78).

His research also shows that the languages that Kikamba borrows from, like Kiswahili, also borrow from the Arabic language and discusses the fact certain disallowed consonant clusters are permitted when borrowed from English. For example, "a sequence of [skw] is disallowed in Kiswahili but it occurs in 'skwea' adapted from the English word 'square'" (Mutua (2013:15). Whiteley (1965:68) notes that although some loanwords that start with the 's' sound are incorporated into Kikamba via 'z' as in 'cinema' becoming *zinema* others, such as 'poem', from English 'stanza' retain the 's' because of the consonant cluster 'st' and thus 'stanza' becomes *stenzi*.

In his research into Sukuma, a language of Tanzania, Luhende (2018) analyses loanword integration based on various lexical-semantic and morpho-syntactic characteristics of English loanwords. He notes that the phonological and morphological accommodation of loanwords occurs through:

vowel insertion, consonant insertion, suffixation and prefixation, derivation, gender and number assignment, assignment of various borrowed nouns into noun classes system of the recipient language (Luhende, 2018:116).

Additionally, Luhende explains that:

The loanwords borrowed from one language, i.e. the donor language, into another language, i.e. the recipient language, via an intermediary language often do not have the former's linguistic characteristics for the reason that they might have undergone some phonological and morphological changes when borrowed initially from the 'first' donor language. Loanwords of this kind may have more of the intermediary donor language features when they are adapted in the 'last' recipient language. Therefore, the 'last' recipient language actually modifies the morpho-syntactic and lexical-semantic features of the intermediary language (Luhende, 2018:119).

Luhende's research also looks at giving explanations at the similarities and differences of how loanwords borrowed in English by Sukuma are structured and focusses on those domains which have seen the most loanwords, such as transport and professions generating words like *ibaasi* 'bus' and *insipekita* 'inspector' (Luhende, 2018:129-130). It appears that in Sukuma, English "loan nouns with the syllable structural properties not permissible in Sukuma are adapted through the insertion of an epenthetic vowel to interrupt the sequence of consonants" (Luhende, 2018:251) and earlier in his thesis gives examples of such epenthetic vowels in *laputopu* and *kaputeni* (Luhende, 2018:141). What is of interest to this study is Luhende's claim that loanwords are not assigned randomly to Sukuma's noun class system but rather that when they are borrowed they conform to "the nominal morphology of Sukuma" (Luhende, 2018:154).

Sebonde (2014:71) in his analysis of loanwords in Chasu, a language of rural Tanzania, notes that his data revealed that words from "Swahili noun classes 1/2, 5/6, and especially 9/10 are prone to borrowings compared to other noun classes". Sebonde (2014:75) also notes that all numeral forms from English in Chasu occurred in the domain of education. This study of loanwords in Chasu concludes with the observation that "core borrowed words which are allocated in noun class 9/10 have a zero allomorph for the prefix" (Sebonde, 2014:75).

Closer to home, Rassman (1977), discussing loanwords in Sesotho, notes that adoptive words must be "accommodated" by one of the noun classes in the language and that this accommodation is determined by:

- (a) The phonological shape of the original word, particularly the vowels and consonants in word-initial position;
- (b) The position of stress in the original word;
- (c) The significance of the word: adoptives tend to be included in the noun classes in which they fit most appropriately according to meaning (Rassman, 1977:242).

Research into isiZulu adoptives also concentrates on “the phonological shape” of the loanword, “the first major alteration to words adopted into Zulu seems to be that of adjusting their syllable structure to fit in with that of Zulu” (Khumalo, 1984:205).

In this thesis I hope to test Rassman’s and Khumalo’s hypotheses and observations, and to discuss which of the points she makes is the most significant for a discussion on the noun classes of contemporary borrowed nouns in isiXhosa. I also hope to discover other, possibly new, motivations, for assigning certain borrowed words to specific noun classes.

Demuth (2000:282) argues that “there does seem to be some (human) semantics at work in assigning at least some loanwords to particular noun classes.” I therefore believe that for this literature review I need first to consider works which have dealt generally with the classification of Bantu nouns (Dingemane, 2006), loanword classification (Ngcobo, 2013) as well as those that deal with the acquisition of noun classes (Zawada and Ngcobo, 2008).

Zawada and Ngcobo (2008) discuss the Bantu noun class system from a theoretical cognitive view. They look at how the isiZulu noun class system is acquired by children and also analyse a corpus of spoken adult isiZulu, their main hypothesis being that noun class system is not a “morphologically arbitrary system without any conceptual or semantic underpinning or purpose” (Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008:316). Zawada and Ngcobo (2008) argue that the isiZulu noun class system consists of 16 of the 23 Bantu classes of which, like isiXhosa, Noun Classes 12 and 13 are not represented. The authors refer to the issue of semantic heterogeneity of certain classes, where the semantics could be differently interpreted, but also argue that “there are classes that appear to have a common underlying denominator, which results from the semantic details of each class” (Poulos, 2001 in Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008: 319).

When it comes to acquiring the language, Zawada and Ngcobo quote Suzman (1991) who is of the view that, children normally first acquire Classes 1a, 5 and 9, and also acquire singular classes before they do plural ones. According to Suzman, by the time children reach three years of age, they will acquire knowledge of isiZulu Noun Classes 1,2, 5, 6,7, 8,9 and 10 but they have difficulty with Noun Classes 3, 4, 11, 14 and 15 (see Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008:321).

Speakers use borrowed nouns when they are bilingual and very familiar with the other language and have contact with its culture. When stating reasons why children are selective in learning certain morphemes Suzman (1991, 30 in Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008:323) argues that this may be the result of 'innate or environmental factors' interfering with the children learning the language, and by 'environmental factors' she is not referring to actual objects children encounter, nor their size, shape or colour. To her, environmental factors include morphological features of the isiZulu noun class system which are the way children see or hear words (Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008:323). Zawada and Ngcobo criticize Suzman for ignoring 'the visual and tactile senses of the child ... and the animate and inanimate objects in the child's environment' (2008:323). They argue that:

It is a feature of all the studies to date on the acquisition of the Bantu languages, that the noun class system and related concordial agreement system are reported on without any discussion as to the nature of the actual nouns that the children acquire (Zawada & Ngcobo, 2008:324).

In his (2013) article on *Loanwords classification in isiZulu: The need for a sociolinguistic approach* Ngcobo argues that isiZulu speakers classify most new words in Class 9 with loanwords referring to people acquiring the Class 1a prefix (Ngcobo, 2013:33). He is also of the view that loanwords come mostly from English and Afrikaans and that these words are borrowed and are later institutionalised via ordinary conversations in a classificatory manner. The words are then categorised into various groups and, after going phonological assimilation, are adapted into isiZulu (Ngcobo, 2013:22). Ngcobo also argues that people classify isiZulu loanwords differently in accordance with their sociolinguistic background (Ngcobo, 2013:22). He is of the view that the noun *iselulafoni* (cellphone) can be classified in Class 7a or in Class 9a respectively, depending on the speaker (Ngcobo, 2013:30). Ngcobo claims that:

Although the *-s-* of *iselulafoni* is part of the stem in the lending language (English), it is perceived as a prefix when it is adapted into isiZulu. It is important again to note that the people who classify this word in class **7a** would be those who are considered as less educated (Ngcobo, 2013:33-34).

I intend verifying or contesting Ngcobo's claim as to the 'educatedness' of certain prefixes in my own research in this thesis.

Ngcobo also shows that, similarly to isiXhosa, Class 1a refers to human beings or personal nouns (Ngcobo, 2013:33). My own research, however, has shown that Class 1a can also refer to companies (cf. reference to *uMercedes Benz* on page 67 below) and other miscellaneous nouns. Ngcobo goes on to refer to the work of Schnoebelen who is “also aware that there are some borrowed nouns that are classified in class 7 such as ‘*isitezi*’ (stairs)”, and asserts that this is due to “phonology and misanalysis” (Ngcobo, 2013:27). Ngcobo also refers to Schnoebelen’s observation that some borrowed nouns are classifiable in Class 5 and Class 9 and he notes that “Canonical wants to place these nouns in a new sub-class, called 9a...” (Schnoebelen in Ngcobo, 2013:27), which could explain why Ngcobo himself refers to subcategories of Classes 7 and 9 as Class 7a and Class 9a (Ngcobo, 2013:27).

Although Ngcobo asserts that most loanwords referring to humans would be given the Class 1a prefix (Ngcobo, 2013:33) I must argue that it does not hold true all the time since the prefix of Class 9 is also frequently used, for example ‘*IPresident yaseSouth Africa ithe kwintetho yayo ...*’ (The South African President said in his speech), which is as acceptable as ‘*UPresident waseSouth Africa uthethe kwintetho yakhe ...*’.¹⁵ in this way using isiXhosa translation of the noun ‘president’.

After studying loanwords acquisition and how productive these were Demuth (2000) concluded that noun classes cannot be independent lexical items but grammatical morphemes, and that they function as part of “larger ‘concordial’ agreement systems, with the same noun class (gender) feature.” (Demuth 2000:270). Like Ndlovu, Zawada and other scholars, Demuth points out that in most Bantu languages noun class systems are grammatically and semantically productive, and that they take part in a concordial agreement system where pronouns, verbs etc. agree with the subject. I want to disagree when it comes to Demuth’s statement that “... classes 1 and 2 typically include humans and other animates, and that classes 9/10 typically include inanimate objects”, especially when taking into account *iprezidenti* (president) example above and that of and *ilecturer* (lecturer) (from the loanwords list under ‘education’ section), and both nouns fall in class 9 but are both referring to a human.

A sample of 200 nouns from a dictionary of Sesotho was randomly selected by Demuth to classify loanwords in Sesotho and of these, 26 were from either English or Afrikaans

¹⁵ <https://xh.oxforddictionaries.com/gugulela/isingesi-isixhosa/president>

and these were also phonologically, and semantically classified “(e.g. humans – classes 1/2 or 1a/2a). On loanwords that were classified phonologically, Demuth notes that non-human loanwords that begin with /m/ are assigned to class 3 or 4 but not to class. In her other paper on how children acquire noun agreement Demuth (1998), observed that when children are young, they acquire or aware of phonological properties of grammar but only become aware of the semantics at a later stage, around the age of 4 or 5. Demuth (2000) goes on to mention that one can observe how children learn Bantu noun class systems, and discover whether “their errors exhibit evidence of semantic overgeneralisation” which is the process of extending the application of a rule to items that are excluded from it in the language norm, as when a child uses irregular past tense verb, for example, “I finded my socks”. I agree with this explanation because another example of overgeneralisation is that of one participant in this research study, a teenager who goes to an English high school, responded ‘*amashiya aba-fake*’ for ‘fake eyelashes’ (I have included the noun phrase *amashiya aba-fake* as a loanword in the ‘lifestyle’ list). This young speaker has overgeneralized the fact that Class 2 is a plural class, so she uses a Class 2 relative concord (*aba-*) to qualify a plural noun which is nevertheless in Class 6 and which should take the relative concord ‘*a-*’ as in *amashiya amnandi* ‘nice eyelashes’, therefore *amashiya a-fake* would be grammatically correct. This would suggest that even when a particular noun like ‘eyelashes’ is not borrowed, when combined with a lifestyle concept like ‘fake’ the young speaker is sometimes unable to assign the correct qualificative concord.

Dingemanse (2006) compares three studies that discussed Bantu noun classifications and attempts in his review to find out their central arguments. The first study was conducted by Richardson (Richardson, 1967 in Dingemanse, 2006) on *Linguistic evolution and Bantu noun class systems* and looks at other language structures that are relevant to noun classification. The second one was conducted by Palmer and Woodman (Palmer and Woodman 2000 in Dingemanse, 2006) on *Ontological Classifiers as Polycentric Categories, as Seen in Shona Class 3 Nouns*, and pays particular attention to Shona Noun Class 3. The third study, conducted by Selvik (Selvik 2001 in Dingemanse, 2006) is entitled: *When a dance resembles a tree: a polysemy analysis of three Setswana noun classes*, analyses three Setswana noun classes. After reviewing all three papers, Dingemanse concludes that “even an

arbitrary system of noun classification is useful in communication because, as Contini-Morava (1996:268) notes, it helps narrow the range of possible referents during communication” (Dingemanse, 2006:16). He further argues that:

Whatever the specifics, it is difficult to see how any system of noun classification could start out as fully or even largely arbitrary: after all, there has to be some criterion according to which the nouns are classified. Much simplified, what it boils down to is the question ‘how do I classify this noun?’ (Dingemanse, 2006:17).

Dingemanse (2006:17) goes on to argue that people would have been motivated to make a choice, and this motivation would have been based on factors relevant to the culture and the language. He concludes that the choice as to which noun class to assign a new noun would:

in all likelihood utilize routine strategies like metaphor and metonymy (for example, again much simplified, ‘this new type of bow is much like a wooden stick’ (making it a good candidate for class 3, where other wooden sticks are found) or ‘this new type of bow is an instrument used for hunting’ — i.e. it would go well with the other instrumental artefacts in class 7) (Dingemanse, 2006:17).

As can be seen from this literature review, while much has been written on loanwords in Bantu, most of the research has concentrated on phonological and morphological adaptation. As speakers become more bilingual, new research is needed to understand motivations outside of these areas that could provide additional insights into how newly adopted isiXhosa nouns specifically are assigned to the language’s noun class system. For this reason, in this study I will focus on the question of how new loanwords are incorporated into the noun class system of isiXhosa.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Methodology

In this thesis I use a qualitative data collection methodology. This is because I did not have access to large population samples but rather had to rely on smaller focus groups, individual interviews and my own observations. As little is known about how loanwords are incorporated into the lexicons of modern L1 speakers of isiXhosa I felt that this qualitative method would help me generate hypotheses which could later be tested by quantitative methods (Patton, 2014). I also believe, that as an L1 speaker of isiXhosa myself, the qualitative method allowed me to bring something unique to the enquiry, an observation supported by Patton (2014) in his book *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. The fact that I speak isiXhosa with older people born in rural Eastern Cape but also converse with young speakers who call Cape Town home, the fact that I have training both in Linguistics and in African Languages (my Honours dissertation was on Intergenerational Language Attrition) and the fact that I find myself in many contexts in which isiXhosa is spoken freely and without self-consciousness – all these factors contribute to rich and meaningful qualitative research. In all instances that required participants to do a task for me (e.g. translating) I explained the research background and my own position as a researcher and the ethics involved and reassured them of their anonymity and impressed upon them that at any time they could withdraw from the research activity.

3.2 Methodological tools

To be meaningful, qualitative research must consider “all relevant and theoretically salient micro and macro contextual influences that stand in a systematic relationship to the behaviour or events one is attempting to explain” (Watson-Gegeo, 1992:54). Therefore, to gather sufficient data to analyse the productivity of particular noun classes of isiXhosa for loanwords, and to ensure that I harvested my data from a wide range of contexts, I employed the following methodological tools:

- i) A week-long data capture of all isiXhosa loanwords I encountered in my daily conversations with friends, colleagues in the African Languages Section of the School of Languages and Literatures, at home with family, in shops and conducting official private and public business. This data was compiled as a pilot list to test with speakers;
- ii) A translation exercise with isiXhosa-speakers;
- iii) Transcribed interviews with 5 random isiXhosa speaking shoppers at a shopping mall on the topic of what they were about to buy;
- iv) A further capture of naturally occurring loanwords (which were used to populate Noun Class charts of Classes 1a, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 14) over a two-week period;
- v) An analysis of the loanword nouns occurring on a Facebook page
- vi) A geosemiotic survey of loanword nouns in five isiXhosa signs – three formal and two informal;

Following the administration of six data capturing tools allowed me to gather sufficient information to investigate and theorize about how contemporary isiXhosa L1 speakers integrate nouns that are borrowed from other languages into their isiXhosa conversations and narratives, both written and textual. The study will examine properties of the loanword nouns to ascertain which semantic, phonological and morphological elements predispose them to being assigned to particular noun classes.

Before I present the data, I discuss ethical considerations and follow this with a brief background to noun classes in isiXhosa including a discussion of which loanwords are generally assigned to each noun class in isiXhosa. I follow this with a further analysis of the new data collected with specific reference to how new nouns are incorporated into the isiXhosa noun class system.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Cohen et al. (2004) note that in research the rights of participants and respondents as human beings should be respected at all times. In my study, I informed all respondents and participants about the nature of the study and my and their role in it. Participants were not forced or coerced to answer any questions, were informed of the ethics of the study and were free to withdraw at any time. I also stressed to all

participants their anonymity at all times. Apart from the ages of participants, no personal data was recorded, neither were any photographs or videos taken. In the case of recorded data, I noted that it would only be used for the purposes of the study and would not be used for any other purposes. Participants were also given a consent letter in both English and isiXhosa which they signed after having agreed to its terms. The ethics of this MA was also passed by the Ethics Committee of the School of Languages and Literatures at the University of Cape Town.

3.4 Background to data analysis: Noun Classes of isiXhosa

In order to provide a detailed analysis of the data, it is important to consider the Noun Class system of isiXhosa. It consists of 15 Noun Classes 1, 2, 1a, 2a, 3-11 (there is no class 12 or 13), 14 and 15 as show by the table below:

Table 1: Noun Classes of isiXhosa

Class	Prefix	Description	Example
1	Um	Personal nouns	Umntu (person)
2	Aba	Plural of Class 1	Abantu (persons)
1a	U	Personal proper nouns; Kinship terms, and Miscellaneous	UMandela (Mandela), UMasipala (Municipality)
2a	Oo	Plural of 1a	OoMasipala (municipalities)
3	Um	Non-personal	Umthi (tree)
4	Imi	Plural of 3	Imithi (trees)
5	Ili ¹⁶	Singular for nationality, type of work, some borrowed nouns, some paired body parts	I(li)China (China man), i(li)polisa (policeman) i(li)phepha (paper) i(li)bele (breast)
6	Ama	Plural of 5	AmaChina , amapolisa , amaphepha , amabele
7	Isi	Singular for culture, language, borrowed nouns starting with 's'	IsiXhosa (Xhosa culture), IsiNgesi (English), Xhosa = Xhosa language, isitayile (style)
8	Izi	Plural of 7	Izizwe (nations), izipili (mirrors)
9	I, In, Im ¹⁷	Singular for animal names, words derived from verbs etc.	Ingwe (leopard) intetho (speech – derived from verb 'talk' thetha), impuku (mouse)
10	Ii, Iin, Izin, Iim ¹⁸	Plural of 9	Iintombi (girls); Izingwe (leopards)
11	Ulu, ul, ulw, u ¹⁹	Singular whose plural can sometimes be found in class 8	Uluthi (stick), with a plural izinti (sticks)
14	Ubu, ub, u ²⁰	Singular whose plural can sometimes be found in class 10	Ubuhlanti (kraal) – iintlanti (kraals) Ubutywala (beer) – iindywala (this (one depending on the dialect))
15	Uku, ukw ²¹	Can represent a noun or infinitive or gerundive	Ukutywa (food), ukutya (to eat / eating)

As isiXhosa “has lost the regular use of the nouns of the locative classes 16,17 and 18 (*pha-*, *ku-* and *mu-*)” (Oosthuysen, 2016:43) I will not discuss them in detail here. Suffice to say words like *phambili* ‘in front’ and *phandle* ‘outside’ represent Class 16, while *ukunene* ‘the right-hand side’ usually found in its locative form *ekunene* and

¹⁶ The i- only prefix in Class 5 is used with polysyllabic noun stems

¹⁷ In Class 9 the prefix i- is used with all borrowed words and noun stems that start with a nasal, the noun prefix in- is used with monosyllabic noun stems and im- is used with noun stems that start with a labial

¹⁸ In Class 10 the prefix ii- is used with all loanwords and all polysyllabic stems that start with a nasal, iin- occurs with all polysyllabic stems, and izin- occurs with monosyllabic isiXhosa noun stems

¹⁹ In Class 11 ulu- is only used with monosyllabic noun stems

²⁰ In Class 14 ubu- is only used with monosyllabic noun stems, ub- is used with vowel commencing noun stems (e.g. ubomi – life) and u- is used with noun stems starting ty- (e.g. u(bu)tywala – alcohol).

²¹ In Class 15 ukw- is used with vowel commencing stems, e.g. ukwenza (to do/doing)

ukwindla 'autumn' are surviving nouns of Class 17 (Oosthuysen, 2016:44). As Oosthuysen (2016:44) observes "the locative prefix *ku-*, used regularly with pronouns and nouns of class 1a/2a and optionally with other nouns, is presumably a relic of the prefix of class 17".

Drame (2000:232) observes that when using borrowed nouns, isiXhosa speakers look at reasonable prefixes, that they can use together with the borrowed noun, as a root, and thus the noun can belong to a certain noun class that would suit its description. 'Reasonable prefixes' in the case of borrowed nouns could be determined after considering the adopted noun's morphological, phonological and syntactical systems. When a noun is borrowed from another language, its prefix is usually assigned to its (the noun's) consonant – thus the English word 'style' is assigned to Class 7 when borrowed in isiXhosa as it contains the consonant of that noun class -s- .

Demuth (2000:272) explains that "Many Bantu languages today have lost some of the nominal class distinctions thought to have existed in the Proto-Bantu system. However, some classes seem to be more resistant to change than others, being maintained to some degree...", and this is true of the classes 12 and 13 which do not appear for all the languages on the list above.

3.4.1 Stability, flux and anomalies in the isiXhosa Noun Classes

The stability of the isiXhosa noun classes (and that of all other African languages) and, its concordial agreement system is exceptional although recent research has shown that there is some flux with the use of Noun Classes 11 and 3 (see Gowlett and Dowling, 2015; Dowling, Deyi and Whitelaw, 2017). There are, in fact, a number of isiXhosa dialects, such as isiMfengu, in which the merger of Class 11 nouns into Class 5 nouns has already progressed substantially (see Gowlett & Dowling, 2015:69).

Looking at the Table 1 above, after noting that class 2 is the plural of class 1, one would be of the impression that all nouns that belong to odd numbers (1,3,5,7,9), would automatically have a plural belonging to their subsequent even numbers (2,4,6, 8 10), but this is not the case when we look at Class 11, (prefix **ulu-**), where **uluthi** (stick) is a singular of which the plural can be found in Class 10, (prefix **izin-**), **izinti** (sticks). In the isiMpondomise dialect, however, most nouns of Class 11 take their plurals in Class 6 (see Mbadi, 1956:29). Also notable is the fact that a large number of Class 9 nouns

have their plural in Class 6, and not in Class 10, for example, 'girl / girls' in isiXhosa is *intombazana / amantombazana* (Oosthuysen, 2016:38-39).

IsiXhosa also has Class 14, (prefix **ubu**) *ubumnyama* (darkness) which is totally different to other noun classes because it contains only singular nouns that do not have a plural. Occasionally, we get nouns in Class 14 whose plural is found in Class 10, for example, *ubuhlanti – iintlanti* ('kraal/kraals'), *u(bu)tywala - iindywala*. ('alcohol'/'alcoholic drinks'). *iindywala* is a term used by contemporary speakers of isiXhosa among themselves when referring to different types of brewed alcoholic beverages. Njaba and Tyatyeka (2006:81) explain: "*Umbona wokwenza iindywala, owokungqusha wodwa, imbewu yonyaka ozayo ibekwe yodwa. Bambalwa abanokuzazi ngoku ezo zinto*" (*Mealies that are used for brewing, the ones (mealies) for stamping is different, the following year's harvest is stored separately. Very few can know these things now.*). Therefore, this noun does not necessarily refer to *utywala* specifically, being alcohol, but rather metonymously²² to homesteads in the village or houses in the townships where alcohol is obtained.

Also, from Class 14, we also get another interesting noun, *ubuso* (face), whose plural is thought to be, and is widely used as, *iibuso*.²³ As much as this is not the official plural for *ubuso* which is glossed in *The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Vol 3* (Pahl et al., 1989:21) as not having a plural, *iibuso* is now widely used amongst contemporary speakers of isiXhosa.

When both young and old speakers use the word *iibuso*, they are generally referring to 'many different faces'. For example, *Mandinxibe kakuhle apho ndiya khona kukho iibuso ngeembuso endiza kudibana nazo* (Let me dress well, where I am going I will be seeing a lot of different faces). In an article in *Isolezwe lesiXhosa* an interview with Pabi went as follows:

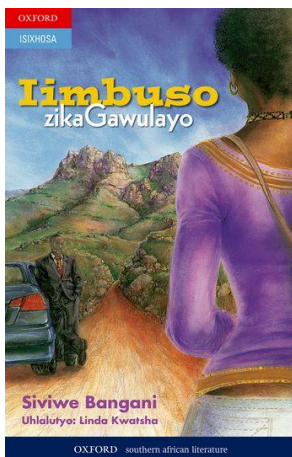
Akawuvali umlomo yimincili yokubhexesha le nkqubo kwaye akakwazi kulinda ukuze afumane iibuso ezintsha ezinetalente ezinokuthi gingci kwiinkqubo ezintathu zeSABC3 iExpresso, Afternoon Express neTop Billing.

²² Metonymy is when a part refers to the whole, for example, "the crown" for a royal person.

²³ *Ubuso* has standard plural *ubuso*. The noun *iibuso* is sometimes used as a plural of *ubuso* but it has different meanings.

She can't close her mouth from excitement of conducting this programme, and she can't wait to get new talented faces that can fit properly into three SABC3 Expresso, Afternoon Express and Top Billing.

This means that although language users may be aware that the way that some nouns are used is not standard, they will nevertheless speak the way they want to get their meaning across as directly as possible. A shift to non-standard plurals is prevalent, since these nouns are widely used, particularly in the townships. Another proof of how the noun *iibuso* is gaining momentum is the title of the isiXhosa novel *iibuso ZikaGawulayo* (The faces of AIDS) by Siviwe Bangani, published by Oxford in 2006, which provides details of the disease, cautions and teaches young people about how dangerous AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is.



In his novel Bangani (2006:68) describes what was at the back of a suicide note and again the irregular plural of *ubuso* appears:

Ngasemva kwakuzotywe iibuso ngembuso zabantu. Abanye babezotywe mhlophe, namnyama, namthubi, nabomvu njalo-njalo. Abanye bonwabile abanye bedakumbile. Abanye behleka abanye bekhala. Abanye bebahle abanye bebabi.

Abanye beneenwele ziyephuyephu, abanye zingqaqhuluka. Wonke nje umahluko onokuwufumana kwiibuso zabantu ngabantu wawuzotywe kweli phepha.

At the back there were drawings of faces and faces of people. Some were drawn white, and black, and yellow, and red etc. Some are happy, some are miserable. Some are laughing some are crying. Some are beautiful some are ugly.

Some have silky hair and some coarse / rough (hair). All the differences that you can find in different faces of people were drawn in this paper.

Class 15, (prefix **uku**), is also very interesting because this class, just like Class 14, does not have a plural, and in this class the infinitive of a verb carries the noun prefix. An example of a Class 15 noun is **ukutya** 'to eat/food' **ukufa** 'to die/death'. A confusing aspect of this noun class for L2 learners of the language is some contexts a word in Class 15 could represent a gerund, as in *ukubhala kwakhe kubi* (his writing is bad) or the act of writing in the infinitive *ndifuna ukubhala* (I want to write). The same goes for *ukufa* (death), it can be a noun or function as the actual act of dying *ukufa*

yinto ebuhlungu – (death is a sad thing), *ukufa kwakhe kusothusile* – (his death shocked us) (Oosthuysen: 2016; 43).

3.4.2 How loanwords are brought into the Noun Class system in isiXhosa

Having summarized the morphology, number and semantics of the noun class system in isiXhosa I will now discuss how loanwords, or adoptives, are brought into this system. As has been observed by a leading scholar in the field “loanwords provide a particularly interesting set of data for investigating the synchronic productivity of semantics within the noun class system” (Demuth, 2000:279).

Demuth’s poses that, “nouns seem to be classified on the basis of either phonology or semantics” (Demuth, 2000:279). The following discussion will elaborate on how existing adoptives have been incorporated into the isiXhosa noun class system.

According to Madiba (1994) “certain noun prefixes indicate singularity whereas others indicate plurality. Therefore, noun stems may be appropriately assigned to different noun classes according to number” (Madiba,1994:237). He goes on to say, “Adopted nouns may also be assigned prefixes on the basis of their meaning; in fact, this is the traditional way of assigning prefixes to nouns” (Madiba, 1994:239). The morphological structure of isiXhosa is that of a noun classification system, and the concordial agreement system which means that nouns are classified by their prefixes, and that a noun’s prefix is linked to a verb, an adjective, a possessive and many other parts of speech.

3.5 Background to data analysis: Incorporation of loanwords into isiXhosa noun class system

In this section I will mainly look at existing loanword nouns and the prefixes that are assigned to them.

Class 1a adoptives

Class 1a (with the prefix **u-**) is a singular class for personal nouns and has been most productive as a noun class for loanword nouns referring to people's jobs, e.g. *unovenkile* 'shopkeeper'; *unoteksi* 'taxi driver'. *Unovenkile* is from the loanword 'ivenkile' from the Afrikaans word for 'shop' 'winkel' and *unoteksi* derived from the loanword *iteksi* from the English 'taxi'. In both words the prefix *uno-* denoting a profession. Pahl (1978:14) writing in isiXhosa, note that Class 1a is also used when talking about letters of the alphabet, or even words in a metalinguistic way:

Oonobumba namagama. Xa kusingiselwa ngokukodwa kwezi zinto, zithabatha iceba lehlelo 1(a): Imiz.: U-m lo umbhale kakubi. U-thatha akamelwe na kukubhalwa ne: thabatha? U-hayi wakhe ngu-hayi ke, akajiki. U-ewe ngu-ewe.
(Letters of the alphabet and words. When these are being specifically referred to they take the initial vowel of class 1(a): E.g: You have written "m" badly. Shouldn't "thatha" be written as "thabatha"? His "no" is "no", he does not budge. Yes" is "Yes.")

This noun class therefore has the possibility of being very productive particularly when speaking about language in the abstract, even when speaking about English words in the abstract. For example, a teacher could say "*Simsebenzisa njani u-BECAUSE?*" (How do we use [the word] BECAUSE?) In my research I hope to show that other, more commonplace adopted nouns, also find their way into Class 1a. For example, although academic discussion of noun classes in Bantu generally associates this class with proper names, kinship terms and personifications (see Katamba in Nurse and Philippson, 2006:115) in isiXhosa we also use this class for borrowed numbers (*u-1*, *u-2*), colours (*uyellow*), times of the day (*u10 '10 o'clock*) and months (*uMay 'May*'). This is shown by the list of loanwords that have been incorporated into the isiXhosa lexicon in Table 2 below and other tables to follow.

Class 1 loanwords

Noun Class 1 is exclusively personal, so only nouns that refer to persons will fall into this class. It is therefore common to see nouns that are derived from borrowed verbs, e.g. *ummakishi* (marker) from *-makisha* (mark), *umvoti* (voter) from *-vota* (vote) or nouns referring to people previously unknown to the Xhosa, falling into this class, e.g. *umIndiya* (Indian person), *umHindi* (Hindi person). Calteaux (1996:112) refers to the phenomenon of nouns being derived from nouns and cites as examples Class 1 nouns such as *umWesile* (Methodist) derived from the borrowed word *iWesile* referring to the Wesleyan church.

Class 3 loanwords

Noun Class 3 in isiXhosa is an exclusively non-personal class. Generally, this noun class includes some anatomical terms, e.g. *umlomo* (mouth), points of the compass, for example, *umzantsi* (south) and *umntla* (north) and masses such as *umhlaba* (earth) and *umkhenkce* (ice) to name just a few. Because of the nature of this class, it is not very productive in terms of loanword nouns but because this class contains the names of many trees, e.g. *umnga* (mimosa tree) it is productive in this domain, e.g. *umoki* (oak tree), *umsedare* (cedar tree). Speakers do refer to specific fruit trees that are not originally in the isiXhosa lexicon by just changing the prefix of the loan fruit (word for fruits that are loaned from other languages generally go to Class 5), but words that are loaned from other languages for fruit trees go to Class 3, for example, an apple tree becomes *umapile*; a peach tree becomes *umpesika*, and a grapevine becomes *umdiliya*. This process proves that borrowed fruit tree names are found in Class 3 because of the association of this class with trees generally and not because of any morphological or phonological element present in the English word.

Selvik (1996:32), is of the same view about Class 3 when she argues that

Within the semantic network of class 3, I therefore find it reasonable to treat plants other than trees, as extensions from the category 'tree', on the basis of their many similarities with trees. Plants, as well as trees, instantiate the schema 'material with «live» origin', which again instantiates the even more abstract class schema 'living'.

Demuth (2000:280), discussing loanwords in Noun Class 3 in Sesotho notes that 'non-human loanwords beginning with /m/ are assigned to class 3' while Mahlangu

(2016:27) observes that very few adoptives have found their way into noun Classes 3 and 4 in isiNdebele and gives by way of example *umtjhini* (machine), *umdanso* (dance) and *umbhede* (bed) and *umsorodo* (type / kind / sort).

Madiba (1994:235) discussing adoptives in Tshivenda notes that:

Even though the allocation of the class prefix to adoptive nouns is made on the basis of the initial sound resemblance, the actual class to which the noun is assigned may be determined by other factors. In order to determine to which class the adopted noun is assigned, other factors such as semantic content also need to be considered.

Yet again, in isiXhosa, Class 3 is mostly productive for adoptives that are derived from borrowed verb roots, for example *umdaniso* (dance) from the verb *danisa* (dance), *umdrowusho* (a drawing) from the loanword verb *drowisha* (draw).

Class 5 loanwords

Class 5, (with the full noun prefix *ili-* sometimes contracted to just *i-* with polysyllabic noun stems) contains nouns adopted nouns that refer to individuals of some ethnic groups, for example *iTshayina* (Chinese person), *iNgesi* (English person) as well as some nouns referring to miscellaneous personal nouns, some of which are loanwords, e.g. *ipolisa* (policeman / woman). As has already been observed this noun class is productive for the names of adopted fruits such as *iapile* (apple) and *ipere* (pear). Loanword nouns that refer to objects made of paper or of card are often found in this class e.g. *iphepha* (paper) and *ikhadi* (card) as are some loanword nouns which form part of a pair, e.g. *itayala / amatyala* (tyre/s). In isiZulu Class 5 is a far more productive class for adoptives than in isiXhosa, although the fact that isiZulu speakers use Class 5 for adoptives does influence some isiXhosa speakers to use this class more often when incorporating borrowed words into their lexicons.

Class 7 loanwords

Demuth (2000:287) notes that in Bantu languages 'derivational word-formation processes still show productivity in human classes (1/2), the attribute classes (7/8) and

the abstract noun class 14'. Class 7, because of its prefix *isi-*, is productive as a noun class for words starting with an /s/ borrowed from other languages, for example, *isitulo* (chair) and *isitalato* (street) from the Afrikaans *stoel*, and *straat*. Both nouns are borrowed from Afrikaans and made to fit the phonological system of isiXhosa by inserting the vowel 'i' in front of the borrowed word, and also insert it (i) in-between the initial consonant 's' and the second consonant 't' (st). Other contemporary examples of this are *isitayile* (style), *isipika* (speaker) and *isiteyitas* (status) although very often in speech the second 'i' is elided to produce: *istayile*, *ispika*, *isteyitasi*.

Class 9 loanwords

As has already been mentioned and will be shown in the tables below, Class 9 is a very productive class, particularly for incorporating nouns from other languages merely by prefixing *i-*. The productivity of Class 9 in other African languages has been noted by a number of scholars. For example, Petzell (2005) makes reference to this fact in discussing Swahili loanwords while Mahlangu (2016:27) calls Class 9 “the hub of foreign adopted nouns”. Dowling (2011) noted that most of the borrowed nouns used by participants in her study were in Class 9.²⁴ Zawawi (1979:127) also suggests on writing about Swahili, that “...such nouns may be incorporated into class 9, and may later be re-categorised as class 5, the latter having the advantage of distinguishing singular from plural.” It has even been argued, that this ‘confusion’ of classes for loanwords has negatively influenced L2 acquisition of isiNdebele:

The confusion of classes for borrowed nouns has a negative influence on the language since the mastering of the noun class system is central to speaking Ndebele correctly (Ndlovu, 2009:95).

²⁴ There have been no specific treatments of loanwords in Noun Classes 11 and 14 but my data collection did generate some loanword nouns in these classes which I discuss under the analysis section.

3.6 Sampling

3.6.1 Data Set 1: Loanwords occurring in daily interactions and isiXhosa newspapers and magazines

In the first pilot stage of my data analysis I engaged in a week-long process of consciously listening to the way in which isiXhosa was being spoken around me (with friends, colleagues in the African Languages Section of the School of Languages and Literatures, at home with family, in shops and conducting official private and public business).

I paid attention to, and made a note of, any occurrence of a loanword that was a noun in an isiXhosa utterance (not when there was extensive code-switching, but when most of the other lexical items in the sentence were in isiXhosa). At this stage I was not looking out for any particular noun class but was trying consciously to identify the domains to which the loanwords referred, such as education, food, furniture and lifestyle.

After noting down the loanwords I had encountered in the different domains, I created tables for each singular noun class in isiXhosa and populated these tables with the loanword nouns as I encountered them over a week-long period.

Table 2a and Table 2b therefore give the English word followed by the interlocutor's expression of it (or the textual representation of it) in isiXhosa during our conversations. I then grouped the loanwords under specific domain headings that overlap, but extend on those first observed by Knappert (1970) and detailed by him in his "classified list of objects which were introduced by foreign cultures" (in Koopman, 2000:11).

A third method of identifying loanwords is to make classified lists of words within certain categories of meaning such as ... clothes, fruits, ... furniture ... - and to study these words in all the languages of a given area. Loanwords will be found in these categories in almost all African languages (Knappert, 1970:80).

Unless their pronunciation was significantly altered to that of the English (e.g. *iwanzis* for 'onesie'²⁵), the new loanwords are generally entered as they are spelt in English

²⁵ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=onesie>

(the older loanwords are entered as they occur in the dictionary, with the spelling adapted to the phonological rules of isiXhosa), as the purpose of this exercise was not to work out the way in which these words were phonologically adapted to the borrowing language (isiXhosa) but to concentrate on the noun class assignation for each and the domain to which they referred. It is said that “Another important guide for establishing the route of a group of loanwords is their phonetic form. On purely linguistic grounds we can determine the direction of loaning, if we know the phoneme systems of the languages concerned” (Knappert 1970:80).

Table 2a: Pilot stage: Loanwords in domains of Clothes and Education

	CLOTHES	Interlocutor’s word		EDUCATION	Interlocutor’s word
1	Poloneck	Upolo /ipolo/ upoloneki / ipoloneki	1	Teacher	Utishala
2	Shorts	Ushoti	2	Lecturer	Ilecturer
3	Flip-flops	Iiflops / amaphaqa	3	Training	Itraining
4	Skirt	Iskeyiti	4	Skills	Iskills
5	Pants	Ibhulukhwe	5	Research	Irisetshi
6	Sports bra	Ibhodi	6	Mathematics	Imaths
7	Swimsuit	Iswimsuit	7	University	Iyunivesithi
8	Socks	Iikawusi	8	College	Ikholeji
9	Jeans	Ijini	9	Classroom	Iklasi
10	Leggings	Iileggings / uthayithi	10	Lecture room	Ilecture room
11	Jumpsuit	Ijumpsuit / iwanzis	11	Certificate	Isetifiketi
12	Blouse	Iblawuzi	12	Diploma	Idiploma
13	T-Shirt	Isikhipa	13	Degree	Idigri
16	Jacket	Ijakethi	16	Biology	Ibhayoloji
17	Gloves	Iigloves / iiglavu	17	Psychology	Isaykholoji
18	Belt	Ibhanti	18	Whiteboard	Iwhiteboard / ibhodi
			19	Lesson	Ilesini

Table 2b: Pilot stage: Loanwords in domains of Food, Furniture, Health and Lifestyle

FOOD			Interlocutor's word			FURNITURE			Interlocutor's word		
1	Spinach		Isipinatshi	1	Couch		Ikhawutshi / isofa				
2	Lentils		lilentils	2	Cupboard		Ikhabhathi				
3	Steak & kidney pie		lpayi yesteki	3	Printer		lprinta				
4	Oats		l-oats	4	Chair		Isitulo				
5	Vegetables		lveg	5	Bed		Ibheyidi				
6	Sweet chilli		lsweet chilli	6	Coffee table		Itafile				
7	Chocolate		lchocolate	7	Television		l-TV				
8	Baked beans		libaked beans	8	Dishwasher		ldishwasher				
9	Tomato Sauce		ltumata sosi	9	Stove		Istovu				
10	Rusks		liraski	10	Microwave		lmicrowave				
11	Pasta		lpasta	11	Matrass		Umatrasi / itrasi				
12	Water melon		lvatala	12	Dresser		ldresser				
13	Cheese		ltshizi	13	Boardroom table		Itafile				
14	Avocado		lavocado	14	Fan		lfeni				
15	Sushi		lsushi	15	Heater		lheater				
16	Fruit		lfruit	16	Filing cabinet		lfiling cabinet				
17	Herbs		liherbs	17	Mirror		Isipili				
18	Cereal		lpapa								
HEALTH			Interlocutor's word			LIFESTYLE			Interlocutor's word		
1	Lifestyle		llifestyle /	1	Massage		lmasaji				
2	Diet		ldayethi	2	Facial		lfacial				
3	Hormones		lihomoni	3	Wax		lwax				
4	Vitamins		lvitamin	4	Nail polish		lthyuteksi				
5	Status		lsteyitasi	5	Fake eyelashes		li-eyelashes				
6	Muscles		limuscles	6	Hair spray		Ispreyi senwele				
7	Transplant		ltransplant	7	Aerobics		lerobics				

8	Scalp	lscalp	8	Gym	ljim
9	Infection	l-infection	9	Exercise	l-exercise
10	Ringworm	lringworm	10	Motivation	lmotivation
11	Sinus	lsayinasi	11	Dietician	ldietician
12	Shingles	lishingles	12	Braids	lbreyidi
13	Weight	lweight	13	Treadmill	ltreadmill
14	Scale	lscopyili	14	Fashion	lfashoni
15	Fitness	lfitness	15	Habit	lhabit
16	Calories	lcalories	16	Activity	l-activity
17	Nutrition	lnutrition	17	Style	isitayile

In Table 2a, under the field “clothes”, for items number 1 and 2, the participants used two different noun prefixes (those of Class 1a and Class 9) for the loanwords for ‘polo neck’: *upolo* (Class 1a prefix u-) and *ipolo* (Class 9 prefix i-). Similarly, when they spoke of ‘shorts’ I heard isiXhosa-speakers use both *ushoti* (Class 1a prefix u-) and *ishoti* (Class 9 prefix i-). This could be because participants come from different dialect backgrounds where u- or i- is the preferred prefix but this has not been verified by any academic text or research. For item number 3 (flip-flops) some participants responded *iiflops* and some *amaphaqa*²⁶. Most of those who said *amaphaqa* were from Phillipi, a suburb in Cape Town, but originally came from the Eastern Cape and have been working in Cape Town for quite a while. Again, it could be argued that their choice of the word *amaphaqa* is informed by the dialect they use, since the participants who gave this word came from areas close to KwaZulu-Natal. It is possible that these participants are speakers of isiMpondo, because Nyamende (1996:203) mentions that speakers of this dialect live close to KwaZulu-Natal:

The Mpondo occupy the stretch of land from Southern Natal to central Transkei in the north and along the coast to Port St John’s. Their main districts are Lusikisiki, Libode, Flagstaff, Port St John’s, Bizana and Tabankulu.

Under “clothes” there was also a frequent reference to *uthayithi* (using the prefix of Class 1a) for item number 10 which is ‘leggings’, and although it could be argued that ‘tights’ are similar to ‘leggings’ they are not actually the same. The striking finding was

²⁶ *Amaphaqa* is a nominalization of the isiZulu ideophone *phaqa* that describes the pattering of feet (see Doke, Malcolm, Sikakana & Vilakazi, 1990:648)

that regardless of their (participants) different dialects and background, most of them used *isikipa* for t-shirt and not *it-sheti*. It (*isikipa*) is a term largely used for a t-shirt or a vest-like item, by isiXhosa speakers. Koopman (2000:43) discussing the equivalent word in isiZulu (*isikibha*) claims that it is derived from a Durban shirt factory called “Skipper”. Interestingly, Bona magazine appears to use *it-sheti* for ‘t-shirt’ (see page 57 below).

Under the field “education” in Table 2a most borrowed nouns were semantically assimilated to fit everyday communication. When referring to ‘classroom’ in Table 2a number 9, some participants dropped the word ‘room’ instead referred to it as *iklasi*, whereas when referring to ‘lecture room’ in number 10, they (same participants) continued to keep the noun ‘room’ for *ilecture room*. The assumption for this is, the noun *ilecture room* is a result of the associated function which is to give a lecture and thereby referring to the one giving a lecture as *ilecturer*. This is the same for ‘whiteboard’ in Table 2a number 18: most participants referred to it as *ibhodi* ‘board’, dropping the part signifying the colour. This could be explained by saying speakers of isiXhosa in general refer to any board whether white, green or black, as *ibhodi* without specifying the colour. It is unlikely to hear someone saying, *ibhodi emnyama* ‘a black board’ or *ibhodi emhlophe* ‘a white board’ or *ibhodi eluhlaza* ‘a green board’.

In Table 2b, under the “food” domain, the noun that was attention-grabbing to me was *ipapa* used when referring to cereal which is in number 18. *Ipapa* appears to be a generalisation, or semantic extension since it generally refers only to ‘porridge’. In fact, in *The Greater Dictionary of isiXhosa* there is not one gloss that refers to cereal:

- 1 porridge;
- 2 dry, but not crumbly mealie-meal;
- 3 stiffening material in cloth, which is washed out before the cloth is used;
- 4 cooked sampt to which no beans have been added.
- 5 something that is over-cooked and reduced to an unpleasant soft mass
- 6 a feeble brain, one lacking in intelligence
- 7 a person whose body is run down, enfeebled, enervated, debilitated. (Mini et al., 2003:959)

The popularity of *ipapa* is particularly interesting since one would have expected a transliterated response, such as *icereal* but *ipapa* was the only term used. This could be a reflection of the influence Afrikaans had on South African indigenous language lexicons.

A similar semantic shift was made in Table 2 under the “lifestyle” field, where for number 4 (nail polish), the majority of participants referred to nail polish with the brand name ‘cutex’ *ithyuteksi*. It appeared that none were aware that “cutex” is a brand name not the polish itself. This use of brand names as sources for loanwords can be described as “onomastic shift” (see Koopman, 2000:43) which is common in all of the world’s languages and which is why English speakers use the word ‘hoover’ for a vacuum cleaner, using the brand name of the Hoover vacuum cleaner company which dominated the market in the 20th century.

It was also interesting to note that, in Table 2b under “furniture”, items 6 and 13 (coffee table; and board room table) the general word *itafile* (table) was used in both instances by the participants, without stating further which kind of a table they were referring to. Also, most participants used the noun *isofa* for couch, which is a Canadian and British English used to describe a piece of furniture for seating in the form of a bench with armrest.²⁷ Below, appears a few pictures aiming at explaining examples discussed above. This is an attempt to help us see features of loanword nouns and how they appear in text format.



The loanword *iiglavu* as used in Bona May 2012:52. (Translation: Wash clothes wearing gloves because water also can cause dry [skin].)

²⁷ www.en.m.wikipedia.org



The terms *ibhatyi*, (jacket) *ibhulukhwe* (trousers), *it-sheti* (T-shirt), *ibhanti* (belt) all loanwords in Class 9, as used in Bona May 2012:131.

Another striking finding was that it appeared that speakers of isiXhosa have been mostly exposed to borrowed words such as *iwax*, *ifacial*, and *imasaji* (Table 2b, numbers 1-3 under the domain “lifestyle”) instead of using any isiXhosa nouns. This might be due to the fact that speakers of isiXhosa today do not associate these nouns with practices of amaXhosa where face painting and body painting was used for different reasons but with similar outcomes. In other words, speakers want to differentiate between traditional make-up and beauty practices, with those of the modern world (see Saxena, 2014 for a discussion on lifestyle diglossia). For many years and for different motives including religious, cultural, hunting, even for military reasons face painting and body painting would be done for purposes of camouflage. I grew up with anecdotes about hunters who would smear mud on their bodies to alter their human body odour, or how people would beautify and rejuvenate their skin with ochre used for rituals. When doing this, they (amaXhosa) normally used earth materials such as clay, bark, *umthoba* (a stone from a quarry like a pile of stones from which one would be picked; and would be rubbed against a smooth and flat based stone mixed with water to give a thick solution then applied on neck and face). Although these were not referred to as facials they surely gave more or less the same results. People referred to applying the solution on the face as *ukuqaba* ‘to smear/spread’ which is followed by rinsing off the solution at some stage hoping for the same results. One should note that *ukuqaba* in a beauty shop is referred to as a mask, which is rinsed off and then another application hoping for a cleansed rejuvenated skin. As far back as 1930, a leading scholar of Swahili noted the following about the need for loanwords to come from speakers themselves, not from foreigners:

Foreign words will have to be borrowed and foreign influences will be required to attain greater clarity of expression, but this must be done by African minds in order that the language may remain African (Broomfield, 1930:519).

Cultural factors are also critical in understanding the way in which speakers express themselves:

There is a mutually determining relationship between language and culture, with languages functioning as instruments in the acquisition of speakers' views, beliefs, values, norms and patterns of behaviour, and with them reflecting, symbolising and expressing their speakers' cultural character and identity (Webb, 2010:165).

This statement needs to be tempered with Seema's warning that "the rapid expansion of globalisation in Africa leads to Americanisation and Westernisation, which in turn undermines all indigenous African cultures" (Seema, 2016:201).

These statements above enlighten the fact that most participants (even the staunch isiXhosa speakers who insisted that they do not codeswitch or use any non-standard lexical items) used *iwax*, *ifacial*, and *imasaji*, in Table 2b under "lifestyle" instead of original nouns as discussed above. The same can be said for terms such as 'aerobics', 'gym', and 'exercise' in Table 2b numbers 7-9. As is evident, these words are adopted as they are, because long time ago amaXhosa did not need to go to the gym for exercise even though they had time and resources to do so because as children they had *uggaphu* (skipping rope) to play with for leisure not to mention the long miles they had to walk to the river to draw water, and the calories they burned while working in the fields. There was also *upuca* (a game that was played by putting pebbles into a hole and pick them one by one while tossing one pebble above and grab others from the hole at one go). These games or activities used to keep children active and, as already mentioned, when they become adults, people had chores that kept them fit like *ukutheza* (fetching wood from the forest) mostly done by women, and *ukucanda* (chopping of that wood) mostly done by men.

3.6.2 Data Set 2: Translation exercise with 25 isiXhosa-speakers

In order to test the Noun Class assignment for the above collection of nouns, I asked 25 participants (20 adults between the ages of 25 and 40 and 5 teenagers between the ages of 16 and 19) to translate 32 simple sentences from English to isiXhosa. The sentences were carefully prepared to generate concords (e.g. subject concords, object concords, possessives, adjective concords) that would allow me to ascertain the noun class that the participant was assigning to the loan noun, if indeed they used one. At no stage did I tell informants what words they should use, I just impressed upon them the need to translate as they would speak. Below I give the English sentences, each followed by the range of isiXhosa translations offered by the participants (the responses are produced verbatim).

Translated sentences

1. **This poloneck is beautiful.**
Lo polo umhle.
Ipolo intle.
Le poloneck intle
Lo poloneck mhle.

2. **My daughter's shorts are old.**
Ushoti wentombi yam mdala.
Ishoti yentombi yam indala.
Ooshotwana bentombi yam bagugile.
Ooshoti bentombi yam badala.
Ishoti zentombi yam zindala.
Ibhulukhwe emfutshane yentombi yam indala.
Ibhulukhwe ezimfutshane zentombi yam zindala.

3. **The flip-flops are broken.**
Amaphaqa ophukile.
Iiflops zophukile.
Amaphaca ophukile.
Akrazukile amaphece-phece.

4. **The skirt is long.**
Isikeyiti side.
Side isiketi.

5. **The pants are expensive.**
Ibhulukwe iduru.
Iliblukwe ziduru.
Ibhurukwe iduru.
Ilibrukwe ziduru.

6. **My sports bra does not fit nicely.**
Ibhodi yam ayindilingani.
Ibhodi yam incinci.
Isport bra sam sincinci.
Isports bra yam ayindilingani.
7. **The swimsuit must not be washed with the other clothes.**
Iswimsuit mayingavaswa nezinye impahla.
Ibheyidingi kufuneka ingahlanjwa nezinye iimpahla
Impahla yokuqubha mayingavaswa nezinye iimpahla.
8. **The socks are black.**
likawusi zimnyama.
9. **Her jeans are too tight.**
Ijini yakhe iyambamba.
Ijins zakhe zincinci.
Ijean yakhe iyambamba.
Ijeans zakhe zimbambile.
10. **Her leggings suit her.**
Uthayithi wakhe uyamfanela.
Utight wakhe uyamfanela.
Ileggings zakhe ziyamfanela.
11. **The blouse is white.**
Iblawuzi yakhe imhlophe.
Ihempe yakhe imhlophe.
12. **The t-shirt is black.**
It-shirt imnyama.
Isikhipha simnyama.
13. **The jacket is beautiful.**
Ibhatyi intle.
Ijakethi intle.
14. **Gloves keep your hands warm.**
Iglaves zigcina izandla zakho zishushu.
Iglavu zigcina izandla zakho ziishushu.
15. **My belt is broken.**
Ibhanti yam yophukile.
Ibhanti lam lophukile.
16. **The teacher is tired.**
Utishala udiniwe.
Umfundisi-ntsapho udiniwe.
17. **The lecturer is complaining.**
Ilecturer iyakhalaza.
Umhlohli uyakhala.
18. **The training you get is good.**
Itraining oyifumanayo ilungile.

19. **The skills we get are not enough.**
Izakhono esizifumanayo azanelanga.
Iskills esizifumanayo azanelanga.
Izkills esizifumanayo azanelanga.
20. **The research I am doing is difficult.**
Irisetshi endiyenzayo inzima.
Iresearch endiyenzayo inzima.
21. **Maths gives me a headache!**
Imaths indenza intloko ebuhlungu.
Imaths iyandisokolisa.
22. **The university is big.**
Iyuniversity inkulu.
23. **The college is in Mowbray.**
Ikholeji ise Mowbray.
24. **The classroom is small.**
Iklasi incinci.
25. **The lecture room is big.**
Ilecture room inkulu.
26. **My certificate is at home.**
Isetifikeyiti sam sisekhaya.
27. **I have a diploma but she does not have one.**
Ndinediploma kodwa yena akanayo.
28. **A degree in languages is useful.**
Idigri kwiilwimi iyasebenziseka.
29. **Biology is not taught here.**
Ibhayoloji ayifundiswa apha.
Ibiology ayifundiswa apha.
30. **Psychology is an interesting subject.**
Isayikholoji sisifundo esinomdla.
Ipsychology sisifundo esinomdla.
31. **The whiteboard is broken.**
Iwhiteboard yophukile.
Ibhodi yophukile.
32. **The lesson is finished.**
Isifundo siphelile.
Ilesini iphelile.

3.6.2.1 Analysis of translated sentences

The translated sentences reveal the following trends in terms of loanword incorporation:

- There is substantial variation in terms of the orthography and noun class assignment of new loanwords (loanwords not currently found in any dictionary), e.g. the word 'poloneck' is not only given both as *ipolo* and *ipoloneck* (minus the initial vowel after the demonstrative) but the latter occurs in both Class 1a as is evidenced by the demonstratives *Lo* (Class 1a demonstrative, first position) and *Le* (Class 9 demonstrative, first position) as well as by the descriptive copulative *m-* in *Lo poloneck mhle* and that of Class 9 *in-* in *Le poloneck intle*. Other examples of different ways of rendering the loanword as well as different class allocation can be seen in Sentences 2, 5, 6,7,9,10 and 19. The many different ways in which the English word 'shorts' was translated (*ushoti, ishoti, ooshotwana, ooshoti, iishoti, ibhulukhwe emfutshane, iibhulukwe ezimfutshane*) demonstrates the great amount of loanword variation speakers exhibit, both when writing and speaking. Clearly the -s that occurs in some English singular nouns ('jeans', 'pants', 'glasses') causes some confusion for speakers of other languages and consequently there are differences in the way speakers view these nouns and incorporate them into their lexicons. Most participants used *ijjins* when translating 'jeans' in Sentence 9, as they did for 'flip flops' in Sentence 3, and 'gloves' in Sentence 14. In all of these cases the nouns did not lose the English 's' and were written as *iiglavs* and *iiflops* even though *ii* in isiXhosa is already an indication that the noun is in the plural form via the Class 10 prefix for loanwords which is *ii-*. Koopman (2000:47) refers to this incorporation of the English suffix as "suffixal interference".
- It is also clear from the sentences, that although we normally can predict that a loanword that starts with an 's' will fall into Class 7, as with Sentence 4 *isikeyiti* and *isiketi* for 'skirt', this is not the case in Sentence 6 where there is variation in terms of the noun class prefixes used for 'sports bra' for which both Class 7 and 9 prefixes were used, the possessive clearly revealing this disparity e.g. *Isports bra sam* and *isports bra yam*.

- Another interesting observation is that while *utishala*, ‘teacher’ in sentence 16 takes the prefix of Class 1a, we see the use of Class 9 for *ilecturer* ‘lecturer’ in sentence 17. L2 learners might ask why the loanword for ‘lecturer’ is treated differently to the loanword for ‘teacher’. What we could argue is that teachers are viewed as more familiar members of any community (and are thus linked to kin members who are afforded the Class 1a prefix) whereas lecturers are deemed more distant and inaccessible, less likely members of a kin structure.
- It is interesting to note that even with entrenched loanwords such as *ibhulukwe* for pants my participants produced three variations of the standard being *iiblukwe* and *ibhurukwe* and *iibrukwe*.
- Just as English speakers are free to use words like ‘bather’, ‘swimsuit’, ‘bathing costume’ and ‘costume’ when referring to a particular item of clothing used to swim in, so too do isiXhosa-speakers make use of a range of lexical items (e.g. *iswimsuit*, *ibheyidingi*), possibly affected by how they have heard English-speakers talk about this apparel.
- *Ibhodi* for sports bra is an interesting case in that without tone marks the written word could refer to a) a board (e.g. a council of directors); a chalkboard or a brassiere (see Tshabe & Shoba, 2006:171). The HLH (high-low-high) tones render it specific to the meaning ‘brassiere’, adapted from the English ‘bodice’ (Tshabe & Shoba, 2006:171). Interestingly participants also gave *ibhodi* for whiteboard in Sentence 31, clearly aware that their pronunciation of the word would disambiguate it from meaning a ‘brassiere’.
- Sometimes Class 8, when used for a loanword starting with ‘s’, loses the vowel of the BNP (Basic Noun Prefix) as in *izkills* for ‘skills’.
- Interestingly for ‘belt’ in Sentence 15, most female participants used Class 9 (as is evidenced by the possessive concord *ya-*) in *ibhanti **ya**m* ‘my belt’, while most male participants used Class 5 *ibhanti **la**m* (as is evidenced by the possessive concord *la-*) for the same noun.

- In most cases participants attempted to write the loanwords using phonetic assimilation, taking the spelling rules of the L1 and applying these to the sounds of the loanword, e.g. in Sentence 20 *irisetshi* for ‘research’ but there were a number of cases in which no attempt was made to do this, e.g. in Sentences 17 and 25 *ilecturer* and *ilecture room*.
- The use of Class 1a for nouns like ‘poloneck’, ‘shorts’ and ‘tights’ – *upolo*, *ushoti* and *utayithi* would suggest that items of clothing with openings for parts of the body tend to fall into this class. This, however, cannot be verified until greater research is done on this particular semantic attribute, and until larger corpora are available to us. What also could be of significance for this category of loanwords that fall into Class 1a is the stress on the original English word but this requires further investigation.

3.6.3 Data Set 3: Captured audio to test loanwords: 5 shoppers

For this data set I used my phone to do a kind of vox pop-style interview with 5 random shoppers at my local shopping mall. I informed them that their recorded voices would be anonymous, and that I would delete the sound files once I had transcribed their utterances. They were also free not to take part. Loanword nouns are entered in bold italics. For this exercise I do not consider the names of shops or shopping centres as loanwords.

Interviewer: Nizaw’ya kweyiphi ***ishop*** nomamakho?
Participant 1: Sizaw’ya eCavendish siyothenga ***iboots nelokhwe*** kwaMr Price, gqiba siyothenga ***noshoti*** omnyama ***wes’kolo***.
Interviewer: Ok. Qha? Anizothenga ezinye izinto?
Participant 1: Hayi, siye nase Pick n Pay siyothenga ***iveg***.
Interviewer: So ziphelele ezo zinto nizakuzithenga?
Participant 1: Eh eh.

Interviewer: Which shop are you going to go to with your mother?
Participant 1: We’ll go to Cavendish to buy boots and dress at Mr Price, and then go buy a black school shorts
Interviewer: Ok. Is that all? Are you not going to buy other things?
Participant 1: No, we’ll also go to Pick n Pay to buy veg.
Interviewer: So that’s all you’re buying?
Participant 1: Eh eh. (Yes)

.....

Interviewer: Ufuna ukubathengel’ ntoni abantwana bakho?

Participant 2: Ndifuna ukubathengela **iishirt** for **iterm** le sizaw'ngena kuyo, ... **nooshoti** ... be **bes'kolo**. Ja, kunye nezinto ke nje zobaphathel' **ilunch**, **ifruit** mhlawumbi **amabhanana**, **pesika** njalo njalo for **ewinter**.

Interviewer: *What do you want to buy for your children?*

Participant 2: *I want to buy them shirts for the term that we are going into, .. and shorts mainly for school. Yes, and thing just to take for lunch, fruit, maybe bananas peaches etc. for winter.*

Interviewer: Uzothengelwa ntoni ngutatakho apha eCanal Walk?

Participant 3: I...**ishoti**, nezihlangu .. **iiflops**

Interviewer: Oh, OK. **Ngushoti** wantoni, **wes'kolo**?

Participant 3: Ah ah, **webeach** for xa kushushu ... kunye **nepijama**.

Interviewer: *What did your father come to buy for you in Canal Walk?*

Participant 3: *Short(s), and shoes, flops.*

Interviewer: *Oh, OK. What shorts, school shorts?*

Participant 3: *Ah ah, the beach ones for when it is hot, and pyjamas*

Interviewer: Uthe uzothenga ntoni sisi?

Participant 4: Ndiyawindow-shopa, andithengi, ndijonga izihlangu .. **neetoys**, for umntanam.

Interviewer: Qha? OK, enkosi kakhulu.

Interviewer: *What did you say you came to buy sisi?*

Participant 4: *I'm window-shopping, I'm not buying, I am looking at the shoes ... and toys for my child.*

Interviewer: *Only? OK, thank you very much.*

Interviewer: Uzothenga ntoni aph'eCanal Walk?

Participant 5: Ndizokhangela **ibhola** for **isoccer**, ndizakuqala apha kwaMr Price Sport, ndithenge impahla nezinto ezinjalo for **ijim**. Emva koko ndifuna ukuya eFoschini ukuyokhangela **iperfum** for umamam.

Interviewer: *What did you come to buy in Canal Walk??*

Participant 5: *I'm looking for a soccer ball by Mr Price Sport, and to buy clothes etc. for the gym. After that I want to go to Foschini to buy perfume for my mom*

3.6.3.1 Analysis of captured audio

In these 5 short interviews there were 25 loanword nouns out of a total of 34 nouns, not including the names of shops. The loanword nouns thus formed 74% of the total noun count. This is 10% less than the loanwords used in the Data Set 1 (translated sentences), and the Class 9 loanwords in these extracts only form 64% of the total number of loan words (16 out of the 25), whilst in Data Set 1 they formed 74% of the total. Class 10 loanwords formed 12% of the total number of loanwords (3 out of the

25) while Class 1a loanwords also made up 8% of the total, almost the same as for Data Set 1 which had 10% Class 1a loanwords. Class 7 also had 2 loanwords (8%). Class 6 had just the one (thus 4% of the total) loanword – *amabhanana*. Class 2a also had just one word – *ooshoti* – (4% of the total).

Comparison of loanword noun classes Data Sets 1 and 2

NOUN CLASS	DATA SET 1	DATA SET 2
9	74%	64%
1a	10%	8%
7	3%	8%
10	13%	12%
2a	-	4%
6	-	4%

3.6.4 Data Set 4: Further capture of loanwords according to noun classes

Over the period of two weeks following the pilot stage, I tabulated all loanwords encountered in a variety of naturally occurring data sources. I then populated Noun Class charts with these loanwords. I supply the domain in which the loanword nouns were sourced in the third column of each chart.

Table 3: Noun Class 1a loanwords sourced over two-week period (31 nouns in total)

No	isiXhosa loanword	English meaning	Domains in which loanword was heard
1	udrayiva	driver	Numbers 1 to 6 were gathered from listen to everyday conversations picked up from primary school kids.
2	ueighteen	eighteen	
3	uninenty	ninety	
4	u2017	2017	
5	unumber 1	number 1	
6	u3 (ngo-3)	3 o'clock (at 3pm)	
7	upinki	pink	Numbers 7 to 10 -from a couple of conversations overhead at a shop
8	uwhite	white	
9	ublack	black	
10	uyellow	yellow	
11	UFebruwari	February	Numbers 11 to 16 - from school children' conversations
12	UJuni	June	
13	UMatshi	March	
14	UApril	April	
15	umatshini	machine	
16	udyoki	joker	
17	UMercedes Benz	Mercedes Benz Company	Number 17 occurred in a conversation I had at a shop
18	umajayivana	jiver (dancer)	Numbers 18 to 23 - from Bona magazine
19	usisi	sister	
20	ukhazi	cousin	
21	upoloneki	poloneck	
22	ushoti	shorts	
23	ulavi	lovey	
24	uronta	rondavel / round house	Numbers 24 and 25 on Facebook pages
25	uWhy	Why (as an abstract noun used as <i>UWhy-me-Lord</i>)	
26	UWhatsapp	Whatsapp	Numbers 25 to 28 - from university students and other people at the university
27	UVula	Vula (an electronic noticeboard)	
28	UFacebook	Facebook	
29	UGoogle	Google	
30	UX	X (as in mark X here)	
31	upayipi	pipe	School activity sheet Government information document

3.6.4.1 Analysis of collected loan words

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 1a

From the above list we can deduce the following:

IsiXhosa-speakers use the Class 1a prefix **u-** when numbers act as nouns

IsiXhosa-speakers insert the Class 1a prefix **u-** in front of numbers when those numbers are not qualifying a noun, but are performing the function of a noun.

Compare the following two sentences:

Umntwana wam ufunda ku-3. (My child is in Grade 3.)

Abantwana bam abayi-3 bafunda ku-3. (My three children are in Grade 3.)

In the first sentence *u-3* is standing for a Grade (in other words it is performing a metonymic role). In the second sentence the 3 is in Class 9 as we can see by the use of the noun prefix *i-* (*i-3*) as it is now qualifying the noun *abantwana* and therefore requires the relative concord (*aba-*) agreeing with *abantwana* followed by the copulative *yi-* of *i-3* forming *aba-y(i)-i-3* → *abayi-3*. Other examples of numbers being used in Class 1a or when house numbers are used, e.g. *Inamba yendlu ngu4* (The number of the house is 4) as well as when octane ratings of petrol are referred to, e.g. *u95* or *u-unleaded*.

According to Du Plessis and Visser (1992:293) numeral final stems “exhibit the prefix of the noun as agreement morpheme, exactly as in the case of adjectival stems”, although, as I have argued, they are actually used as relative stems, not adjectival stems. It is also important to note that when borrowed numerals are used as ordinals they revert to Class 9. The possessive of the qualified noun is prefixed to the borrowed numeral in Class 9, e.g. *umhlathi we-6* (sixth paragraph).

IsiXhosa-speakers use the Class 1a prefix **u-** when colours act as nouns

Loanword colours, when not qualifying a noun also fall into Class 1a, e.g. *U-mustard* (see Figure 1 below) however, unlike numbers, when qualifying nouns they do not act as do numbers by taking a Class 9 prefix, but are rather used as relative stems, e.g. *ijin emustard* (mustard jeans). The *e-* of *emustard* in this case is the relative concord

referring to *ijin* (formed by prefixing a-SC → a- + i- → e-). There is no copulative concord needed in this case.

The colour term ‘*umustard*’ used in Class 1a in BONA (June 2013:48)

ADODA

UMustard OMHLE

Vuselela iwodrophu yakho ngezi nyanga zasebusika ngomnye wemibala ephambili yale sizini, umustard yellow.

AMACEBO

- Iindondo zelanga ezifanela umustard zezinavy, upurple nomaroon/uburgundy.
- Ukuba uyawuthanda umbala kodwa awufuni wadlule isinxibo sakho, yongeza kwisinxibo ezifana izinto ezifana nezihombo ezifana neekepi, izihlangu okanye iibhegi.
- Ukudibanisa ibhulukhwe emustard nesheti yedenim yindlela elula yokuzama olu hlobo.
- Ijezi emustard okanye iicardigans zikwalungele ukwaleka. Kwezo ntsuku zibandakakhulu, yaleka ijezi ngaphezulu kwesheti yakho usigqibezele esi sinxibo ngokunxiba ijakethi ngaphezulu.

INKANGELEKO 1:

1. Ibeenie, R249.99, Icon Brands, Stuttafords 2. Ijakethi, R299.99, Jet 3. Itophu, R99.90, Jay Jays 4. Ijini, R499, Zara 5. Iisneakers, R89.99, Jet

INKANGELEKO 2:

1. Isheti, R119.99, Mr Price 2. Ijezi, R379, Zara 3. Ibhulukwe, R249, Jay Jays 4. Iiloafers, R119.99, Jet

Ibhulukhwe, R249.99, Mr Price

Ibhanti, R59.95, Jet

Isheti yedenim, R399, LTD, Truworths

UBENJE

IsiXhosa speakers use the Class 1a prefix u- when loanwords refer to colours and months of the year

Loanwords for months of the year also fall into Class 1a, e.g. *uJanuwari*, *uFebruwari* – sometimes the phonology is adapted to that of isiXhosa in writing, in other instances the English word is not tampered with. Even in speech, some speakers of isiXhosa do not bother to adapt the names of English months to suit the phonology of isiXhosa phonology and rather on to pronounce the month as they would in English.

IsiXhosa speakers use the Class 1a prefix u- for company names

The names of companies generally fall into Class 1a. No. 17 above, *uMercedes Benz*, is an interesting example. This was taken from a conversation I had with a stranger about a burning Ford Kuga, (a car that had recently been in the news headlines). The speaker used two different noun classes (1 and 9) to refer to Mercedes Benz. He said:

UMercedes Benz yicompany eright because iMercedes Benz soze ikushiye esithubeni isentsha. (Mercedes Benz is a good company because Mercedes Benz will never abandon you if it's new).

When I asked the speaker why he used different prefixes (those of Classes 1a, and 9), he explained that by *u-* he was referring to the **company** (conceptualized as personal noun belonging to Class 1a) and by *i-* he was referring to the actual car as an object.

The following phrase taken from the newspaper Vukani (City Vision, Thursday 9 November 2017:5) is another example of a company going into Class 1a:

UBuntu Bethu Burial Society ngumbutho wobuhlobo ka masingwabane owasekwa ngo 2015. (UBuntu Bethu Burial society is a friendly burial organization that was formed in 2015.)

In the above example both the name of the society (*UBuntu Bethu Burial Society*) and the type of organization (*ka masingwabane*) fall into Class 1a. In the second instance, the possessive formative *ka-* is written disjunctively but should, in fact, be written together with the noun *umasingwabane* (burial society) which loses its initial vowel in after the possessive marker *ka-* in *kamasingwabane*.

These examples demonstrate that borrowed nouns are not static but will be afforded different noun class prefixes depending on the context (Oosthuysen: 2016; 28).

IsiXhosa speakers can use the Class 1a prefix *u-* for loanwords that refer to people

Pahl (1972:14) explains that Class 1a is used with the prefixes *no-* (for females) and *so-* (for males) although when used with borrowed nouns the gender seems irrelevant, e.g. *unoteksi* (taxi driver), *unovenkile* (shop keeper). In Table 3 the only strictly personal nouns in Class 1a that were new were *udyoki* (joker) and *umajayivana* (jiver).

IsiXhosa speakers use the Class 1a prefix *u-* for proper nouns referring to social media

As can be seen in Table 3, all proper nouns referring to social media (and even university media for such as VULA – an electronic noticeboard) are in Class 1a. The following is a good example of how these proper nouns are used in a sentence from the isiXhosa version of the isiZulu newspaper *Isolezwe*²⁸:

²⁸ <https://www.google.com/search?q=utwitter+wam&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-b-ab>

Ungasindwendwela **kuFacebook** (Iisolezwe) okanye **uTwitter**. (You can visit us on Facebook (Isolezwe) or Twitter.

IsiXhosa speakers use the Class 1a prefix u- for some nouns that have a cylindrical, hollow element

It is difficult to argue why polonecks, shorts and pipes all fall into Class 1a, but if one examines the one thing they have in common it is that they are all cylindrical and hollow – see items 21 *upoloneki*, 22 *ushoti* and 31 *upayipi*. This theory would require more data collection and analysis to make ‘cylindrical shape’ a defining property for miscellaneous nouns that fall into this noun class. In terms of the clothes, it is interesting to note that the items encircle a part of the body.

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 1

As there were very few noun Class 1 loanword nouns (only 6) produced by speakers or spotted in magazines or social media during the data collection process I have not included a table of these six words but merely produce them here. *Umpakishi* (packer) was overheard in a shop; *umfoti* (photographer) and *umfama* (farmer) were both heard on uMhlobo weNene (Xhosa Radio). *Umkorekishi* (corrector) was used by a colleague in African Languages, and *umbhaptizishi* (baptizer) was a loan noun used at church.

It is interesting to note that of the six words collected three of them (50%) are derived from adopted verbs that use *-ish-*: *umpakishi* (from *ukupakisha* ‘to pack’), *umkorekishi* (from *ukukorekisha* ‘to correct’) and *umbhaptizishi* (from *ukubhaptizesha* ‘to baptize’). Koopman (1994:244) is of the opinion that, the *-ish-* suffix seems to be a common occurrence when adopting verbs, but did not test to what extent these *-ish-* verbs are productive in producing loan nouns. A quick test of a number of adopted verbs using the *-ish-* extension does not suggest that these verbs automatically go into Class 1 when nominalized, e.g. *uku-lecture-isha* (to lecture) has the corresponding noun in Class 9, not Class 1, being *ilecturer* (lecturer) and the personal noun from *uku-thayil-isha* (to tile) being ‘tiler’ (someone who tiles) is *ithayila* in Class 9.

Table 4: Noun Class 3 loanwords sourced over two-week period (12 nouns in total)

No	isiXhosa loanword	English meaning	Domains in which loanword was heard
1	umdyarho	race	Heard on radio
2			
3	umdaniso	dancing	
4	umgaranto	guarantee	
5	umkinkisho	ration	Heard from farm workers
6	umkero	a cross [as a correction mark]	Heard from school children
7	ummejariso	measurement	
8	umpaso	present bought for a child that passed a grade	
9	umdrowusho	drawing	
10	umkorekisho	correction	Random chats by a group of girls at Grand West going to an engagement party Heard in a chat with a woman who knits for leisure
11	umngejo	engagement	
12	umtshayina	gambling game	
13	umjemo	jamming	
14	umnito	knitting	Heard at work
15	umkorekisho	correction	
16	umgowo	hectic time	

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 3

Data collection process revealed a couple of Class 3 loanword nouns, such as *umgowo* ‘a hectic time’ from the loanword verb *ukugowa* ‘to be frantic’, - from the English ‘go’, the isiXhosa also sometimes realized as *ukugowisha*. This word was given to me by one of our Honours students, and a discussion of its etymology can be found on Youtube²⁹ where one of the discussants says that when people ask him what the word means he responds “I’m like ... babes, listen to the word – *ngumgowo* – it’s a ‘go’ that has a ‘woe’.”³⁰

²⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryyqMgamtE4>

³⁰ As above at 1:19 mins in

There are also words like No. 1 *umdyarho* 'race' (from Afrikaans 'jag'); No. 8 *umpaso* 'present' more specifically a term used for any present that is bought for a child that passed to the next grade at school, derived from the English word 'pass' (and via the loanword verb *ukupasa* 'to pass'). *Umtshayina* is a gambling game and is portrayed nicely below in an article in *Uvo Lwethu Express* (Jan 14, 2015) *Ukuwina lotto onkanye [sic] umtshayina* (to win the lotto or a gambling game). The name *umtshayina* has its origins in the word *iTshayina* (Chinese person) as the Chinese would have first introduced the game to South African township dwellers. Initially the only loanword noun in Class 3 that occurred during the data collection process was *umgowo* (frantic time) as discussed above. This noun demonstrates that the rule for creating Class 3 nouns from verbs has been followed: the nominalizing suffix -o is made use of instead of -i which would be the suffix used for Class 1 noun. Compare: *umdanisi* (dancer – Class 1) with *umdaniso* (dance - Class 3). *Umkorekisho* (correction) comes from the tick (✓) that the teachers use when they mark a word or sentence correctly. The same goes for *umdrowusho* (drawing) - children would say, for instance, *umdrowusho wam umhle kunokaSipho* (my drawing is nicer than Sipho's). *Umpaso* is a gift that a child gets for passing from one grade to another and is derived from the English word 'pass'. For instance, a school goer can brag to his friends that *umpaso wam uzakuba yicellphone* (my gift for passing will be a cellphone). Later on in the research more words were encountered as shown in the list above. Therefore although initially this class did not present itself as productive for loanwords, my research has shown that in terms of deverbatives, nouns derived from verbs, this noun class could prove to be increasingly useful, as so many verbs are now being adopted from English.

Table 5: Noun Class 5 loanwords sourced over a two-week period (25 nouns in total)

No	isiXhosa loanword	English meaning	Domains in which loanword was heard	
1	Itikiti (i(li)tikiti)	ticket	Numbers 1 to 3 - conversations at Traffic Department	
2	ipolisa	police		
3	ivili	wheel (Afr. <i>wiel</i>)		
4	iapile	apple	Numbers 4 to 16 are conversations picked up from a shop	
5	ikhandlela	candle		
6	iorenji	orange		
7	ikhaphetshu	cabbage		
8	ibhanana	banana		
9	ikhadi lebhanka	bank card		
12	inatshisi	naartjie		
14	ipere	pear		
15	iphepha	paper		
16	ilaphu	cloth (Afr. <i>lappie</i>)		
17	ilepile	spoon (Afr. <i>lepel</i>)		Numbers 17-25 were picked up from general conversations
18	iBhulu	Afrikaner (Afr. <i>boer</i>)		
19	ifele	skin (Afr. <i>vel</i>)		
20	iplasi	farm (Afr. <i>plaas</i>)		
21	ibhantinti	bandit (robber in English) bandido in Portuguese)		
22	ilweyile	nappy/diaper, (Afr. <i>luier</i>)		
23	itshefu	handkerchief		
24	irakethi	racket		
25	itenki	tank		

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 5

The dominant loanword nouns in this Class are the names of fruit and vegetables and documents and cards. *Ibhanana* 'banana' is glossed as a Class 9 word in *The Greater Dictionary of isiXhosa Vol.1* (Tshabe and Shoba, 2006:129) but the speaker used it with all the concords of Class 5, e.g. *Eli bhanana libolile* (This banana is rotten). It has been noted that:

In isiXhosa words borrowed from other languages are predominantly placed in class 9/10, e.g. *iibhanana* (bananas). However, in the related isiNguni language isiZulu borrowed words tend to be placed in class 5/6, influencing some isiXhosa speakers to follow suit, speaking, for example, of *amabhanana* (bananas). (Oosthuysen, 2016:31)

Table 6: Noun Class 7 loanwords collected over a two-week period (23 nouns in total)

No	isiXhosa loanword	English meaning	Domains in which loanword was heard
1	ispika	speaker	These borrowed nouns (numbers 1-5) were from a couple of conversations heard at Traffic Department
2	isipili	mirror (Afr. <i>spieël</i>)	
3	isitalato	street (Afr. <i>straat</i>)	
5	isikhephe	boat (Afr. <i>skip</i>)	
7	istayile	style	
8	isiketi	skirt	Numbers 6-11 - from a couple of conversations overheard being used in a shop
9	ispreyi senwele	hair spray	
10	iswekile	sugar (Afr. <i>suiker</i>)	
11	isitatshi	starch	
12	isiNgesi	English	
13	isiTshayina	Chinese	Numbers 12-14 - from departmental telephonic conversations enquiring about courses offered
14	isiFrentshi	French	
15	istatus	status	
16	isikolo	school (Afrik. <i>skoel</i>)	
17	isipani	work (Afrik. <i>span</i>)	Numbers 15-23 - from everyday general conversation
18	isipoko	ghost (Afrik. <i>spook</i>)	
19	isitampu	stamp (Afrikaans / Eng)	
20	isitupu	stoep (Afrik. <i>stoep</i>)	
21	isitroyi	straw (Afr.)	

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 7

Almost half of the words collected (47%) have their etymology in Afrikaans while other, newer adoptives, like *istatus* (status) are from English. Mostly all loanword nouns in this class begin with 's' in their original languages except for hair spray in number 9 and languages *isiFrentshi* (French language). It is interesting to note that in isiXhosa, when the noun root -Frentshi falls into Class 9, *iFrentsh* it no longer refers to the language but to 'polony' and is sometimes advertised on Xhosa signs without any prefix as can be seen on this informal trader's shop in Masiphumelele, a township just outside Fish Hoek in the Western Cape.



Table 7: Noun Class 9 loanwords sourced over a two-week period (59 nouns in total – list could be much longer)

No	isiXhosa loanword	English meaning	Domains in which loanword was heard
1	iannual report	annual report	from everyday conversations
2	iapplication form	application form	
3	ialarm	alarm	
4	iautomatic	automatic	
5	itshizi	cheese	
6	iketile	kettle	
7	ikhitshi	kitchen	
8	ishampo	shampoo	
9	isali	saddle, (Afr. <i>saa</i>)	
10	isushi	sushi	
11	iNUM	NUM (acronym for National Union of Mineworkers)	
12	isophoro / isaphala	supper – responses I got from different dialect backgrounds	
13	ibhodi	board	
14	iMercedes Benz	Mercedes Benz (the car)	
15	ishop	shop	from Bona magazine
16	iturbocharger	turbocharger	
17	ivalve	valve	
18	icoolant	coolant	
19	ialternator	alternator	
20	ibattery	battery	
21	ijampas	jumper lead	
22	iregulator	regulator	
23	ispark plug	spark plug	
24	ipini	pin	
25	igarlic	garlic	
26	imajarina	margarine	
27	ioats	oats	
28	itreyi	tray	
29	ionti	oven	
30	ibhutsi	boot	
31	iwayini	wine,	
33	idayethi	diet	
34	iwigi	wig	
35	ihomoni	hormone	
36	imaski	musk	
37	ikawusi	sock (Afr. <i>kous</i>)	

38	ivitamini	vitamin	From campus interactions
39	ifowuni	phone	
40	ikhompyutha	computer	
41	iofisi	office	
42	iyunivesithi	university	
43	istudent number	student number	
44	iwayifayi	Wi-Fi	
45	iti	tea	
46	ikofu	coffee	
47	ibhaloni	balloon	
48	imammogram	mammogram	
49	idinala	dinner	
50	iloli	lorry	
51	idrinki	drink	
52	itelevizhini / iTV	TV	
53	idonki	donkey	
54	irhamente	congregation (Afr. <i>gemeente</i>)	
55	ihafu	half	
56	ibhiya	beer	
57	ilokhwe	dress, (Afr. <i>rok</i>)	
58	ilisti	list	
59	ichilli flakes	chilli flakes	

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 9

As can be observed from this list Class 9 is an extremely productive class for loanwords and is becoming more so as technological innovations and new terminologies and concepts proliferate. An interesting phenomenon to note is the use of the English plural suffix -s for singular Class 9 loanword nouns e.g. number 27 *i-oats* (oats) and number 59 *ichilli flakes* (chilli flakes): in both of these instances a singular Noun Prefix *i-* is used with a plural English suffix -s, instead of the plural Noun Prefix only, as in **ii-oat*. A reason for this could be that the substances or items referred to by the English source words such as oats and chilli flakes are rarely thought of in the singular but to isiXhosa speakers they are treated as if they were mass nouns, like *iswekile* (sugar) which are assigned to a singular noun class.

Also important to note is the way in which a particular domain, for example mechanics, generates so many loanword nouns (see numbers 16-23).

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 11 and 14

Very few loanwords nouns were encountered in Class 11 during the data collection process – *uvoto* (election) from the loanword verb *-vota* (vote) and *utshintsho* (change) from the loanword verb *-tshintsha* (change), *usayino* (signing), *urekhodisho* (recording).

Class 14 is also not too productive when it comes to loanwords but a few was found such as, *ubuvolontiya* (volunteering), *ubumeya* (mayorship), and *ubudom* (stupidity) by prefixing the Class 14 prefix *ubu-* to the Afrikaans word *dom* (stupid). Oosthuysen notes that apart from some miscellaneous nouns “nouns of Class 14 consist of abstract and semi-abstract nouns derived from other parts of speech” (Oosthuysen, 2016:42).

Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 15

This could be a very productive noun class for loanwords since it also contains gerunds, for example, *ukudriblisha* ‘dribbling / to dribble’, *ukuhamisha* ‘humming / to hum’, *ukuslimisha* ‘slimming / to slim’, *ukufeyila* ‘failing / to fail’, *ukupasa* ‘passing / to pass’, *ukupripherisha* ‘to prepare / preparing’, *ukuprektiza* ‘practicing / to practice’, *ukuvisitha* ‘visiting / to visit’, *ukumiksa* ‘mixing / to mix’, *ukusheyikha* ‘shaking / to shake’) *ukureyida* ‘raiding / to raid’, *ukusota* ‘sorting / to sort’, *ukuareyinja* ‘arranging / to arrange’, *ukusayina* ‘signing / to sign’, *ukushawarisha* ‘showring / to take a shower’, *ukuseyiva* ‘saving / to save’, *ukusalutha iflegi* ‘saluting the flag / to salute the flag’ but the focus of this study was on nouns that did not have an infinitive / gerund use. This limited my search and I would suggest a focused study just on this noun class for future scholars of isiXhosa.

There is something very interesting about the noun *ubuvolontiya* ‘volunteering’ from Class 14. Depending on the context, this word can also fall in Class 5 *ivolontiya* ‘a volunteer’ and in Class 15 as *ukuvolontiya* ‘the act of volunteering’ as shown in Umhlobo wenene programme “Isikhokelo kwezemfundo”³¹. They had the topic below and invited listeners to discuss it, and the theme was:

31

https://www.facebook.com/mhlobowenenefm/posts/1961579087228365?comment_id=1961583573894583&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R0%22%7D

Ukuba livolontiya njengenye yendlela zokufumana ulwazi nangokwempangelo:- khawabelane nathi ngamava akho okuba livolontiya, kwaye yakunceda ngantoni lonto, iyintoni eyakukhuthaza ukuba uzinikele ekubeni ube livolontiya.

Being a volunteer as one way of getting knowledge:- please share with us your experience of being a volunteer and how this helped you, and what motivated you to become a volunteer.

These are some of the responses 3 listeners gave:

*“Kubalulekile kakhulu **ukuvolunteer** msasazi. I-experience yomsebenzi ungayifumana ingakumbi xa usebenza neeNGOs.”*

It is very important to volunteer presenter. You can get work experience, especially if you work with the NGOs.

*“Ndicinga ukuba kubalulekile **ukuvolontiya** msasazi.”*

I think it is important to volunteer presenter....

*“Kodwa ngoku sekuqashwana ngobutshomi ayisathethi into **yobuvolontiya** ...”*

But now appointments are about friendships volunteering does not count anymore ...

3.6.5 Data Set 5: Loanwords on Social Media - Facebook

Social Media pages demonstrate a high degree of loanword nouns. The following extract taken from an anonymous Facebook page³² is typical in that whole phrases as well as nouns are borrowed from English without losing the overall isiXhosa style of the writer's narrative³³. The loanword nouns are bold and underlined for ease of analysis. I do not include acronyms or brand names or bank names as loanword nouns. Loanword nouns are in bold.

1. *Hi **admin**, please add U uhlala e... and usebenza e Rivonia e NedBank. **Inumber** yake is Aka batali **Imaintenance**, uyohlule **icourt**.*
2. *Sifaka **iphoto** zamadoda angodliyo apha ase EC nezinye ke izixeko*
3. *Sifaka **ipicture** zoo Toky bethu sibabiza ngamagama abo sibaveze babonwe into abazizo*
4. ***iGrant** inyukile ngoku no more #izinja ezingondliyo andithi **galz**?*
5. *...yohlulakala njanina **lcourt** **lganish** kanti isebenza kwabatheni*

³² <https://www.facebook.com/YondlaniZinja/>

³³ I have left the narrative exactly as it appeared and have not corrected the orthography or spelling mistakes

6. **IGRANTI** YONA KU YEKABANI.KRKRKR
7. wasiwa umntana kowabo kodwa wath ufuna **iDNA test**,but bath abazali makuqale kulindwe makhulu womfana Azo fanisa umntana till now ...
8. usassa uyinkunzi. iindoda emadodeni, ayikho indoda efana nosassa
9. ... ingathi baworse aba basemthethweni but **imaintenance court** is failing us ...
10. Ngcono le **group** itshintshe, kungathiwa yintoni igama layo..
11. -xa uyindoda kufuneka ube **nelimit** kwinto yoonke... nalapha kwii **jokes** uhleka nje haha uyeke.
12. ...kwa **icologne** yomtana ithengwa ndim kodwa lomntu uyakwazi undiqhatha athenge **icheap things** ndenze njani xa nding**ubhuti** apha **eSA**?
13. Sumnika **Mali ubaby mama** uthenge ngokwako
14. Ndimcelile siye **eCourt** for **iDNA**
15. La **R300** wawuyithumele yaphela

1. *Hi admin, please add ... who leaves at ... and works at Rivonia Nedbank. His number is ... He doesn't pay maintenance, the court has given up.*
2. *We post photos of men who are not feeding here at EC and other cities.*
3. *We post pictures of our dogs and call them by names and expose them.*
4. *The grant has gone up now no more un-feeding dogs isn't it girls?*
5. *How does the court fail. For whom does the garnish work.*
6. **WHOSE GRANT IS IT**
7. *The child was taken to his home but he said he wanted a DNA test but his parents said first wait for the guy's grandmother to check who the child resembles until now...*
8. *Sassa is the man of men, no man is like sassa*
9. *It looks like the legal ones are worse but maintenance court is failing us*
10. *Better change this group, what can it be called*
11. *When you are a man you need to have a limit in everything. Even for jokes you just laugh haha and stop*
12. *I even buy the child's cologne but this person can cheat on me and buy cheap things what can I do if I am a man in SA?*
13. *Do not give money to your baby mama and buy for yourself*
14. *I asked him to go to Court for DNA*
15. *That R300 you sent is finished*

3.6.5.1 Analysis of collected loanwords in Class 15

The above narrative exchange has 44 nouns in total, of which 25 are loanword nouns – making the loanword nouns count for 57% of the total.

Looking at the Facebook extract it is important to note that the writers consistently:

- use English nouns to refer to nouns that have anything to do with finance (e.g. *imali, igrant, imaintenance*)
- use isiXhosa verbs more frequently than loanword verbs
- generally use English when referring to ‘legal and scientific matters, e.g. ‘court’, ‘DNA test’ etc.
- generally puts all loanwords in Class 9 with the prefix *i-* and pluralizes in Class 10. The normal rules are applied for any phonological changes as in *iipicture zooToky (iipicture zika+uToky)* and *legroup (la+igroup)*
- uses Class 1a only when referring to a particular company - *usassa* (South African Social Security Agency)

It is important to note that not all nouns that are used in everyday isiXhosa conversations are of English origins. For example, in the above extract ‘Cologne’ is a word of French origin, short for *eau de Cologne* and ‘grant’ is from Old French *graunter*, (to promise, assure, guarantee)³⁴. The loanwords ‘picture’ and ‘photo’ in the above extract are commonly used in spoken isiXhosa – in fact it is very rare for to hear a young isiXhosa-speaker refer to *umfanekiso* the isiXhosa word for ‘picture’. Again, Classes 9 and 10 dominate in this extract. The inclusion of *R300* (with the preceding demonstrative for Class 9) is also an example of how all amounts of money are referred to using the Class 9 prefix (here elided because of the demonstrative).

Also important to note is the translation of qualified English nouns, e.g. ‘cheap things’ using the Class 9 prefix ‘*icheap things*’. The spelling was so erroneous in this extract that the writer might have been referring to ‘*iicheap things*’ - this use of the singular *i-* instead of the double *ii-* Class 10 plural for loanwords is often not spelt correctly. In fact one can see that *ipicture* should be *iipicture* because of the following possessive *zo-* (here incorrectly written disjunctively) preceding Toky, ‘of Toky’. If it were singular it would have been *yoToky*. The same error is evident with *iphoto zamadoda* – clearly the Class 10 prefix *ii-* is required *iiphoto*, because of the following possessive *za-* which must concord with a Class 10 noun.

³⁴ <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/grant>

3.6.6 Data Set 6: Geosemiotic survey of loanwords in isiXhosa signs



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

3.6.6.1 Analysis of geosemiotic survey of loanwords in isiXhosa signs

Above are notices found at Langa Clinic (Cape Town) and which contain a number of isiXhosa loanword nouns. The first picture shows *istola* for the noun 'store' short for 'store room'. In a case like this, isiXhosa, as well as isiZulu, morphological assimilation uses 'l' in place of 'r'. For this same word, (store) most people will keep the 'r' and say *istoro*, or *estorweni* depending on their background or dialect. The second picture shows a situation where a prefix 'i' is used and the loanword noun (pap smear) is kept as it is. *Kwiminyaka engama 30* refers to the number 'thirty' as a reference to age. This is a case where the number does not take prefix u- as mentioned earlier, because 30 in this instance stands for description of years using tens where '20' would be *amashumi amabini*; '30' *amashumi amathathu*; etc. Bangani (2006:38) writes the years in full when he says:

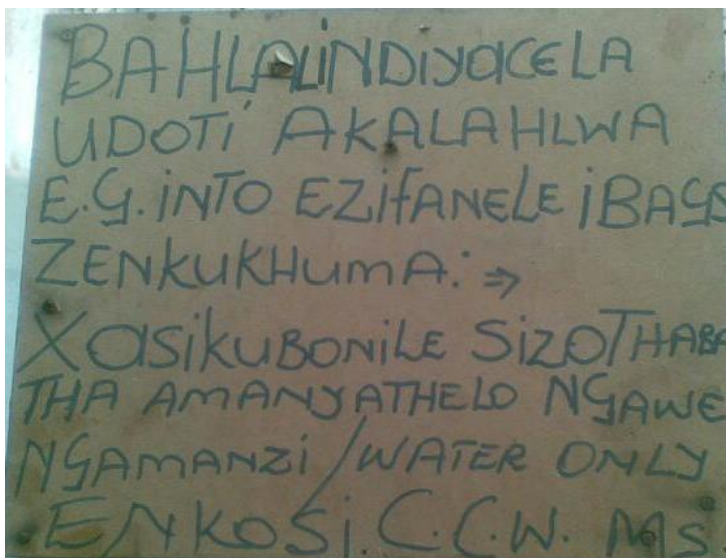
Emva koko baphuma umhlonitshwa nale ntokazi iminyaka ilishumi elinesihlanu. Umhlonitshwa engaphambili, yona ngasemva. After this the honourable one and this fifteen year old girl came out. The honourable one in front, and she (the girl) behind.

The third picture is just included to show that concurrently class 10 will be used for plural to some borrowed words that are found in class 9, for example *ikomityi* (cup) *iikomityi* (cups); *ibhotile* (bottle) *iibhotile* (bottles). Interestingly, the loanword noun for clinic is *ikliniki*, and in Picture 3 it is written with a capital 'K' suggesting that the loanword is referring to that particular clinic or the possibly to stress that it is the clinic the patient normally attends. It could also just be a case of faulty orthography, as the possessive *we-* is written disjunctively, suggesting that the sign was not proofread. It could be that proofreaders of isiXhosa are struggling to formulate the rules for how to spell, and apply the correct orthographic rules to, the many new loanwords that have entered the lexicon of contemporary isiXhosa. Thus, in connection with the ever expanding lexicon of isiXhosa, it is salutary to observe that in Picture 3, there are 12 nouns and exactly half of these are loanword nouns. This would indicate that in the domain of health English loanword nouns are extremely common.

The following homemade signs were spotted in Masiphumelele:

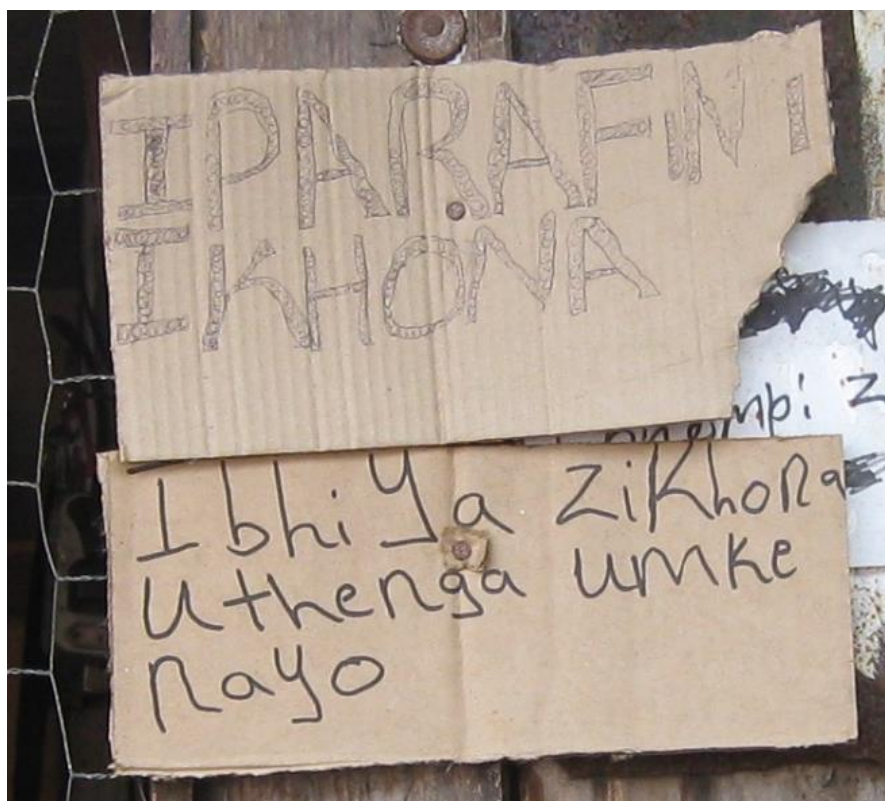
Picture 4

(Translation: Residents please don't dump rubbish, e.g. things like bags of rubbish. If we see you, we will take steps against you. It is water only. Thanks.)



Picture 5

(Translation: There is paraffin. There are beers, it's a take-away [literally: you buy and leave with one.])



In Picture 4 there is the Class 1a word *udoti* which is in fact an isiZulu loanword from the English 'dirt' (Doke et al., 1990:168). The loanword *ibags* is used with the singular Class 9 prefix *i-* and the English plural suffix retained. The following possessive evident in *zenkunkuma* again points to the fact that *ibags* is a Class 10 noun which should have the prefix of that class, being *ii-* for loanwords. Even with a native isiXhosa noun like *into* the writer has not provided the plural prefix of *izin-* - again we know that *into* should be a plural because of the following relative concord *ezi-* in *ezifanele*. In Picture 5 *iparafini* is in correctly prefixed with the Class 9 prefix *i-* but again the same error of not using the plural *ii-* for 'beers' is evident in *ibhiya zikhona*.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

4.1 Is it code-switching?

By way of conclusion we need to discuss why the loanwords in my corpus cannot be described as code-switching. In his article on *Conversational code-switching*, Gxilishe describes code-switching as having to be performed by someone who has "... enough knowledge of two (or more) grammatical systems to allow the speaker to draw from each system only those rules which the other shares, when alternating one language with another" (Gxilishe, 1992:93). Gxilishe explores in depth why people switch between languages and what could be the constraints on code-switching and explains that the constituent needs to be a free morpheme because if it is bound morpheme (such as -ing or -ed in English) then it "must be attached to other morphemes such as prefixes, roots, suffixes and pronominal stems" (Gxilishe, 1992:95).

In the Facebook extract the phrase 'maintenance court' consists of two free morphemes: maintenance + court, so the speaker can effortlessly incorporate this phrase into her narrative merely by using the noun class prefix of Class 9 *i-aintenance court*. Gxilishe also argues that code-switching is a "verbal skill requiring a large degree of linguistic competence in more than one language, rather than a defect arising from insufficient knowledge of one or the other" (Gxilishe, 1992:96).

Code-switching or the complete lack of adaptation of the adopted item to the adopting language is more prevalent in isiXhosa when adverbs, adverbial phrases and conjunctions are used, than when nouns are adopted. In example (1) (below) 'for real' is given no morphological or phonological adaptation by the speaker:

- 1) *lyenzeka le nto* for real.
SC9-happen this thing for real.

Nouns, however, must always have a noun prefix (unless they are used in the vocative) as in (2) below, e.g.

- 2) Driver! *Sizohamba nini?*
Ø-driver! SC1p.p.-FUT-go when?

Speakers may or may not phonologically adapt the English word when speaking isiXhosa. Examples (3) and (4) contrast two different speaker styles with the adopted word 'cupboard':

3) *I*-cupboard *yophukile*.
NPx9-cupboard SC9-broken

4) *I*khabathi *yophukile*.
NPx9-cupboard SC9-broken

Finally, in this conclusion I will look at reasons for loanwords being incorporated at such a rapid rate into isiXhosa and I will also try to posit explanations as to why certain loanwords gravitate to certain noun classes.

For example, why is the English word 'pipe' assigned to Class 1a / 2a in isiXhosa (*upipe* / *oopipe*), but the word 'tube' (in the same semantic field as 'pipe') is assigned to Class 9, where it is phonologically rendered as *ityhubhu*? Generally, *upipe* is described as "... related to the internal size, which expresses the fluid conveyance capacity." And tube is described as "... the outside diameter ..."³⁵ This indicates that *upipe* and *ityhubhu* are definitely two different items, and thus, even though they might look alike or work together, they will also be assigned to different noun classes in isiXhosa because of their semantic distinctness. We could argue that it is the fact that pipes can contain a substance, just like other nouns in Class 1a that can encircle body parts (*ushort*, *upoloneck*) that subconsciously prompts isiXhosa speakers to assign it to Class 1a. This theory is still in its infancy though, and more thorough research would have to be conducted to prove its validity.

Now I come to the question I posed at the start of this thesis "Is the way in which nouns are assigned prefixes a random process or is there some logical explanation?" Before embarking on answering the question as to why certain loanwords are assigned to certain noun classes, I need to analyse the reasons why people adopt nouns from other languages when speaking isiXhosa.

³⁵ <https://blog.projectmaterials.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Difference-between-pipe-and-tube.pdf>

4.2 Reasons for adopting nouns

New concepts and technology

Sometimes words are borrowed when there is a new concept that the other language does not have, for example, Wi-Fi for which there is no equivalent word in isiXhosa. If one wants to speak about Wi-Fi in one's daily conversation in isiXhosa, one will have to use phonological adaptation and add a prefix 'i' together with a final verb 'i' and get *iWiFi / iwayifayi* and as a result the noun will be classified as belonging to Class 9. O'Grady et al (1996:340) refer to this phenomenon as the filling of 'lexical' gaps – the addition of lexical items which 'is frequently the result of technological innovations or contact with other cultures'. In isiXhosa some new concepts are Facebook, Whatsapp and Twitter which are both afforded the prefix of Class 1a, rendering them *uFacebook*, *uWhatsapp* and *uTwitter*. An isiXhosa-speaking teenager talking to her peers about *i-Intanethi* (the internet), will be easily understood by her peer group, but if she mentions the same nouns to an illiterate adult, not only these "new" isiXhosa words, but the concepts themselves, might prove difficult to comprehend. Understanding some loanwords depends on the kind of interaction between speakers and sometimes their degree of bilingualism determines misunderstandings. The adopted noun would be understood when the process of adaptation where one will have to use the Class 9 prefix *i-*. This should give the adult or someone who is not literate, an indication that the noun that is used, has been adopted from English since this (as has been demonstrated in this thesis) is the preferred noun class for loanwords in isiXhosa. Whereas before isiXhosa purists would like to see the use of *isidanga* for a 'degree' and *isithwala-ndwe* for 'graduate' the majority of isiXhosa-speakers these days would opt for the loanword alternatives and would most likely use *idigri* for 'degree', *igraduate* for 'graduate', *igown* instead of *ingubo*; *ilist* instead of *uluhlu / uludwe* and *iguest of honor* instead of *undwendwe olubekekileyo*.

Prestige

It has been argued that "African languages are, through colonialism, held in low regard by many of their speakers, who believe that their national languages are primitive, inferior and unable to cope with technical elaboration. ..." (Van Huyssteen, 1999:180).

This negative attitude towards African languages is not confined to speakers of European languages only. Some scholars argue that there is a perception, even among Africans themselves 0“that anything Western is better than anything African” (Van Huyssteen, 1999:180). It could be this feeling that leads some speakers to prefer borrowed nouns instead of the original isiXhosa ones.

There could also be more practical reasons for the proliferation of loanwords in isiXhosa. A conversation with a 43-year-old Ilitha Park resident (Ilitha Park is a suburb in Khayelitsha, Western Cape), led to the following comment as to why isiXhosa has so many English loanwords:

Sometimes it is easier to grab the English word because it has one meaning.

This comment led me to think about polysemy in isiXhosa. According to O’Grady et al. (1996:270), polysemy occurs “when a word has two or more related meanings”. Sometimes (although certainly not all the time) the fact that the isiXhosa word has a number of different meanings could encourage a speaker to adopt an English loanword to avoid ambiguity. A good example of this would be the controversy around naming the Cape Town stadium in 2009. The following extract is from a newspaper report at the time:

Councillors were unanimous yesterday in their support of Cape Town Stadium as the name for the new facility being built for the World Cup, but there was some confusion about its Xhosa equivalent. Ikapa Stadium was first suggested, but then it was said that eStadium saseKapa would be more accurate. City director of legal services Lungelo Mbandazayo ended the debate by calling for the stadium to be Inkundla yezemidlalo Yasekapa (Lewis, 2009).

The problem with the suggested name (which was never taken up) lies in the use of the word *inkundla* which has many different meanings in isiXhosa. For example, it could refer to an area between the cattle kraal and the bare yard of the homestead or it could be used to denote the chief or headman and his councillors, or it might signify a law court (see Mini et al., 2003:647).

Sometimes words are borrowed even when there are existing lexical items in the borrowing language. Haspelmath (2009:35) asks “Why should speakers use a word from another language if they have a perfectly good word for the same concept in their own language?” He answers his question by positing that “speakers adopt new words

in order to be associated with the prestige of the donor language” (Haspelmath, 2009:48). Speakers of isiXhosa on uMhlobo weNene (the national radio station for the isiXhosa language) have been heard to use words like *inspirisha* ‘inspire’ instead of the isiXhosa equivalent *phembelela*; *threatenisha* ‘threaten’ in place of *songela* and *basurprised* “they are surprised” rather than *bothukile*. These loanwords are often used by preachers and subject specialists, indicating a desire on their part to appear knowledgeable in their areas of specialization.

Medium of instruction

Drame argues that “the education of isiXhosa speakers is mainly through English as medium of instruction and therefore English loanwords are integrated with a higher frequency (Drame, 2000:236). English is also seen as a prestige language and this means that as the time goes by, more speakers become familiar with loanwords to the extent to which they (loanwords) are used freely, with many people not knowing where the words came from originally and as a result, not even realizing that the words were borrowed from another language. Current theories on translanguaging describe the process as speakers using their:

full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages (Otheguy et al., 2015 :283).

What is remarkable about Bantu languages’ noun classes is the concordial agreement system, which makes it impossible to just borrow a noun from another language and indigenize it by giving it a noun class prefix. In a recent article Dowling and Krause (2017) argue that noun prefixes and the concordial system of isiXhosa allow teachers to give learners clues as to the metalinguistic information they are trying to get across. For example, if a teacher wants to speak about the English word ‘meaning’ in the abstract, she will prefix u- of Class 1a, but if she wants to integrate the word as part of the isiXhosa lexicon she will use i-. Compare:

Abstract use: *Umeaning ngesiNgesi ligama elithetha ngentsingiselo* (Meaning in English is a word that speaks of meaning)

Integrating into isiXhosa lexicon: *Ithini imeaning yakhe?* (What is its meaning?) (Dowling & Krause, 2017:16).

Life-style

Changes in life-style could be affecting the rate at which new words, from other languages, are adopted by speakers of isiXhosa. This phenomenon of new lifestyles affecting language is not confined to Africa. Taking an example from the Asian continent, in the tiny nation of Brunei the youth no longer use traditional words for Malaysian food as it is not as common as fast-food:

In Brunei younger people tend to know more about Western food like spaghetti or pizza than the traditional one because Western food are easier to make and available widely in fast food restaurants (Saxena, 2014:105).

Urban isiXhosa speakers, like the youth in Brunei, also adopt words to describe a new lifestyle and to identify themselves with new trends, styles and fashions. A new development is when these loans include an English adjective, e.g. the word 'white' in the English compound noun 'white wedding' will sometimes be further qualified by the speaker of isiXhosa who will add on the isiXhosa word for 'white' *mhlophe* which will agree with the adopted noun in Class 9, *iwedding*. In this way the English compound noun 'white-wedding' becomes an isiXhosa compound noun that consists of the compound loanword in Class 9 (*iwhite wedding*) with a qualifying adjective: *iwhite-wedding emhlophe* (a white white-wedding). This phenomenon also occurs with food, for example: *isonka esibrown esimdaka* (brown brown-bread) where the borrowed word 'brown' is further qualified by its isiXhosa equivalent *esimdaka*. This repetition can also be found in the lifestyle concept of 'long weekends' which are translated as *ilong-weekend ende* the isiXhosa *ende* merely being a repetition of 'long'.

Lifestyle adoptives also lead to the inclusion of many brand names as nouns, e.g. *icheckers* for plastic bag, *irama* for any kind of margarine or butter, *ipampers* for any kind of nappy and *icutex / ithyuteks* for any kind of nail polish as we saw in Table 2b (number 4 under "lifestyle"). An amusing example of a brand name being used twice to refer to one object is to be found in the following request *Khawundiphathele iColgate yeAquafresh* - 'Please get me some Aquafresh toothpaste' (Literally: Please get me some Colgate of Aquafresh). In terms of new foodstuffs, a quick browse through the recipe section of an isiXhosa Bona magazine (*Bona*, June 2000:98-104) suggests that translators are happy to succumb to the ease and accessibility of the loanword noun:

ILentil soup nespicy sausage
IPotato neHerb Bread
IMarvellous Malva Emnandi
IOrange Ring Cake

Other lifestyle adoptives relate to the luxuries that would not have been part of the rural isiXhosa speaking person's experience. Examples of these kind of adoptives are *imanityho* 'manicure', *imasaji* 'massage', *ifeyishiyali* 'facial' and *iweks* 'wax' as in *Imilenze yam ifuna iweks* (My legs need a wax).

Immigration

Most of the time, a common way in which languages come into contact with each other, is through movement of individuals or groups into other people's countries or regions. These movements can be spontaneous (e.g. holidays) but can also be deliberate, for example, movement done by people from the rural areas of the Eastern Cape to Cape Town – these people deliberately relocate for periods of time to seek work which is more readily to be found in an urban area. Sometimes these (movements) are forced, for example, people who are forced to run away from their country because of war, or people who are taken to other countries against their will as slaves. One of the reasons why speakers borrow words from other languages is immigration and the effects of speakers of one language making contact with speakers of other languages:

Historically, many conquered or colonized peoples, or those who have found themselves newly incorporated into a nation state, have felt the linguistic effects of these social changes only very slowly, giving rise to language contacts that have endured over decades, generations, or even centuries. (Sankoff, 2001:641).

Sankoff goes on to say that "..., the influence of immigrant languages on the language to which immigrants have shifted has also tended to be rather restricted, unless descendants of particular immigrant groups have been numerically dominant, or in a position such that their speech patterns influence those of the wider community rather than the reverse" Sankoff (2001:641). This means that, as much as borrowing of words from other languages happens, it comes with restrictions because if one's language is not dominant numerically, people can hardly borrow words from it. Thus

isiXhosa, Sesotho, Tshivenda etc, would rather borrow more words from English or Afrikaans than neighbouring, smaller, less globally influential languages.

Webb (2010) talks about another movement, that of missionaries and how this influenced standardisation of Bantu languages in South Africa:

French missionaries in the case of Sesotho cluster... German missionaries for Venda, and Swiss for Tsonga ... These missionaries developed orthographic systems ... wrote grammars, compiled dictionaries, translated the Bible into these languages and taught these languages in the schools they established” (Webb, 2010:168).

Webb goes on to mention that “Usually, the ‘standardisation’ was based on the dialects/varieties of the strongest tribes: ...based on the dialects of the Gcaleka (Transkei) and Ngqika (Ciskei) tribes...” (Webb, 2010:168). The importance of dialect cannot be ignored: if speakers now decide to borrow nouns from English and Afrikaans and incorporate them into their spoken isiXhosa, the prefixes they use to incorporate these new words into their lexicons will be influenced by their original dialects. So, for example, if a speaker’s dialect is strongly influenced by isiZulu, it might be that s/he will use the prefixes of Class 5/6 for loanwords.

4.3 Reasons for assigning loanword nouns to different classes

It is clear from the individual analyses of each singular noun class of isiXhosa that the majority of loanword nouns fall into Class 9. We can no longer safely assume that loanword nouns referring to occupations, for example, will fall into Class 1a, as my research has shown that it is common to find personal nouns such as *ilecturer* ‘lecturer’ and *itiler* ‘tiler; *ipeyinta* ‘painter’ in Class 9. At the same time Class 1a has become productive for the brand names of social media platforms, for example, *uFacebook* and *uWhatsapp*. I was unable to give a definitive explanation as to why certain loanword nouns such as *upayipi* ‘pipe’, *ushoti* ‘shorts’ and *upoloneck* ‘poloneck’ are assigned to Class 1a even though other people assign these to Class 9. I have tried to consider what they all share in common (a certain hollowness and a cylindrical shape) but, as discussed earlier, that would not fully explain why *ityhubhu* ‘tube’ does not have a Class 1a noun prefix. We could narrow down the semantics of clothes that are assigned to this class as already suggested (in the analysis of Data Set 2), that they must contain openings for parts of the body and we could also do an analysis of

the stress of the English words in this class to see whether there are any commonalities there. So far Rassman's (1977) theory of the stress on the syllables of the English word having a bearing on which noun prefix speakers will use for the loanword has not revealed any patterns to me, and I have been unable to draw any conclusions as to the link between English stress and Noun Class preference for adoptives.

My research also revealed that although Class 3 is a productive class for tree names of loanword origin it is still not a class that the average speaker uses when using loanword nouns, although it is becoming more productive when speakers create deverbative nouns from loanword verbs. Further research needs to be done on how these loanword verbs such as – *korekisha* and *danisa* are used to create loanword Class 3 nouns such as *umkorekisho* 'correction' / *umdaniso* 'dance' and whether and how we can predict which morphological contexts will result in such loanword noun creations.

Class 5 was substantially more productive than Class 3 but further research is needed to establish whether this noun class is gaining in popularity as a noun class for adoptives via influence from, and contact with, isiZulu. Class 7 was also productive as it had many borrowed nouns because its prefix is easily allocated to nouns that start with 's' such as *isitulo* borrowed from Afrikaans 'stoel' (chair) and *isitalato* borrowed Afrikaans 'straat' (street). The existence of the 's' in the prefix of Class 7 is also now predisposes English words that start with an 's' to be assigned to this class by speakers, to be heard, for example, in statements like *Ndithanda istyle sakho* 'I like your style'. However, there is variation in this practice, since I have heard some speakers use the concords of Class 7 with a word like *istadium* 'stadium' and others use the concords of Class 9. Clearly more research needs to be done concerning when to predict such variation.

Class 9 proved to be the most productive noun class for loanword nouns and all my data sets prove that this noun class is growing in popularity as more and more concepts, technologies and lifestyles are become common to speakers of isiXhosa.

Further research needs to be done on the area of loanword nouns in Classes 11, and 14, since although my data collection processes did not reveal many words from other languages in these classes. It is important to note that Class 11 is undergoing flux in

isiXhosa, and that some speakers are already assigning Class 11 nouns to Class 5 (Gowlett and Dowling, 2015). Class 11 can be used (like Class 3) for deverbative loanwords, for instance, *u(lu)voto* 'voting/election' and *u(lu)tshintsho* 'change'. So far only six of these were encountered but maybe there might be more, and I recently heard, on uMhlobo weNene an announcer use the word *ubudom* 'stupidity' from the prefix of Class 14 (which is frequently used to create abstract nouns) *ubu-* and the Afrikaans word *dom* for 'stupid'. Class 15 is more productive though as it also applies the same method, as shown by words like *ukupripherisha* (to prepare), or *ukumiksa* (mixing / to mix), from Class 15. From these classes, (Class 3, 11, 14 and 15) loanwords are by no means dormant and are clearly seen as viable options for creative speakers of isiXhosa who skilfully manipulate the semantics of these prefixes to generate interesting new words.

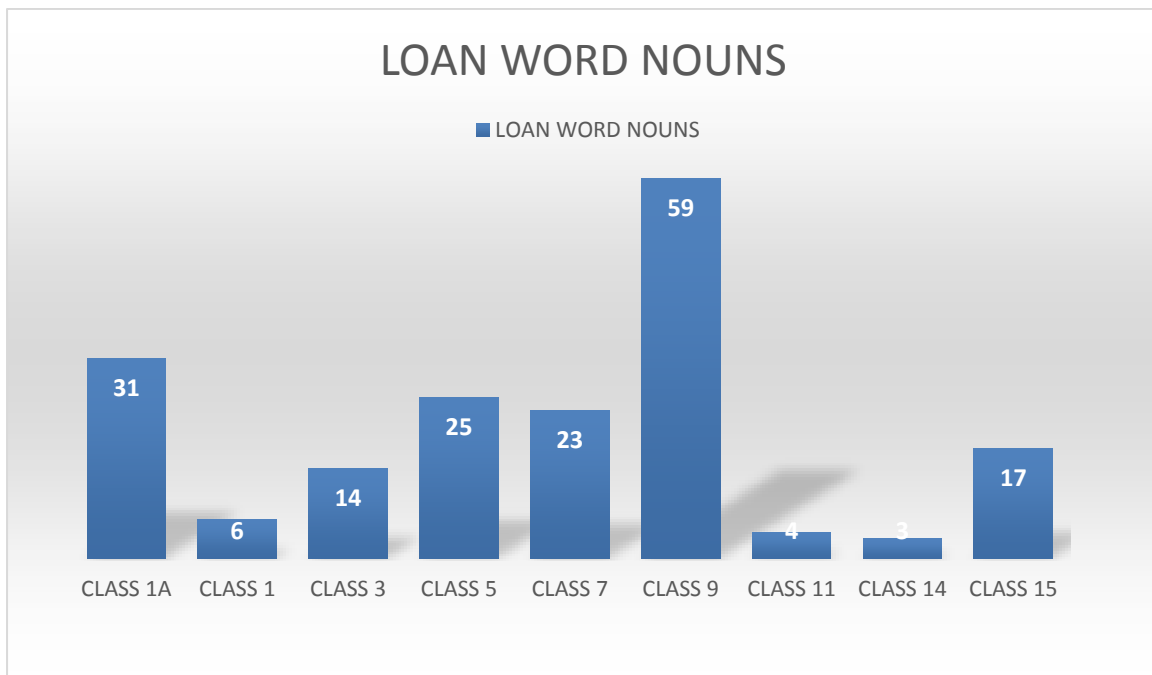
Earlier in this thesis I referred to Rassman's (1977) theory that the phonological shape the stress and the semantic significance of the original word all play a part in determining the noun class the loan word will fall into. It could be argued that the stress on the English words 'pipe' and 'shorts' could explain why these nouns are assigned a Class 1a prefix instead of a Class 9 prefix, but this theory still needs far more rigorous testing. Certainly, Rassman's theory is strong in terms of Class 7 becoming the repository for loanwords starting with 's' and Class 1a becoming productive for professions such as *utitshala* 'teacher' and *unesi* 'nurse'.

It needs to be acknowledged that some isiXhosa-speakers do not approve of the use loanwords. For example, I often hear isiXhosa-speakers use words like *ihabit*, *imotivation* and *iexercise* but when I speak about these new loanwords to other, possibly more linguistically conservative isiXhosa-speakers, they claim that the language already has words to express these nouns and ask why one would loan words that already are extant in the lexicon. They say things like "a habit is *umkhwa* in isiXhosa, motivation is *ukhuthazo*, and exercise is *umthambo*" and are critical of the way in which younger speakers seemed unaware of their tendency to rely heavily on the English lexicon. An anomaly in my research was the finding that some young women, who happened to be newly married, tended to want to use the more standard isiXhosa word, rather than a loanword. I believe that they were, at this stage in their lives, becoming aware of their identity as amaXhosa, having to adopt certain behaviours and attitudes befitting their people. This this sense of isiXhosa identity

(newly reinforced via marriage) might have made them hyper-correct when it came to producing lexical items for me.

Finally, I believe that the only way we can really understand which way the isiXhosa-language is developing is to conduct further in-depth research studies with speakers of all age groups and socio-economic classes. This will enable linguists to create meaningful lexical corpora with which to inform writers, educators and dictionary compilers.

Graph showing productivity for loanword noun creation according to noun class where $n = 182$



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