

# **BREAK AND BEND VERBS IN XITSONGA**

**BY**

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at the University of Stellenbosch.



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## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature

Date

## ABSTRACT

The break and bend verbs in Xitsonga forms part of the larger verb class of verbs of change of state. Such verbs show two events, i.e. a process and a transition. These verbs have been investigated in Xitsonga with regard to the following properties: the syntactic categories within which they may appear, the levels of representation within lexical semantics and their semantic features.

The break verbs in Xitsonga appear in three syntactic categories, i.e. transitive verbs, verbal roots with transitive and intransitive suffixes and ideophones, which may appear as derived verbs with transitive and intransitive suffixes. The bend verbs appear only as transitive or intransitive verbs, but they may have a shadow argument with the phrase [hi NP] which gives rise to instrument-subject alternation. Most of the bend verbs may also appear in structures with inalienable possession.

The break verbs have five semantic features: break, split and crack, smash and crush, demolish, tear. The bend verbs have six semantic features: bend, bend or fold, bend or twist, be crooked, lean over, kneel.

The break verbs, which may also appear, as ideophones are clear examples of ergative verbs in Xitsonga. Such verbs denote a change of state and they occur as both transitive and intransitive verbs.

## OPSOMMING

Die **breek-** en **buig**werkwoorde in Xitsonga vorm deel van die groter klas van werkwoorde, bekend as verandering-van-toestand ('change-of-state') werkwoorde. Hierdie soort werkwoorde vertoon twee tipes gebeure ('events'), naamlik proses en oorgang ('transition'). Hierdie werkwoorde word vir Xitsonga ondersoek met betrekking tot die volgende eienskappe: die sintaktiese kategorieë waarin hulle mag verskyn, die vlakke van representasie in die leksikale semantiek, en die semantiese kenmerke van hierdie werkwoorde.

**Breek**werkwoorde in Xitsonga verskyn in drie sintaktiese kategorieë, naamlik transitiewe werkwoorde, werkwoordstamme met transitiewe en intransitiewe suffikse, en ideofone, wat as afgeleide werkwoorde met transitiewe en intransitiewe suffikse mag verskyn. Die **buig**-werkwoorde mag slegs as transitiewe of intransitiewe werkwoorde verskyn, maar hulle mag 'n skadu-argument neem met die frase [**hi** NP], wat die instrument-subjek alternasie kan realiseer. Die meeste **buig**werkwoorde kan ook in strukture verskyn wat onvervreembare besit illustreer.

Die **breek**werkwoorde het vyf semantiese kenmerke: breek, kloof, kraak, slaan en druk, verwoes en skeur. Die **buig**werkwoorde het ses semantiese kenmerke: buig, vou, draai, gebuig wees, oorleen en kniel.

Die **breek**werkwoorde, kan ook as ergatiewe werkwoorde verskyn in Xitsonga. Sulke werkwoorde dui verandering-van-toestand aan, en hulle mag as beide transitiewe en intransitiewe werkwoorde verskyn.

## **NKOMISO**

Maendli yo ntlhantlha na yo petsa ya wela eka tinxaka ta maendli yo komba ku cinca ka xiyimo. Maendli lawa ya komba mahundzulukelo na mahundzuluxelo ya swilo eka xivulwa; na swona ya kambisisiwile hi ku landza vulongoloxamarito na tinhlamuselo ta wona eka ririmi ra Xitsonga.

Maendli yo ntlhantlha ya nga humelela hi ku landza tinhlamuselo leti va ka kona eka riendli hi ku landza nhloko-mhaka; rimitsu ni xilandzi xa rona. Maendli yo ntlhantlha ya komba tinhlamuselo leti landzelaka: faya; pandza; kherha; phyandlasa; hlanhla na handzula.

Maendli yo petsa ya komba tinhlamuselo leti landzelaka: petsa; khotsa; ghova; khinya; soholota; hamboloka; voyama na nkhinsama.

## **DEDICATION**

*I would like to dedicate this study to:*

*My beloved loving parents*

*My dearest husband Magigwani Maurice and  
my sisters Sophy and Nelly Malungani*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank the Almighty God for making my task a success; without His help and strength this work would still only exist in my mind; but because of God's grace, I am what I am today.

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to Professor JA du Plessis who has been wonderful in terms of his intellectual resources, kindness; assistance; encouragement and the care he showed me since I started with this study. I point out that, without his constructive guidance, this research would not have been a success.

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I am grateful to my grandson, MD Ratshivhumo for everything you have done for me. I thank you. May God bless you "Rachi".

Finally and most significantly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Ms Karin Vergeer who typed this work with diligence, dedication and accuracy. May God bless you.

**MAY THE NAME OF THE LORD BE PRAISED!**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine the Break and Bend verbs in Xitsonga. With this view the literature will be examined to find out what writers say about the Break and Bend verbs within the concept of verb classes.

A semantic as well as a syntactic analysis of Break and Bend verbs will be attempted, with attention to the syntactic categories of such verbs, the argument structure and the selection restrictions. The analysis of these verbs will be done within the assumptions of lexical semantics.

This study will thus look into the syntactic distribution of these Break and Bend verbs in Xitsonga. It will examine the different syntactic constructions associated with the Break and Bend verbs as well as the semantic properties of these verbs. It will also be investigated if Break and Bend verbs have a syntactic similarity because they are both referred to as verbs of change of state.

The Break and Bend verbs will also be analyzed with regard to the syntactic categories within which these verbs may be classified. The argument structure of these verbs will be investigated taking into consideration the assignment of arguments by these verbs. The selection restrictions of the arguments of Break and Bend verbs will be thoroughly examined and also the event structure and the lexical conceptual paradigm to look into the senses of these verbs as well as the lexical inheritance structure of these verbs to see the relation of these verbs to other verbs. The Break verbs will be viewed with regard to ideophones, as many of them are ideophones.

## 1.2 THE ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 will outline the aim of the study, i.e. the semantic as well as the syntactic analysis of Break and Bend verbs in Xitsonga.

Chapter 2 will review the previous research on lexical semantics. The verbal classes according to Levin (1993) will be looked at to find out what the Break and Bend verbs are. The lexical semantics will be considered with regard to the argument structure, i.e. the assignment of arguments, the types of argument and also the selection restrictions.

Chapter 3 will look at the Break verbs in Xitsonga. Many of the break verbs are ideophones with derived verbs, which are transitive verbs or intransitive verbs. The transitive verbs are regarded as two place predicates because these verbs assign two arguments, namely, an external argument (agent) and the internal argument. The external argument appears in the subject position and an internal argument in the object position. They may have the following functions:

Agent:           The animate being that actively and deliberately performs the acting expressed by a verb.

Patient:         A person or thing undergoing the action expressed by the predicate.

The Break verbs will be looked at considering the syntactic categories, within which these verbs may be classified, the assignment of arguments, the selection restrictions, the event structure, the lexical conceptual paradigm and the lexical inheritance structure.

Chapter 4 will look at the Bend verbs in Xitsonga with regard to the syntactic categories, within which these verbs may be classified, the assignment of arguments, the selection restrictions, the event structure, the lexical conceptual paradigm and the lexical inheritance structure. An investigation will be done to check the semantic classification, levels of representation in transitive bend verbs and levels of representation in intransitive bend verbs in Xitsonga. According to Du Plessis and Visser (1992:3) the intransitive predicates are regarded as one-place predicates. These verbs assign only one argument, i.e. an external

argument to the NP in the subject position. And again according to Du Plessis and Visser (1995:19) the transitive verbs are regarded as two-place predicates. These verbs assign two arguments where the one argument is an external argument and the second one an internal argument.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion, summarizing the findings of all previous chapters in this study on Break and Bend verbs in Xitsonga.

## CHAPTER 2

### LEXICAL SEMANTICS

#### 2.1 VERB CLASSES

Levin (1993) presents 49 semantically coherent classes of verbs whose member's pattern in the same way with respect to alternations within the argument structure of the VP such as Instrument-Subject alternation, and other properties which are syntactically relevant. Basically, verbs are grouped together which are related in meaning, i.e. they share one or more meaning components, and they have a similar behaviour in syntax and/or morphology. Thus, one may find a verb class which includes mostly verbs of removing. Such verbs relate to the removal of an entity from a location, e.g.:

(1) **Wansati u-susa nyama embiteni**

"The woman removes the meat from the pot"

Such verbs as **susa** share a basic meaning of removal which includes a specification of the source from which something is removed, i.e. **embiteni** above.

In this thesis, attention will only be given to the verbs of change of state in which we find break and bend verbs as subcategories.

#### 2.2 ARGUMENT STRUCTURE

##### 2.2.1 Assignment of arguments

According to Rappaport and Levin (1988) there are two distinct lexical representations: on one hand linguistic expressions such as NPs that are assigned theta roles ( $\phi$ -roles) are called arguments. Potential arguments are the NPs and clauses, which have the same sort of referential function; they have to refer to persons, things, and places. The lexical representation in this case is a reflection of a lexical-syntactic representation, i.e. predicate argument structure (PAS).

On the other hand, the term thematic role may also name a specific semantic relationship, which an argument may bear to its predicate. Such a lexical representation refers to a lexical semantic representation.

### 2.2.2 Types of arguments

The argument structure of a word can be seen as a minimal specification of its lexical semantics. There are four types of arguments for lexical items illustrated for verbs.

#### True arguments

They are syntactically realized parameters of the lexical item:

(2) **[Leti tihomu] ti nonile**

“These cattle are fat”

True arguments define those parameters, which are necessarily expressed at syntax.

The argument structure of verbs will look at the specifiers or complement of the verb to establish what may appear together with it. A verb like **oxa** (roast) will need a person to do the roasting, and it will need some food to be roasted.

$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{ARG}_1 = \text{animate, individual} \\ \text{ARG}_2 = \text{food} \end{array} \right]$$

A verb such as **hleketā** (think) will need a person as subject and any object as complement.

$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{ARG}_1 = \text{person} \\ \text{ARG}_2 = \text{object} \end{array} \right]$$

Default arguments

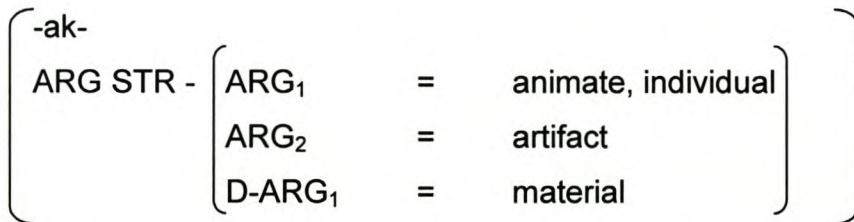
Parameters which participate in the logical expression in the qualia, but which are not necessarily expressed syntactically:

- (3) **Ndzi ake yindlu hi maribye**  
 "I built a house out of stones"

We have here an example of material, product alternation, because **maribye** (the material) is optional, its status as an argument is different from the created object **yindlu** (house). Such optional arguments in alternations such as the material or product pairs are called the default arguments. They are necessary for the logical well formedness of the sentence but may be left unexpressed in the surface syntax.

The argument structure of verbs with default arguments may be represented as follows:

With the verb **-ak-** (build)

Shadow arguments

They are parameters which are semantically incorporated into the lexical item. They can be expressed only by operation of subtyping or discourse specification:

- (4) **U n'wi langute [hi mahlo yo komba rirhandzu]**  
 "He looked at her (with eyes which revealed love)"



Shadow argument appears in brackets. This refers to semantic content that is not necessarily expressed in syntax. Shadow arguments are expressible only under specific conditions within the sentence itself, namely when the expressed arguments stand in subtyping relation to the shadow argument.

Shadow argument may be represented as follows with the verb **-khandl-** in a sentence:

(5) **Ndzi ti khandle [hi ribye] erintihweni**

“I hit myself with a stone on the finger”

-khandl-			
ARG STR -	ARG <sub>1</sub>	=	animate, individual
	ARG <sub>2</sub>	=	physical object
	S-ARG <sub>1</sub>	=	stone

True adjuncts

True adjuncts are parameters which modify the logical expression but are part of the situational interpretation, and are not tied to any particular lexical item's semantic representation. They include adjunct expressions of temporal or spatial modification:

(6) **Moya wa hunga [entshaveni]**

“The wind is blowing in the mountain”

The true adjunct is bracketed and is associated with verb classes and not individual verbs. The ability of these verbs to be modified by temporal expressions as in the sentences:

(7) **Ndzi tshama laha [tinh'weti timbirhi]**

“I stayed here for two months”

or locative modifies such as:

**Moya wa hunga [entshaveni]**

“The wind is blowing in the mountain”

**2.2.3 Selection restrictions**

When verbs select certain arguments to appear with them, they also select semantic features which these arguments must have in order to appear with such a verb, e.g. the verb **vukula** will assign two arguments: the first argument will be assigned to the noun phrase in the subject position:

**(8) Mbyana yi-vukula vanhu**

“The dog barks at the people”

In the sentence above, the first argument is **mbyana**. The question then is whether the verb **vukula** requires this argument to have specific semantic features, i.e. whether there are any selectional restrictions on this argument. It appears that a dog can only do the act of barking. Thus, this argument will have a selection restriction of **mbyana**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> = mbyana]

The second argument above is **vanhu** and the question is then whether **vukula** requires any selection restriction on this argument. To answer this question, one should be able to say that if a dog barks, what is it that he barks at? One can then see that dogs may bark at anything, i.e. there may be no clear selection restriction on this argument:

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**2.2.4 Cognate object**

According to Levin (1993) some basically intransitive verbs take as their object a noun that is zero related to the verb, a so-called “cognate object”. He adds that usually, the cognate object itself does not appear to make a contribution to the meaning of the sentence. Cognate objects are clear when an adjective or other modifier modifies them, and the modifier makes a

contribution to the meaning of the sentence. Most verbs that take cognate objects do not take a wide range of objects. Often they only permit a cognate object, although some verbs will take as object anything that is a hyponym of the cognate object. Cognate verbs are found with many verbs of nonverbal expression, as well as with a variety of other activity verbs.

De Jong and Jones (1988) state that some intransitive verbs may appear with cognate objects. This entails that some intransitive verbs may occur with what appears to be a direct object noun phrase whose head noun denotes the event or state nominalization of the verb.

According to Du Plessis and Visser (1992) cognate object is an object whose semantic content is more or less identical to that of the verb which governs it. Such nouns denote the event or state nominalization of the verb. Cognate object frequently appears with weather verbs:

(9) **Ndzi-rila [mihloti]**

“I cry tears”

In (9) the cognate object is **mihloti**.

### 2.2.5 Inalienable possession

According to Voeltz (1976) and Satyo (1985) as cited by Du Plessis and Visser (1992), this is the syntactic phenomenon, which is also known as the syntax of body parts. An inalienable body part is used as an adjunct of an intransitive verb. The inalienable possession, which is in the subject of the intransitive verb may end up as adjunct of the verb. This adjunct shares the theta-role found in the subject position and has no theta-role of its own.

In the sentences below, the adjunct shares the theta-role to be found in the subject position, having not theta-role of its own:

(10a) **[Nomu wa manana] wu-hombolokile**

“The mouth of the mother is twisted”

**[Manana] u-hombolokile [nomu]**



(b) **[Nenge wa mina] wu-tshovekile**

“My leg has broken”

**Ndzi tshoveke nenge**

(c) **[Nenge wa mina] wu-gombonyokile**

“My leg is bent”

**Ndzi gombonyeke nenge**

With transitive verbs

(11a) **Ndzi tsema [rintiho ra n’wana]**

“I tear the finger of the child”

**Ndzi tsema n’wana rintiho**

“I tear the child’s finger”

**Ndza ri tsema rintiho ra n’wana**

“I tear the finger of the child”

**Ndza n’wi tsema n’wana rintiho**

“I tear the child’s finger”

(b) **Pongo ri pfala [tindleve ta wanuna]**

“The noise deafened the ears of this man”

**Huwa yi pfala wanuna tindleve**

“The noise deafened the man’s ears”

**Huwa yi pfala tindleve ta wanuna**

“The noise deafened the ears of the man”

**Huwa yo yi pfala wansati tindleve**

“The noise deafened the woman’s ears”

(c) **Ndzi ghova [nhloko ya n'wana]**

"I bend the head of the child"

**Ndzi ghova n'wana nhloko**

"I bend the child's head"

**Ndza yi ghova nhloko ya n'wana**

"I bend the head of the child"

From the examples above, it is clear that the body part in sentence (11) is an adjunct, but sharing the same thematic role with the object even taking the object clitic.

**2.2.6 Verbal suffixes as controllers of transitivity**The suffixes [l] and [k]

There is a class of verbs that exemplify the regular alternation of transitive and intransitive verbs, linked to the occurrence of the verbal derivational suffixes -l- and -k-. These verbs are similar to ergative verbs, in that their verbal root assigns two internal thematic roles: an agent, patient or theme. These verbs with the -l- (transitive) and -k- (intransitive) alternations occur in sentences, which have a similar derivation to the ergative pairs.

- (12) a. **Wansati u-handzu-l-a nguvu**  
 "A woman Agrs-tears the dress"
- b. **Nguvu-ya-handzu-k-a**  
 dress Agrs is torn  
 "The dress is torn"

The transitive suffix -l- bears the semantic feature CAUSATIVE whereas this intransitive suffix -k- has an ANTICAUSATIVE semantic feature. The example sentence in (12a) above containing the transitive counterpart characterized by the suffix -l- corresponds to the transitive verb.

The example sentence in (12b) with the intransitive counterpart characterized by the suffix -k- corresponds to the intransitive sentences.

The deep-structure representation of sentences containing the transitive (-l-) counterpart of these verbs is:

(13) [NP] INFL [VP **handzula wansati nguvu**]  
           tear           woman dress

Such sentences as in (12a) with the transitive counterpart (-l-) of these verbs are derived by movement of the agent argument to the subject position. Thus the sentences have the following S-structure representation:

[wansati]<sub>i</sub>   INFL [VP – **handzula t<sub>i</sub> nguvu**]

The intransitive suffix –k- has the property of controlling the agent argument. Thus the suffix –k- suppresses the agent argument and prevents it from occurring, similar to the suppression of the agent argument by the passive morpheme:

(14) **nguvu yi-ta handzuka**  
       dress Agrs-Fut-torn  
       “The dress will be torn”

[NP] INF [VP – handzuke nguvu]  
           be torn   dress

The patient/theme argument is moved to the subject position, yielding the S-structure:

(15) [nguvu]<sub>i</sub> INFL [VP-**handzuka t<sub>i</sub>**]  
           be torn

Thus the transitive-intransitive alternation correlated with the suffixes -l- and -k- is associated with case-assignment properties: the intransitive suffix -k- lacks case-assignment features,

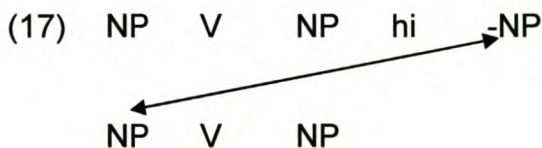
thus necessitating movement of the patient/theme object argument to the subject position where it can be assigned nominative case by the agreement element of infl (action). By contrast the transitive suffix -l- bears the accusative case assignment features, thus it assigns case to the patient/theme NP.

### 2.2.7 Instrument-subject alternation

In this alternation it is noted that there are subjects in sentences that are “oblique” in that they are characterized as “instruments” in sentences:

- (16) a. **Manana u ghova darata [hi pulayizi]**  
 “The mother bent the wire with plier”
- b. **[Pulayizi] yi ghova darata**  
 “The plier bent the wire”

In the sentences above, the NP, which is a complement of the instrumental preposition **hi**, is assigned a theta-role of instrument by **hi**. This NP may appear as subject of a sentence:



In this new position it still has an interpretation of instrument, but it is now the subject of the sentence. Such alternations may appear with verbs of change of state in Xitsonga:

- (18) a. **Ndzi fayile [fasitere] [hi nhonga]**  
 “I broke the window with a stick”
- [nhonga] yi faye [fasitere]**  
 “The stick broke the window”

b. **Ndzi pandzele [rivanti] [hi hamula]**

“I cracked the door with a hammer”

**[hamula] yi pandze [rivanti]**

“The hammer cracked the door”

Also with bend verbs as in break verbs:

(19) a. **Ndzi khotse darata [hi pulayizi]**

“I bent the wire with pliers”

**[Pulayizi] yi khotse [darata]**

“The plier bent the wire”

### 2.3 EVENT STRUCTURE

The oldest semantic classification for verbs is that of aspectual class. It is assumed that there are at least three aspectual types, i.e. state, activity and event where the event is itself sometimes broken down into accomplishment and achievement events:

(20) a. **Ntsako u fambe tolo**

“Ntsako walked yesterday”

b. **Ntsako u fambile ekaya ka yena tolo**

“Ntsako walked to his home yesterday”

Sentence (20a) is said to denote an activity. Sentence (20b) conveys the same information as (20a) with the additional constraint, however, that Ntsako terminates his activity of walking at his home. Sentence (20b) asserts that the process has a logical culmination whereby the activity is over when Ntsako is at home. Such a sentence is said to denote an accomplishment event.



Another conventional aspectual classification is that of achievement. An achievement is an event that results in a change of state, just as an accomplishment does, but where the change is thought of as occurring instantaneously:

- (21) a. **Nxalati u file hi awara ya nharhu**  
"Nxalati died at 3 pm.
- b. **Nxalati u kumile mali hi awara ya nharhu**  
"Nxalati found money at 3 pm"
- c. **Nsovo u fikile ni nhlekanhi**  
"Nsovo arrived at noon"

In these examples the change is not a gradual one, but something that has a point-like quality to it. Therefore, modification by point adverbials such as "at 3 pm" is suggestive that a sentence denotes an achievement.

It is also assumed that events can be subclassified into three sorts: process, states and transitions. It can be noted that activities can become processes while accomplishments and achievements be common to transitions.

State (S): a single event, which is evaluated relative to no other event, e.g.

- (22) In Xitsonga: **Musa wa vabya**  
"Musa is sick"

Structural representation

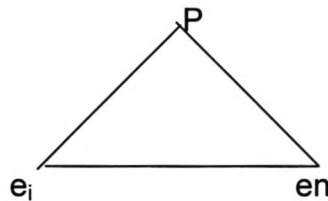
S  
|  
E

Process (P): a sequence of events identifying the same semantic expression.

(23) **Nsovo wa tsutsuma**

“Nsovo is running”

Structural representation



P is a process verb, then if the semantic expression  $p^1$  identified with P is true at interval I, the  $p^1$  is true for all subintervals of I larger than a moment.

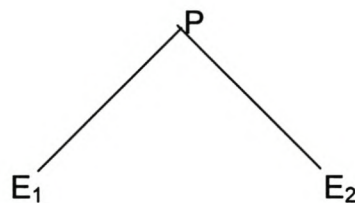
Transition (T): an event identifying a semantic expression, which is evaluated relative to its opposition:

(24) **Ntsako u aka yindlu**

“Ntsako built a house”

Structural representation

(where E is a variable for an event type)



It is then possible to give a listing of an event structure represented as a listing of event variable.

- (25) ARG STR = ARG<sub>1</sub>, ARG<sub>2</sub> ... ARG<sub>n</sub>  
 EVENT STR = EVENT<sub>1</sub>, EVENT<sub>2</sub> ... EVENT<sub>n</sub>

For example, the verb **aka** (build) involves a development process and a resulting state.

- (26) 
$$\left( \begin{array}{l} \text{-ak- (build)} \\ \text{EVENT STR = } \left[ \begin{array}{l} E_1 = \text{PROCESS} \\ E_2 = \text{STATE} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right)$$

Unlike **aka** which constrains the types of two subevents to PROCESS and STATE the verb accompany permits either telic events, TRANSITIONS or PROCESS:

- (27) 
$$\left( \begin{array}{l} \text{-akan- (accompany)} \\ \text{EVENT STR = } \left[ \begin{array}{l} E_1 = T_i \\ E_2 = T_i \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right)$$

- A verb like **hleket** (think) will have one event: [E<sub>1</sub> = state]  
 Verb like **kambela** (examine) will also have one event: [E<sub>1</sub> = process]  
 A verb like **vatla** (sculpture) will have a transition as an event: [E<sub>1</sub> = transition]

However, verbs such as **hlanganisa** (connect), **oxa** (roast) may have two events:

- [E<sub>1</sub> = [process]  
 [E<sub>2</sub> = [state]

The process will change something into a state, i.e. two things are now connected or roasted this referring to states.

## 2.4 LEXICAL CONCEPTUAL PARADIGM (LCP)

A lexical item may have various meanings or senses, e.g. the noun **nyimpfu** may refer to the meat of the sheep which we eat (i.e. a count noun).

The intuition behind the notion of a lexical conceptual paradigm is that there is something inherent in the semantics of a noun such that it is able to project any of three separate senses of the noun in distinct syntactic and semantic environment. The listing of the nouns in the separate environments is similar to a paradigmatic behaviour.

Nouns such as **newspaper** appear in many semantically distinct contexts, able to function sometimes as an organization, a physical object or the information contained in the articles within the newspaper.

- (28) a. **Phephahungu ri hlongole muhleli**  
“The newspaper fired the editor”
- b. **Ndzi haletele kofi eka phephahungu**  
“I spilled coffee on the newspaper”
- c. **U kwatise hi phephahungu**  
“He got angry because of the newspaper”

## 2.5 LEXICAL INHERITANCE STRUCTURES (LIS)

Semantic concepts are organized hierarchically into levels from specific to generic, e.g. in nouns and verbs there is a relative small number of generic concepts. The noun **wayini** (wine) can be classified as a liquid, at the same time as something intoxicating and also as food:

- (29) a. **Va nwa wayini**  
“They drink wine”

- b. **Va dakwile hikwalaho ka wayini**  
“They are drunk because of wine”
  
- c. **Wayini ya nandziha loko u yi nwa**  
“The wine is good when drinking”

For verbs like **phamuka** (crack, break, change):

- (30)
- a. **U phamule rivanti**  
“He cracked the door”
  
  - b. **Rivanti ri nge pfuleki hikuva ri phamukile**  
“The door cannot open as it is broken”

The break verb above is part of the verbs of change of state.

## CHAPTER 3

### BREAK VERBS IN XITSONGA

#### 3.1 AIM

In this chapter an analysis of the various break verbs in Xitsonga will be attempted. The following issues will receive attention. In the first place, the syntactic categories of these break verbs will be established. Within each syntactic category, the argument structure of the specific verbs will be investigated, i.e. which arguments may be assigned to a specific verb. Then attention will focus on the selection restrictions which these verbs put on the argument of a verb, at the same time the various break verbs within each category, will be analyzed semantically to see which semantic categories will be appropriate for the break verbs in Xitsonga. Thereafter, the event structure, the lexical conceptual paradigm as well as the lexical inheritance structure of each verb will be given.

#### 3.2 SYNTACTIC CATEGORIES

The various break verbs in Xitsonga may be classified into three syntactic categories:

(a) Transitive verbs with two arguments, e.g.

(1) **[N'wana] u-phema [xinkwa]**  
 "The child breaks the bread"

In (1) above the two arguments which are assigned by the verb **phema** appear in brackets.

(b) Verbs with transitive and intransitive suffixes

A verbal root may appear with a transitive suffix [-l-] or an intransitive suffix [-k-]:

(2) a. **[Wanuna] u-konyomu-l-e [fasitere]**  
 "The man broke the window"

- b. **[Fasitere] ri-konyomu-k-ile**  
“The window is broken”

In (2) above, the verbal root **[konyomu]** carries the meaning represented by break. The verb in (2a) has a transitive suffix [-l-]. In such a case, the two arguments in brackets are allowed to appear. But in (2b) the intransitive suffix [-k-] will only allow the one argument **[fasitere]**.

- (c) Ideophones with transitive and intransitive suffixes

There are various ergative ideophones in Xitsonga. These ideophones may also appear in derived verbs with transitive and intransitive suffixes as above in (2):

The ergative ideophone:

- (3) a. Transitive:

**[Wanuna] u-te phatlu [xifaki]**  
“The man broke the cob”

- b. Intransitive:

**[Xifaki] xi-te phatlu**  
“The cob is broken”

With a transitive suffix:

- (4) **[Wanuna] u-phatlu -l-e [xifaki]**  
“The man broke the cob”

With an intransitive suffix:

**[Xifaki] xi-phatlu-k-ile**  
“The cob is broken”

### 3.3 TRANSITIVE BREAK VERBS

#### 3.3.1 Argument structure

Transitive verbs are to be regarded as two-place predicates. Their predicate argument structure thus allows two arguments where the one argument is an external argument and the second one an internal argument. According to the theta-theory, transitive verbs have two theta-roles, the one theta-role is to be found in the subject position and the other one in the object position of the verb. These theta-roles may have a number of semantic interpretations. The transitive break verbs have an external argument which is an agent and an internal argument which is a patient.

- (5) **[Nxalati] u-phema [xinkwa]**  
 “Nxalati is breaking the bread”

In sentence (5) the verb **phem** is subcategorized for a noun phrase, in this case **xinkwa**. This verb may be presented in this way with its accompanying theta-grid:

(6)	Morphological form	phem									
	Categorial type	[ <sup>+</sup> V, <sup>-</sup> N]									
	Subcategory Feature	[— NP]									
	Theta-grid	<table style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">⊖ 1</td> <td style="width: 100px;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">⊖ 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">agent</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">patient</td> </tr> </table>	⊖ 1		⊖ 2				agent		patient
⊖ 1		⊖ 2									
agent		patient									

#### 3.3.2 Other levels of representation and semantic categories

In this section the selection restrictions which each break verb places on its two arguments will be considered. The various break verbs in Xitsonga will be placed in specific semantic categories at the same time. Each semantic category will be regarded as a subcategory of the transitive verbs. Such a subcategory will be given a semantic feature and the number of break verbs with this semantic feature will then be given and subsequently analyzed with regard to these selection restrictions.



Subcategory 1 : [break]

Only one verb with this semantic feature of [break] appears in Xitsonga, i.e. [phem]

Selection restrictions on the subject of phema: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(7) Human: **[N'wana] u-phema xinkwa**  
"The child is breaking off bread"

Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-phema lamula**  
"The monkey is breaking off an orange"

Selection restrictions on the object of phema: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga phemekaka hi ku olova na swona swi dyekaka**  
"Something which can easily be broken and be edible"

- (8) a. **N'wana u-phema [vuswa]**  
"The child is breaking off porridge"
- b. **Mfenhe yi-phema [lamula]**  
"The monkey is breaking off an orange"

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **apula** (apple); **xibundwa** (mielie bread); **xinkwa** (bread); **vuswa** (porridge); **pyere** (pear).

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking

- (9) **N'wana u-phema xinkwa** (an act)  
"The child is breaking off the bread"

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]

break: cut, break off

(10) **Ndzi – phema xinkwa**

“I am breaking the bread off”

[lis]

break – break off – change of state

Subcategory 2: [split and crack]

There are three verbs with this semantic feature: **pandza, tshova** and **phata**

Verb 1: pandza

Selection restrictions on the subject of **pandza**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(11) Human: **[Jaha] ri-pandza rihunyi**  
“The boy is splitting the wood”

Animal: **Mfenhe yi-pandza kwembe**  
“The monkey is splitting the pumpkin”

Selection restrictions on the object of **pandza**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya, leswi nga pfulekaka loko swi pandziwa kumbe loko swi tsemiwa**  
“Something hard which may open, crack and split”

(12) a. **Jaha ri-pandza [rivanti]**  
“The boy is splitting the door”

b. **Mfenhe yi-pandza [khalavatla]**

“The monkey is splitting the watermelon”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **lamula** (orange); **xitulu** (chair); **pyere** (pear); **mhandzi** (pole); **apula** (apple).

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of splitting

(13) **Jaha ri-pandza rihunyi**

“The boy is splitting the wood”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu**, **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]

break: cut, split

(14) **Ndzi – pandza rihunyi**

[lis]

break – split – change of state

Verb 2: tshova

Selection restrictions on the subject **tshova**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(15) Human: **[Gwambeni] u-tshova rihunyi**

“Gwambeni is splitting the wood”

Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-tshova xifaki**

“The monkey is splitting the cob”

Selection restrictions on the object of **tshova**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya na swona swa tshoveka**

“Something which is hard and may be split”

- (16) a. **Wansati u-tshova [nkukulu]**  
“The woman is splitting the broom”
- b. **Ndlopfu yi-tshova [rhavi]**  
“The elephant is splitting the branch”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **rhavi** (branch); **rihunyi** (wood); **mova** (sugar-cane); **nkukulu** (broom); **timba** (sugar-reed); **penisele** (pencil)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of splitting

- (17) **N'wana u-tshova xifaki**  
“The child is splitting the cob”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu-petlu** (many pieces)

[lcp]

break: cut, split

- (18) **Ndzi – tshova rihunyi**

[lis]

break – split – change of state

Verb 3: phata

Selection restrictions on the subject **phata**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(15) Human: **[Nhwanyana] u-phata xikotlola**  
“The girl is cracking the bowl”

Animal: **[Mbuti] yi-phata kanyi**  
“The goat is cracking the marula-fruit”

Selection restrictions on the object of **phata**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya swa phateka na swona hi ku olova**  
“Something which is hard and cracks easily”

(20) a. **Musa u-phata [xikotlola]**  
“Musa is cracking the bowl”

b. **Mbhongolo yi-phata [mbulwa]**  
“The donkey is cracking the olive tree”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **sabelo** (dish); **kanyi** (marula-fruit); **xikotlola** (bowl); **mbulwa** (olive-tree)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of cracking

(21) **Musa u-phata xikotlola** (an act)  
“Musa is cracking the bowl”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu-petlu** (many pieces)

[lcp]

break: crush, crack

(22) **Ndzi – phata xikotlola**

[lis]

break – crack – change of state

Subcategory 3: [smash and crush]

There are eight verbs in this category:

Verb 1: kherha

Selection restrictions on the object of **kherha**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(23) a. Human: **[N'wana] u-kherha apula**  
"The child smashes an apple"

b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-kherha kwembe**  
"The monkey smashes the pumpkin"

Selection restrictions on the object of **kherha**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi kherhekaka hi ku olova**  
"Something hard but it smashes easily"

(24) a. **N'wana u-kherha [pyere]**  
"The child smashes the pear"

b. **Mbhongolo yi-kherha [kwembe]**  
"The donkey smashes the pumpkin"

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **lekere** (sweets); **apula** (apple); **kwembe** (pumpkin); **pyere** (pear); **khalavatla** (water-melon).

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of smashing

- (25) **Nxalati u-kherha apula** (an act)  
 “Nxalati smashes an apple”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break; smash

- (26) **Ndzi-kherha apula**

[lis]: break-smash-change of state

### Verb 2: Faya

Selection restrictions on the subject of **faya**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (27) a. Human: **[Wansati] u-faya bodhlele**  
 “The woman smashes the bottle”
- b. Animal: **Mfenhe yi-faya khalavatla**  
 “The monkey smashes the water-melon”

Selection restrictions on the object of **Faya**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi fayeka hi ku olova na swona a swi lunghiseki,  
 swi huma swipetlu**

“Something hard but easily smashes into pieces and cannot be repaired”

- (28) a. **Wanuna u-faya [nghilazi]**  
“The man smashes the glass”
- b. **Mfenhe yi-faya [khalavatla]**  
“The monkey smashes the water-melon”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **puleti** (plate); **mbita** (pot); **khalavatla** (water-melon); **nkambani** (bowl); **fasitere** (window); **nghilazi** (glass).

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of smashing

- (29) **Wansati u-faya puleti** (an act)  
“The woman smashes the plate”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush, smash

- (30) **Ndzi-faya puleti**

[lis]: break-smash-change of state

### Verb 3: phyandlasa

Selection restrictions on the subject of **phyandlasa**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (31) a. Human: **[N'wana] u- phyandlasa tandza**  
“The child smashes an egg”
- b. Animal: **[Mbyana] yi- phyandlasa tandza**  
“The dog smashes an egg”



Selection restrictions on the object of **phyandlasa**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi phyandlakaka hi ku olova**

“Something hard but it is easily crushable”

(32) a. **Mukhegula u-phyandlasa [tandza]**

“The old woman smashes an egg”

b. **Mfenhe yi-phyandlasa [tamatisi]**

“The monkey smashes the tomato”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **tandza** (egg); **tamatisi** (tomato)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of smashing

(33) **Mukhegula u-phyandlasa tandza** (an act)

“The old woman smashes an egg”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush, smash

(34) **Ndzi-phyandlasa tandza**

[lis]: break-smash-change of state

Verb 4: kandza

Selection restrictions on the subject of **kandza**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (35) a. Human: **[nhwanyana] u-kandza mavele**  
“The girl stamps the maize”
- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi- kandza misava**  
“The monkey stamps the soil”

Selection restrictions on the object of **kandza**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi kandzeka hi ku olova**  
“Something which is hard and smashes easily”

- (36) a. **N’wana u-kandza [timanga]**  
“The child stamps the peanuts”
- b. **Mfenhe yi-kandza [misava]**  
“The monkey stamps the soil”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **mavele** (maize); **timanga** (peanuts); **misava** (soil); **n’wahuva** (kaffir-corn)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of stamping

- (37) **Nhwanyana u kandza mavele** (an act)  
“The girl stamps the maize”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: pound-stamp

(38) **Ndzi-kandza mavele**

[lis]: break-stamp-change of state

Verb 5: **pyanya**

Selection restrictions on the subject of **pyanya**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (39) a. Human: **[mufana] u-pyanya khongoloti**  
 “The boy crushes the milliped”
- b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-pyanya mpfundla hi khwiri**  
 “The elephant crushes the hare with the stomach”

Selection restrictions on the object of **pyanya**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi tshikeleriwaka ehansi hi matimba kumbe hi ku susumeteriwa ehansi swi pyanyeka**

“Something that is pressed upon or pushed down and is crushed”

- (40) a. **Jaha ri-pyanya [vuswa]**  
 “The young man crushes the porridge”
- b. **Mfenhe yi-pyanya [tinhwala]**  
 “The monkey crushes the lice”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **khongoloti** (millipede); **lamula** (orange); **nhwala** (lice); **swighalani** (ticks); **vuswa** (porridge)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of crushing

- (41) **Jaha ri-pyanya khongoloti** (an act)  
 “The young man crushes the millipede”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu-tlupu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush, smash

- (42) **Ndzi-pyanya khongoloti**

[lis]: break-crush-change of state

Verb 6: **bvanyangeta**

Selection restrictions on the subject of **bvanyangeta**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (43) a. Human: **[nhwana] u-bvanyangeta huku**  
 “The girl crushes the chicken”
- b. Animal: **[ximanga] xi-bvanyangeta kondlo**  
 “The cat crushes the mouse”

Selection restrictions on the object of **bvanyangeta**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya swi hanyaka na swona kambe swin’wana swa swona swa  
 bvanyangeteka na hi voko**

“Something hard and alive, which can be crushed some of them by hand”

- (44) a. **Nhwana u bvanyangeta [huku]**  
 “The girl crushes the chicken”

b. **Ximanga xi-bvanyangeta [kondlo]**

“The cat crushes the mouse”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **huku** (chicken); **kondlo** (mouse); **nsuna** (mosquito); **hele** (cockroach); **nhongani** (fly)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of crushing

(45) **Nhwana u-bvanyangeta huku** (an act)

“The girl crushes the chicken”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu-tlupu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush (some in hand)

(46) **Ndzi-bvanyangeta nhongani**

[lis]: break-crush-change of state

Verb 7: vandza

Selection restrictions on the subject of **vandza**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(47) a. Human: **[Manana] u-vandza timongo**

“The mother crushes the marrows”

b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi- vandza maribye**

“The monkey crushes the stones”

Selection restrictions on the object of **vandza**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya swa fayeka hambu ku ri hi maribye**

“Something which is hard and crushable even with stones”

(48) a. **Nhwanyana u-vandza [timongo]**

“The girl crushes the marrows”

b. **Mfenhe yi-vandza [maribye]**

“The monkey crushes the stones”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **timongo** (marula-nut); **ribye** (stone); **rhakarhaka** (cucumber)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of crushing

(49) **Mukhegula u-vandza timongo** (an act)

“The old lady crushes the marrows”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush (stones)

(50) **Ndzi-vandza timongo**

[lis]: break-crush-change of state

Verb 8: khandla

Selection restrictions on the subject of **khandla**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(35) a. Human: **[Mufana] u-khandla nsimbhi**

“The boy crushes an iron”

- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-khandla maribye**  
 “The monkey crushes the stones”

Selection restrictions on the object of **khandla**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swin’wana swa swona swa khandleka ni hi maribye**  
 “Something which is hard and crushable, some with stones”

- (52) a. **N’anga yi-khandla [murhi]**  
 “The witch doctor crushes the medicine”
- b. **Mfenhe yi-khandla [maribye]**  
 “The monkey crushes the stones”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **murhi** (medicine); **nsimbhi** (iron)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of crushing

- (53) **Mufana u-khandla nsimbhi** (an act)  
 “The boy crushes an iron”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu-tlupu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush (with stones)

- (54) **Ndzi-khandla nsimbhi**

[lis]: break-crush-change of state

Subcategory 4: [Demolish]

There is only one verb in this category: **hlanhla**

Selection restrictions on the subject of **hlanhla**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (55) a. Human: **[Tatana] u-hlanhla khumbi**  
“The father demolishes the wall”
- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-hlanhla maribye entshaveni**  
“The monkey demolishes stones in the mountain”

Selection restrictions on the object of **hlanhla**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Xilo xin’wana lexi nga tiyela, lexi fayekaka xi hlanhleka xi mbundzumuxiwa**  
“Something hard which can be crushed, demolished and broken”

- (56) a. **Mufana u-hlanhla [nhloko ya homu]**  
“The boy demolishes the head of the cow”
- b. **Nghala yi-hlanhla [marhambu]**  
“The lion demolishes the bones”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **nyama** (meat); **marhambu** (bones); **khumbi** (wall); **maribye** (stones).

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of demolishing

- (57) **Manana u-hlanhla nhloko ya homu**  
“The mother demolishes the head of the cow”



[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu-phemu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: pull down, demolish

(58) **Ndzi-hlanhla nyama ya nhloko ya homu**

[lis]: break-demolish-change of state

Subcategory 5: [tear]

There are two verbs in this category: **rharhambuta** and **kavutlula**

Verb 4: rharhambuta

Selection restrictions on the subject of **rharhambuta**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (59) a. Human: **[Manana] u-rharhambuta nceka hi mukwana**  
"The mother tears the linen with a knife"
- b. Animal: **[Mbyana] yi-rharhambuta dzovo hi meno**  
"The dog tears the skin with teeth"

Selection restrictions on the object of **rharhambuta**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya swa haleka swi handzuka swi tlhela swi tsemeka**  
"Something hard which splits, scratches and tears"

- (60) a. **Manana u-rharhambuta [lapi hi mukwana]**  
"The mother tears the linen with the knife"
- b. **Mbyana yi-rharhambuta [dzovo hi meno]**  
"The dog tears the skin with teeth"

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **nceka** (cloth); **dzovo** (skin); **buruku** (trouser); **nhlonge** (skin); **lapi** (linen)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

(61) **Tati u-rharhambuta buruku hi mukwana**(an act)  
“The sister tears the trouser with knife”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu-tlupu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: scratch, tear

(62) **Ndzi-rharhambuta buruku**

[lis]: break-tear-change of state

### Verb 2: kavutlula

Selection restrictions on the subject of **kavutlula**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(63) a. Human: **[Manana] u-kavutlula khavichi hi mavoko**  
“The mother tears the cabbage with hands”

b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-kavutlula khalavatla hi meno**  
“The monkey tears the water-melon with teeth”

Selection restrictions on the object of **kavutlula**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi tsemekaka hi meno kumbe hi mavoko swi huma switlupu swo tala**

“Something hard which is torn to pieces with teeth or hands”

- (64) a. **Kokwani u-kavutlula [khavichi hi mavoko]**  
“Grand mother tears the cabbage with hands”
- b. **Nghala yi-kavutlula [nyama hi meno]**  
“The lion tears the meat with teeth”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are: **nyama** (meat); **ntonga** (biltong); **nsiha** (nerve); **khavichi** (cabbage); **nyala** (onion); **kwembe** (pumpkin)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

- (65) **Kokwani u-kavutlula khavichi (an act)**  
“Grand mother tears the cabbage”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: tear to pieces (with teeth or hands)

- (66) **Ndzi-kavutlula khavichi**

[lis]: break-tear-change of state

## 3.4 VERBS WITH TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE SUFFIXES

### 3.4.1 Argument structure

The verbal root with suffixes [-k-] and [-l-] assigns two internal arguments, i.e. agent and patient:

- (67) [e] [-konyomu-] [agent, patient]

The verbal suffixes [-k-] or [-l-] have to appear with this root:

- (68) a. [-konyomu-l-]  
 b. [-konyomu-k-]

These verbal suffixes control the transitivity of the verb, the suffix [-l-] has a causative semantic feature. Both arguments above then appear while the agent argument has to be moved.

- (69) [agent<sub>i</sub>-konyomu-l-t<sub>i</sub> patient]

This movement is compulsory for the sake of case assignment. The subject argument in (67) above is empty and the agent NP which has now moved to this empty subject position in (69) above, will receive nominative case. The moved NP leaves behind a trace [t] with which it is coindexed. The remaining internal argument, i.e. the patient, will then be assigned accusative case.

The suffix [-k-] controls the agent argument with the result that only the patient argument will surface:

- (70) [e] [-konyomu-k<sub>i</sub>- [agent<sub>i</sub>, patient]]

This control relation is indicated by coindexing with [i]. The patient argument is then moved to the empty subject position to receive nominative case:

- (71) [patient; [-konyomu-k<sub>i</sub>- [agent<sub>i</sub>, t<sub>i</sub>]]]

The trace [t] which is left behind after this movement, is coindexed with [j] in (71) above. The suffix [-k-] thus has an anti-causative semantic feature.

### 3.4.2 Other levels of representation

There are two verbal roots which appear with the suffixes [-k-] and [-l-]: **konyomu-** and **handzu-**

#### a. [-konyomu-k-] and [-konyomu-l-]

Selection restrictions on the subject of **konyomula**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (72) a. Human: **[Nxalati] u-konyomula xikomu**  
 "Nxalati breaks a handhoe"
- Animal: **[Ndlopfu] yi-konyomula tshanga**  
 "The elephant breaks the cattle-kraal"

On object of **konyomula** and subject of **konyomuka**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya na swona swa tshoveka swi tlhela swi konyomuleka**  
 "Object which is hard and which splits and breaks"

- (73) a. **Wanuna u-konyomule [fasitere]**  
 "The man broke the window"
- b. **[Fasitere] ri-konyomukile**  
 "The window broke"
- (74) a. **Vavanuna va-konyomule [vhilwa]**  
 "The men broke the wheel"
- b. **[Vhilwa] ri-konyomukile**  
 "The wheel broke"

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **rivanti** (door); **rhambu** (bone); **xikomu** (handhoe); **vhilwa** (wheel); **tino** (teeth).

b. **[-handzu-k-]** and **[-handzu-l-]**

Selection restrictions on the subject of **handzula**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (75) a. Human: **[N'wana] u-handzula buruku**  
"The child tears the trouser"
- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-handzula lapi**  
"The monkey tears the linen"

On object of **handzula** and subject of **handzuka**: [ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi tsemeka hi ku olova**

"Object which splits and tears easily"

- (76) a. **Wansati u-handzule [nceka]**  
"The woman tore the linen"
- b. **[nceka] wu-handzukile**  
"The linen is torn"
- (77) a. **Vavanuna va-handzule [phepha]**  
"The men tore the paper"
- b. **[phepha] ri-handzukile**  
"The paper is torn"

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **hembhe** (shirt); **phepha** (paper); **rhoko** (dress); **buruku** (trouser).

### Event structure

#### a. [-konyomu-]

[Event 1] = process or act of breaking

(78) **Wansati u-konyomule vhilwa** (an act)

“The woman broke the wheel”

[Event 2] = state, **swiphizani** (pieces)

(79) **Darata yi-endle [swiphizani leswintsongo]**

“The wire became small pieces”

#### b. [-handzu-]

[Event 1] = process or act of tearing

(80) **Wansati u-handzula nceka** (an act)

“The woman tears linen”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphiza-phizani** (many pieces)

(81) **Nceka wu-endle [swiphiza-phizani leswintsongo]**

“The linen became small pieces”

### Different senses of the verb –konyomu-

(82) [break]: **konyomula fasitere**

“break the window”

Different senses of the verb –handzu-(83) [Tear]: **handzula tinguvu**

“Tear the clothes”

Lexical inheritance structure [lis]

Verb class: break-change of state

**3.5 IDEOPHONES WITH TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE SUFFIXES****3.5.1 Assignment of arguments**

The ideophone with the semantic feature of [break] has the features of an ergative verb. Ergative verbs denote a change of state and they appear in the same d-structure as the verbal root –**konyomu-** in (67) above, the ideophone will then also assign two internal arguments:

(84) [e] [**tlhibu** [agent, patient]]

The ideophone has no external argument. Therefore one of the internal arguments has to move to this empty subject position to receive nominative case.

In the first place, the agent argument will be moved to receive nominative case. In this case the patient argument remains in its place and will receive accusative case from the verb:

(85) a. [Agent<sub>i</sub> [**tlhibu** [t<sub>i</sub>, patient]]]b. [**wanuna**] [**u-te tlhibu [ntambhu]**]

“The man broke the rope”



In the second place, the patient argument will be moved to the empty subject position. This patient argument will now receive nominative case. The agent argument will then not surface, because it will be controlled by the patient argument in the subject position:

- (86) a. [patient<sub>i</sub>/][t<sub>lhibu</sub> [agent<sub>i</sub>t<sub>i</sub>]  
 b. [ntambhu] yi-te t<sub>lhibu</sub>  
 "The rope broke"

The control relation is indicated by the coindexing with [i] and the trace relation with [j].

These ergative ideophones may also appear with the intransitive suffix [-k-] and the transitive suffix [-l-] or [-s-] as above with the verbal root **konyomu**. The transitive suffix [-l-] or [-s-] will allow movement of the agent argument.

- (87) a. [e] [t<sub>lhibu</sub>-l- [agent, patient]  
 b. [Agent<sub>i</sub>] [t<sub>lhibu</sub>-l- [t<sub>i</sub>, patient]  
 c. [Wanuna] u-t<sub>lhibule</sub> [ntambhu]  
 "The man broke the rope"

The intransitive suffix [-k-] will control the agent argument with the result that the patient will have to move to fill the empty subject position.

- (88) a. [e] [t<sub>lhibu</sub>-k<sub>i</sub>-[agent<sub>i</sub>, patient]  
 b. [patient<sub>j</sub>] [t<sub>lhibu</sub>-k<sub>i</sub>-[agent<sub>i</sub>, t<sub>j</sub>]  
 c. [ntambhu] yi-t<sub>lhibukile</sub>  
 "The rope broke"

Control is indicated by coindexation with [i]

### 3.5.2 Other levels of representation

The break verbs with an ideophone may be classified into smaller subgroups according to the meaning of these verbs:

#### Subcategory 1: Break off verbs

##### Verb 1: phatlu

Ideophone: **phatlu**

With affix [-k-]: **phatlu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **phatlu-l-**

#### Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **phatlu** and the transitive verb **–phatlul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(89) a. Human: **[Mufana] u-ri phatlu xifaki**  
**[Mufana] u-phatlula xifaki**  
 “The boy is breaking off the cob”

b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri phatlu rhavi**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-phatlula rhavi**  
 “The elephant is breaking off the branch”

On the object of the transitive verb (90b) and the transitive ideophone (90a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–phatluk-** (90d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (90c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi tshoveka hi ku olova**

“Something which is hard and breaks easily”

- (90) a. **Wanuna u-te phatlu [xifaki]**  
“The man broke off the cob”
- b. **Wanuna u-phatlule [xifaki]**  
“The man broke off the cob”
- c. **[xifaki] xi-te phatlu**  
“The cob broke off”
- d. **[xifaki] xi-phatlukile**  
“The cob broke off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **xifaki** (cob); **rhavi** (branch); **rihunyi** (piece of wood)

#### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off

- (91) **Mufana u-phatlula xifaki** (an act)  
“The boy is breaking off the cob”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: break off

- (92) **Ndzi-te phatlu xifaki**

[lis]: break – change of state

Verb 2: khatlu

Ideophone: **khatlu**

With affix [-k-]: **khatlu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **khatlu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **khatlu** and the transitive verb **-khatlul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(93) a. Human: **[Wansati] u-ri khatlu kamba**  
**[Wansati] u-khatlula kamba**  
 "The woman breaks off a leaf"

b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri khatlu rhavi**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-khatlula rhavi**  
 "The elephant breaks off a branch"

On the object of the transitive verb (94b) and the transitive ideophone (94a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-khatluk-** (94d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (94c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi tshovekaka hi ku olova swi huma swiphizana swo tala**

"Something hard, fragile and easily breakable off in many pieces"

(94) a. **Mbuti yi-te khatlu [byanyi]**  
 "The goat broke off the grass"

b. **Mbuti yi-khatlule [byanyi]**  
 "The goat broke off the grass"

c. **[byanyi] byi-te khatlu**  
“The grass broke off”

d. **[byanyi] byi-khatlukile**  
“The grass broke off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **matluka** (leaves); **byanyi** (grass); **swiluva** (flowers); **miroho** (vegetables); **swifaki** (cobs)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking

(95) **N’wana u-khatlula bilomu** (an act)  
“The child is breaking off the flower”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu-tlupu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break off (with a split and cut off)

(96) **Ndzi-te khatlu bilomu**

[lis]: break – change of state

### Verb 3: thibu

Ideophone: **thibu**

With affix [-k-]: **thibu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **thibu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **tlibu** and the transitive verb **-tlibul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (97) a. Human:       **[Wanuna] u-ri tlibu njara**  
                          **[Wanuna] u-tlibula njara**  
                          “The man is breaking off a thread”
- b. Animal:         **[mbuti] yi-ri tlibu ntambhu**  
                          **[mbuti] yi-tlibula ntambhu**  
                          “The goat is breaking off a thread”

On the object of the transitive verb (98b) and the transitive ideophone (98a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-tlibuk-** (98d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (98c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya, swi leha ku fana na ntambhu loko swi tsemeka swi huma swiphizani**

“Something hard, long like a rope that is broken off into pieces”

- (98) a.       **N’wana u-te tlibu [njara]**  
                  “The child broke off a thread”
- b.       **Nxalati u-tlibule [njara]**  
                  “Nxalati broke off a thread”
- c.       **[njara] yi-te tlibu**  
                  “The thread broke off”
- d.       **[njara] yi-tlibukile**  
                  “The thread broke off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **ngoti** (string); **harhani** (thread); **pindza** (rope); **ntambhu** (cord); **njara** (thread)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off

(99) **N'wana u-tlhibula ntambhu** (an act)

“The child is breaking off a branch”

[Event 2] = state: **swintabyana** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: break off (by cutting; tearing up)

(100) **Ndzi-te tlibu ntambu**

[lis]: break – change of state

Verb 4: **petlu**

Ideophone: **petlu**

With affix [-k-]: **petlu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **petlu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **petlu** and the transitive verb **-petlul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(101) a. Human: **[Wansati] u-ri petlu xirhengele**

**[Wansati] u-petlula xirhengele**

“The woman is breaking off a piece of clay pot”

- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-ri petlu jomela**  
**[Mfenhe] yi-petlula jomela**  
 “The monkey is breaking off a cup”

On the object of the transitive verb (102b) and the transitive ideophone (102a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**petluk-** (102d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (102c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi fayeka hi ku olova loko swi wela ehansi na ku fayeka hi ku bananisiwa na swin’wana leswi nga tiya**

“Something hard but are breakable when it falls down or when hit against anything hard”

- (102) a. **Wansati u-te petlu [ndyelo]**  
 “The woman broke off a plate”
- b. **Wansati u-petlule [ndyelo]**  
 “The woman broke off a plate”
- c. **[ndyelo] yi-te petlu**  
 “The plate broke off”
- d. **[ndyelo] yi-petlukile**  
 “The plate broke off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **khuwana** (jug); **jomela** (cup); **pulasitiki** (plastic); **nkambana** (bowl); **puleti** (plate)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off



(103) **Wansati u-petlula nkambana** (an act)

“The woman is breaking off a bowl”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu-petlu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break off (with chips, notches)

(104) **Ndzi-te petlu jomela**

[lis]: break off – change of state

Verb 5: phemu

Ideophone: **phemu**

With affix [-k-]: **phemu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **phemu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **phemu** and the transitive verb **–phemul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(105) a. Human: **[Wanuna] u-ri phemu khumbi**

**[wanuna] u-phemula khumbi**

“The man is breaking the wall”

b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri phemu damu**

**[ndlopfu] yi-phemula damu**

“The elephant is breaking the dam”

On the object of the transitive verb (106b) and the transitive ideophone (106a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–phemuk-** (106d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (106c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swa fayeka loko ku ri ni nsusumeto wo karhi eka swona**

“Something which is hard and is breakable when a lot of force is applied on it”

(106) a. **Wanuna u-te phemu [khumbi]**

“The man broke the wall”

b. **Wanuna u-phemule [khumbi]**

“The man broke the wall”

c. **[khumbi] ri-te phemu**

“The wall broke”

d. **[khumbi] ri-phemukile**

“The wall broke”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **khumbi** (wall); **damu** (dam); **buloho** (bridge); **ribye** (stone); **yindlu** (house)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off

(107) **Jaha ri-phemula khumbi** (an act)

“The boy is breaking the wall”

[Event 2] = state: **mabuwa** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: break off (by cracking, crushing)

(108) **Ndzi-te phemu khumbi**

[lis]: break – change of state

Verb 6: tloму

Ideophone: **tloму**

With affix [-k-]: **tloму-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **tloму-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **tloму** and the transitive verb **-tloмуl-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (109) a. Human: **[nhwanyana] u-ri tloму phepha**  
**[nhwanyana] u-tlomula phepha**  
“The girl is breaking off the paper”
- b. Animal: **[mfenhe] yi-ri tloму swimilani emasin’wini**  
**[mfenhe] yi-tlomula swimilani emasin’wini**  
“The monkey is breaking off vegetation in the fields”

On the object of the transitive verb (110b) and the transitive ideophone (110a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-tloмуk-** (110d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (110c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi tloмуka hi ku olova**

“Something hard and breaks off easily”

- (110) a. **Nhwanyana u-te tloму [phepha]**  
“The girl tear off the paper”

b. **Nhwanyana u-tlomule [phepha]**

“The girl tear off the paper”

c. **[phepha] ri-te tloму**

“The paper tear off”

d. **[phepha] ri-tlomukile**

“The paper tear off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **bilomu** (flower); **xihlungwa** (top of a roof); **phepha** (paper); **masofa** (lodge suit); **swimila** (vegetation).

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off

(111) **Nhwanyana u-tlomula phepha** (an act)

“The girl is tearing off the paper”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break off; tear up

(112) **Ndzi-te tloму phepha**

[lis]: break – change of state

Subcategory 2: Split and crack verbsVerb 1: phamuIdeophone: **phamu**With affix [-k-]: **phamu-k-**With affix [-l-]: **phamu-l-**Selection restrictionsOn subject of the transitive ideophone **phamu** and the transitive verb **–phamul-**:[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (113) a. Human: **[Wanuna] u-ri phamu khumbi**  
**[wanuna] u-phamula khumbi**  
 “The man cracks the wall”
- b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri phamu switina swa yindlu**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-phamula switina swa yindlu**  
 “The elephant cracks the bricks of the house”

On the object of the transitive verb (114b) and the transitive ideophone (114a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–phamuk-** (114d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (114c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe loko swi fayiwa swi fayeka hi ku olova hi ku susumetiwa hi xo karhi**

“Something hard to break and it is breakable if pressure is put on it”

- (114) a. **Wanuna u-te phamu [khumbi]**  
 “The man cracked the wall”

b. **Wanuna u-phamule [khumbi]**

“The man cracked the wall”

c. **[khumbi] ri-te phamu**

“The wall cracked”

d. **[khumbi] ri-phamukile**

“The wall cracked”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **khumbi** (wall); **damu** (dam); **yindlu** (house); **switina** (bricks)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of cracking

(115) **Wanuna u-phamula damu** (an act)

“The man cracks the dam”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break by getting split in two; crack

(116) **Ndzi-te phamu damu**

[lis]: break – crack-change of state

Verb 2: **khehle**Ideophone: **khehle**With affix [-k-]: **khehle-k-**With affix [-l-]: **khehle-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **khehle** and the transitive verb **-khehlis-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(117) a. Human:       **[Nhwana] u-ri khehle khuwani**  
                          **[Nhwana] u-khehlisa khuwani**  
                          “The girl cracks a clay pot”

b. Animal:           **[Mfenhe] yi-ri khehle ndyelo**  
                          **[Mfenhe] yi-khehlisa ndyelo**  
                          “The monkey cracks the plate”

On the object of the transitive verb (118b) and the transitive ideophone (118a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-khehlek-** (118d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (118c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swa olova ku swi faya na swona swa pandzeka loko swi fayeka ku huma swipetlu**

“Something hard but very breakable, it can crack and get split in two”

(118) a.       **Nhwana u-te khehle [khuwana]**  
                  “The girl cracked the vessel”

b.       **Nhwana u-khehlise [khuwana]**  
                  “The girl cracked the vessel”

c.       **[Khuwana] ri-te khehle**  
                  “The vessel cracked”

d.       **[Khuwana] ri-khehlekile**  
                  “The vessel cracked”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **mbita** (pot); **xivoni** (mirror); **puleti** (plate); **nghilazi** (glass); **khapu** (cup); **xileti** (slate); **ndyelo** (plate)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of cracking

(119) **Dedeya u-khehlisa khuwani** (an act)

“Dedeya cracks a clay pot”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break by getting split in two, crack

(120) **Ndzi-te khehle khuwana**

[lis]: break – crack-change of state

### Category 3: Smash and crush

#### Verb 1: pfotlo

Ideophone: **pfotlo**

With affix [-k-]: **pfotlo-k-**

With affix [-s-]: **pfotlo-s-**

#### Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **pfotlo** and the transitive verb **-pfotlos-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]



- (121) a. Human: **[Wanuna] u-ri pfitlo xitshatshana**  
**[Wanuna] u-pfotlosa xitshatshana**  
 “The man smashes the basket”
- b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri pfitlo rhavi**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-pfotlosa rhavi**  
 “The elephant crushes the branch”

On the object of the transitive verb (122b) and the transitive ideophone (122a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**pfotlok-** (122d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (122c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swa tshoveka**

“Something hard and breakable”

- (122) a. **Wanuna u-te pfitlo [xitshatshana]**  
 “The man smashed the basket”
- b. **Wanuna u-pfotlose [xitshatshana]**  
 “The man smashed the basket”
- c. **[Xitshatshana] xi-te pfitlo**  
 “The basket is smashed”
- d. **[Xitshatshana] xi-pfitlokile**  
 “The basket is smashed”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **rhambu** (bone); **xitendze** (basket); **xitshatshana** (basket); **rihlampfu** (barricade); **rivambu** (rib)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of smashing

(123) **Mufana u-pfotlosa xitshatshana** (an act)

“The boy smashes the basket”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphizani** (pieces)

[lcp]: break with a snap or crack; smash

(124) **Ndzi-te pfotlo rhambu**

[lis]: break – smash-change of state

Verb 2: Caka

Ideophone: **caka**

With affix [-k-]: **cakanyete-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **cakanyete-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **caka** and the transitive verb **–cakanyetel-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(125) a. Human: **[Jaha] ri-ri caka fasitere**

**[Jaha] ri-cakanyetela fasitere**

“The boy smashes a window”

b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-ri caka bodhlele**

**[Mfenhe] yi-cakanyetela bodhlele**

“The monkey smashes the bottle”

On the object of the transitive verb (126b) and the transitive ideophone (126a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**cakanyetek-** (126d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (126c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiyela kumbe ku tsindziyela loko swo fayeka a swa ha lunghiseki**

“Something hard to break, crush, smash and it cannot be repaired”

- (126) a. **Jaha ri-te caka [nghilazi]**  
“The boy smashed the glass”
- b. **Jaha ri-cakanyetele [nghilazi]**  
“The boy smashed the glass”
- c. **[nghilazi] yi-ri caka**  
“The glass is smashed”
- d. **[nghilazi] yi-te cakanyetekile**  
“The glass is smashed”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **puleti** (plate); **nghilazi** (glass); **khapu**(cup); **fulasiki** (flask); **bodhlele** (bottle); **manghilazi** (spectacles)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of smashing

(127) **Musa u-cakanyetela fasitere** (an act)

“Musa smashes a window”

[Event 2] = state: **swipetlu-petu** (many pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush, smash

[lis]: break – smash-change of state

Verb 3: pyetle

Ideophone: **pyetle**

With affix [-k-]: **pyetle-k-**

With affix [-tel-]: **pyetle-tel-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **pyetle** and the transitive verb **–pyetletel-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(128) a. Human: **[N'wana] u-ri pyetle rhama**  
**[N'wana] u-pyetletela rhama**  
“The child crushes rama”

b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri pyetle ridaka**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-pyetletela ridaka**  
“The elephant crushes the mud”

On the object of the transitive verb (129b) and the transitive ideophone (129a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–pyetlek-** (129d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (129c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi olovaka, swi nga tiyelangiki swi pyetlekaka**  
“Something very soft and it can easily be crushed”

- (129) a. **N'wana u-te pyetle [rhama]**  
 "The child crushed rama"
- b. **N'wana u-pyetelele [rhama]**  
 "The child crushed rama"
- c. **[rhama] yi-te pyetle**  
 "Rama is crushed"
- d. **[rhama] yi-pyetelele**  
 "Rama is crushed"

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **ridaka** (mud); **ndzhope** (mud); **khekhe** (cake); **vulongo** (dung).

#### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of crushing

- (130) **N'wana u-pyetelele rama** (an act)  
 "The child is crushing rama"

[Event 2] = state: **swiphemu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: crush; smash

- (131) **Ndzi-te pyetle rama**

[lis]: break – crush-change of state

Subcategory 4: Demolish

Verb 1: mbundzu

Ideophone: **mbundzu**

With affix [-k-]: **mbundzu-k-**

With affix [-x-]: **mbundzu-x-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **mbundzu** and the transitive verb **-mbundzux-**:  
[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (132) a. Human: **[Tatana] u-ri mbundzu yindlo**  
**[Tatana] u-mbundzuxa yindlo**  
 “The father demolishes the house”
- b. Animal: **[ndlopfu] yi-ri mbundzu misava**  
**[ndlopfu] yi-mbundzuxa misava**  
 “The elephant demolishes the soil”

On the object of the transitive verb (133b) and the transitive ideophone (133a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-mbundzuk-** (133d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (133c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga ni muako lowukulu swi tlhela swi tiya kambe swi fayeka hi ku olova ngopfu loko swi tsakama**

“Something big which is build, it is hard, but it is breakable, crushable when it is wet”

- (133) a. **Wanuna u-te mbundzu [khumbi]**  
 “The man demolished the wall”

b. **Wanuna u-mbundzuxe [khumbi]**

“The man demolished the wall”

c. **[khumbi] ri-te mbundzu**

“The wall is demolished”

d. **[khumbi] ri-mbundzukile**

“The wall is demolished”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **yindlo** (house); **khumbi** (wall); **switina** (bricks)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of breaking off

(134) **Wanuna u-mbundzuxa khumbi** (an act)

“The man demolishes the wall”

[Event 2] = state: **mabuwa** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: demolish

(135) **Ndzi-te mbundzu khumbi**

[lis]: break – demolish-change of state

### Verb 2: hodlo

Ideophone: **hodlo**

With affix [-k-]: **hodlo-k-**

With affix [-s-]: **hodlo-s-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **hodlo** and the transitive verb **–hodlos-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (136) a. Human:       **[Nhwana] u-ri hodlo xitlati**  
                          **[Nhwana] u-hodlosa xitlati**  
                          “The girl demolishes the barn”
- b. Animal:       **[ndlopfu] yi-ri hodlo xihlahla**  
                          **[ndlopfu] yi-hodlosa xihlahla**  
                          “The elephant demolishes the bush”

On the object of the transitive verb (137b) and the transitive ideophone (137a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–hodlok-** (137d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (137c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiyela, loko swi hodlosiwa swi huma switlupu kumbe mabuwa yo tala**

“Something hard to break, fragile, it is demolished and get split in more pieces”

- (137) a.       **Wanuna u-te hodlo [xitlati]**  
                  “The man demolished the barn”
- b.       **Wanuna u-hodlose [xitlati]**  
                  “The man demolished the barn”
- c.       **[xitlati] xi-te hodlo**  
                  “The barn is demolished”
- d.       **[xitlati] xi-hodlokile**  
                  “The barn is demolished”



Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **dulu** (barn); **yindlu** (house); **switina** (bricks); **maribye** (stones); **xitlati** (barn)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of demolishing

(138) **Wanuna u-hodlosa xitlati** (an act)

“The man demolishes the barn”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu**; **mabuwa** (pieces)

[lcp]: break; demolish

(139) **Ndzi-te hodlo xitlati**

[lis]: break – demolish - change of state

Verb 3: hahlu

Ideophone: **hahlu**

With affix [-k-]: **hahlu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **hahlu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **hahlu** and the transitive verb **–hahlul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(140) a. Human: **[Ntshunani] u-ri hahlu lwangu**  
**[Ntshunani] u-hahlula lwangu**  
“Ntshunani demolishes the roof”

- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-ri hahlu byanyi**  
**[Mfenhe] yi-hahlula byanyi**  
“The monkey demolishes the grass”

On the object of the transitive verb (141b) and the transitive ideophone (141a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**hahluk-** (141d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (141c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiyela kambe swi hahluka hi ku olova ngopfu loko moya wu ba**  
“Something hard and very easily demolished and it can be easily blown away”

- (141) a. **Wansati u-te hahlu [lwangu]**  
“The woman demolished the roof”
- b. **Wansati u-hahlule [lwangu]**  
“The woman demolished the roof”
- c. **[Lwangu] ri-te hahlu**  
“The roof is demolished”
- d. **[Lwangu] ri-hahlukile**  
“The roof is demolished”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **byanyi** (grass); **lwangu** (roof); **zinki** (zinc); **rikupa-kupa** (porch)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of demolishing

- (142) **Wansati u-hahlula lwangu (an act)**  
“The woman demolishes the roof”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: be blown off by wind; demolish

(148) **Ndzi-te hahlu lwangu**

[lis]: break – demolish -change of state

Verb 4: hidzii

Ideophone: **hidzii**

With affix [-k-]: **hidzimu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **hidzimu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **hidzii** and the transitive verb **–hidzimul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(144) a. Human: **[Jaha] ri-ri hidzii switina**  
**[Jaha] ri-hidzimula switina**  
“The boy demolishes bricks”

b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-ri hidzii maribye**  
**[Mfenhe] yi-hidzimula maribye**  
“The monkey demolishes stones”

On the object of the transitive verb (145b) and the transitive ideophone (145a), the subject of the intransitive verb **–hidzimuk-** (145d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (145c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiyela swinene kambe swa olova ku swi hlanhla swi wa**

“Something hard but it can easily be demolished”

- (145) a. **Jaha ri-te hidzii [switina]**  
“The boy demolished the bricks”
- b. **Jaha ri-hidzimule [switina]**  
“The boy demolished the bricks”
- c. **[switina] swi-te hidzii**  
“The bricks are demolished”
- d. **[switina] swi-hidzimukile**  
“The bricks are demolished”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **yindlo**(house); **khumbi** (wall); **maribye** (stones); **switina** (bricks)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of demolishing

(146) **Jaha ri-hidzimula switina** (an act)

“The boy demolishes the bricks”

[Event 2] = state: **mabuwa-buwa** (manu pieces)

[lcp]: break, crush, demolish

(147) **Ndzi-te hidzii switina**

[lis]: break – demolish - change of state

Subcategory 5: Tear

Verb 1: kwamu

Ideophone: **kwamu**

With affix [-k-]: **kwamu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **kwamu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **kwamu** and the transitive verb **-kwamul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (148) a. Human: **[Wansati] u-ri kwamu rihanti**  
**[Wansati] u-kwamula rihanti**  
“The woman is tearing off the bark”
- b. Animal: **[Nghala] yi-ri kwamu dzovo**  
**[Nghala] yi-kwamula dzovo**  
“The lion is tearing off the skin”

On the object of the transitive verb (149b) and the transitive ideophone (149a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-kwamuk-** (149d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (149c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga oma na swona swi nga tiya kambe swi kwamuka hi ku olova**  
“Something which has become dry and is hard and also tearable”

- (149) a. **Tatana u-te kwamu [rihanti]**  
“The father tore off the bark”
- b. **Tatana u-kwamule [rihanti]**  
“The father tore off the bark”
- c. **[Rihanti] ri-te kwamu**  
“The bark is torn off”
- d. **[Rihanti] ri-kwamukile**  
“The bark is torn off”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **rihanti** (bark); **nhlonge** (skin); **byewu** (bark); **dzovo** (skin); **rikoko** (crust); **mahanti** (splinter)

#### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

- (150) **Tatana u-kwamule rihanti** (an act)  
“The father is tearing off bark”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: tear off

- (151) **Ndzi-te kwamu rihanti**

[lis]: break – tear - change of state

Verb 2: tlupuIdeophone: **tlupu**With affix [-k-]: **tlupu-k-**With affix [-l-]: **tlupu-l-**Selection restrictionsOn subject of the transitive ideophone **tlupu** and the transitive verb **-tlupul-**:[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(152) a. Human: **[N'wana] u-ri tlupu phepha**  
**[N'wana] u-tlupula phepha**  
 "A kid is tearing to shreds the paper"

b. Animal: **[Nghala] yi-ri tlupu nyama**  
**[Nghala] yi-tlupula nyama**  
 "The lion is tearing to shreds the meat"

On the object of the transitive verb (153b) and the transitive ideophone (153a), the subject of the intransitive verb **-tlupuk-** (153d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (153c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swa tlupuleka hi ku tsemiwa kumbe ku handzuriwa**  
 "Something hard and tearable to shreds when cut and torn up"

(153) a. **N'wana u-te tlupu [phepha]**  
 "The child tore the shreds the paper"

b. **N'wana u-tlupule [phepha]**  
 "The child tore the shreds the paper"

- c. **[phepha] ri-te tlupu**  
“The paper is torn to shreds”
- d. **[phepha] ri-tlupukile**  
“The paper is torn to shreds”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **nyama** (meat); **phepha** (paper)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

- (154) **N’wana u tlupula phepha** (an act)  
“The child is tearing the paper”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: cut, tear up, tear to shreds

- (155) **Ndzi-te tlupu phepha**

[lis]: break – tear -change of state

### Verb 3: tlwebu

Ideophone: **tlwebu**

With affix [-k-]: **tlwebu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **tlwebu-l-**

### Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **tlwebu** and the transitive verb **-tlwebul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]



- (156) a. Human: **[Nhwanyana] u-ri tlwebu nceka**  
**[Nhwanyana] u-tlwebula nceka**  
 “The girl is tearing the linen”
- b. Animal: **[Mbyana] yi-ri tlwebu rhoko**  
**[Mbyana] yi-tlwebula rhoko**  
 “The dog is tearing the dress”

On the object of the transitive verb (157b) and the transitive ideophone (157a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**tlwebuk-** (157d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (157c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya, leswi nga handzukaka hi ku hariwa kunene na swona hi ku olova**

“Something hard which can be torn, but tear off easily”

- (157) a. **Wansati u-te tlwebu [rhoko]**  
 “The woman tore the dress”
- b. **Wansati u-tlwebule [rhoko]**  
 “The woman tore the dress”
- c. **[rhoko] yi-te tlwebu**  
 “The dress is torn”
- d. **[rhoko] yi-tlwebukile**  
 “The dress is torn”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **nceka** (linen); **hembe**(shirt); **buruku** (trouser); **silika** (silk); **fasikoti** (apron)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

(158) **Wansati u-tlwebula nceka** (an act)

“The woman is tearing the linen”

[Event 2] = state: **swilapani** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: tear off

(159) **Ndzi-te tlwebu nceka**

[lis]: break – tear - change of state

Verb 4: mpfarhu

Ideophone: **mpfarhu**

With affix [-k-]: **mpfarhu-k-**

With affix [-l-]: **mpfarhu-l-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **mpfarhu** and the transitive verb **-mpfarhul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

(160) a. Human: **[Nhwanyana] u-ri mpfarhu buruku**

**[Nhwanyana] u-mpfarhula buruku**

“The girl is tearing the trouser”

b. Animal: **[Nkawa] wu-ri mpfarhu nceka**

**[Nkawa] wu-mpfarhula nceka**

“The monkey is tearing the linen”

On the object of the transitive verb (161b) and the transitive ideophone (161a), the subject of the intransitive verb –**mpfarhuk-** (161d) and the subject of the intransitive ideophone (161c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiya kambe swi handzuka hambu swi tsindziyerile**

“Something hard which can easily be torn, cracked or tore up”

- (161) a. **Nhwanyana u-te mparhu [buruku]**  
“The girl tore the trouser”
- b. **Nhwanyana u-mpfarhule [buruku]**  
“The girl tore the trouser”
- c. **[Buruku] ri te mparhu**  
“The trouser is torn”
- d. **[Buruku] ri-mpfarhukile**  
“The trouser is torn”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **hembe** (shirt); **nceka** (linen); **fasikoti** (apron); **xidukwani** (handkerchief)

Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

- (162) **Nhwanyana u-mpfarhula nceka** (an act)  
“The girl is tearing the linen”

[Event 2] = state: **switlupu** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: be torn, tear up

(163) **Ndzi-te mparfhu nceka**

[lis]: break – tear - change of state

Verb 5: kakatlulu

The ideophone **kakatlulu** has a verbal in the form of **–kakatlul-**. It has no intransitive derivation from the ideophone. It has the same meaning of tearing as the other verbs and ideophones in this subsection.

Ideophone: **kakatlulu**

Verb: **kakatlul-**

Selection restrictions

On subject of the transitive ideophone **kakatlulu** and the transitive verb **–kakatlul-**:

[ARG<sub>1</sub> =animate]

- (164) a. Human: **[Kokwani] u-ri kakatlulu nsiha wa nyama**  
**[Kokwani] u-kakatlula nsiha wa nyama**  
“The old lady is tearing the vein of the meat”
- b. Animal: **[Nghala] yi-ri kakatlulu dzovo ra homu**  
**[Nghala] yi-kakatlula dzovo ra homu**  
“The lion is tearing the skin of cow”

On the object of the transitive verb (165b) and the transitive ideophone (165a), as well as the subject of the intransitive ideophone (165c):

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = physical object]

**Swilo leswi nga tiyela kambe swa tsemeka**

“Something hard and breakable”

- (165) a. **Kokwani u-te kakatlulu [nsiha]**  
“The old lady tore the nerve”
- b. **Kokwani u-kakatlula [nsiha]**  
“The old lady tore the nerve”
- c. **[nsiha] wu-te kakatlulu**  
“The nerve is torn”

Other nouns which may feature as ARG<sub>2</sub>: **nyama** (meat); **ntonga** (biltong); **dzovo** (skin); **nsiha** (nerve); **nsiha** (nerve)

### Event structure

[Event 1] = process: act of tearing

- (166) **Kokwani u-kakatlula nyama** (an act)  
“The old lady is tearing the meat”

[Event 2] = state: **swiphizani** (pieces)

[lcp]: break: tear

- (167) **Ndzi-te kakatlulu nyama**

[lis]: break – tear - change of state

## CHAPTER 4

### BEND VERBS

#### 4.1 AIM

The various bend verbs in Xitsonga will be analyzed below. These verbs will be classified into syntactic categories after which a semantic classification will be attempted. The various levels of semantic representation will then be done with each syntactic category, i.e. argument structure, event structure, lexical conceptual paradigm and lexical inheritance structure.

#### 4.2 SYNTACTIC CATEGORIES

The bend verbs in Xitsonga may be classified into two syntactic categories, i.e. transitive and intransitive bend verbs.

##### 4.2.1 Transitive bend verbs

###### Assignment of argument

Transitive verbs are to be regarded as two-place predicates. Their predicate argument structure thus allows two arguments where the one argument is an external argument and the second one an internal argument. According to the theta-theory, transitive verbs have two theta-roles; the one theta-role is to be found in the subject position of the verb. These theta-roles may have a number of semantic interpretations. The external argument may be an agent and the internal is a patient:

###### Verb 1: khotsa (bend)

- (1) a. **Jaha ri khotsa darata**  
“The boy bends the wire”

- b. **Mbyana yi khotsa ncila**  
“The dog bends the tail”

Verb 2: ghova (bend down; bow)

- (2) a. **Musa u ghova darata**  
“Musa bows the wire”
- b. **Mfenhe yi ghova rhavi**  
“The baboon bows the branch”

Verb 3: Petsa (bend; fold)

- (3) a. **Ntsako u petsa phepha**  
“Ntsako folds the paper”
- b. **N’wana u petsa rhoko**  
“The child folds the dress”

Verb 4: Khinya (bend; fold)

- (4) a. **Wansati u khinya rhoko**  
“The woman folds the dress”
- b. **Nhwana u khinya buruku**  
“The girl folds the trouser”

Verb 5: Soholota (bend; twist)

- (5) a. **Musa u soholota voko ra n’wana**  
“Musa twists the hand of the child”

b. **Nghala yi soholota nyama ya mhala**

“The lion twists the meat of the impala”

#### 4.2.2 Intransitive bend verbs

These verbs assign only one argument which is a patient.

Verb 1: soholoka (bend; twist)

(6) a. **Nsovo u soholoka nomu hi ku vabya**

“Nsovo twists the mouth because of illness”

b. **Nyoka ya soholoka loko yi famba**

“The snake twists when it walks”

Verb 2: hamboloka (bend; crooked)

(7) a. **Manana u hamboloka nomu**

“The mother crooked the mouth”

b. **Homu yi hamboloka timhondzo**

“The cow crooked the horns”

c. **Timhondzo ta hamboloka**

“The horns are crooked”

Verb 3: gombonyoka (bend; curve)

(8) a. **Musa u gombonyoka voko**

“Musa bends the arm”

b. **Voko ra gombonyoka**

“The arm bends”



Verb 4: **Voyama** (lean; incline)

- (9) a. **N'wana u voyama nhamu**  
"The child lean the neck"  
b. **Nhamu ya voyama**  
"The neck lean"

Verb 5: **Keyama** (bend forward with buttocks sticking out)

- (10) a. **Jaha ra keyama hi switshamo**  
"The boy bends the buttocks"  
b. **Switshamo swa keyama**  
"Buttocks are bends"

Verb 6: **Korhama** (bend down; bend over)

- (11) a. **Kokwani u korhama nhlana**  
"The old man bends the backbone"  
b. **Nhlana wa korhama**  
"The backbone is bends"

Verb 7: **Nkhinsama** (kneel; go down on the knee)

- (12) a. **Nhwanyana u nkhinsama hi matsolo**  
"The girl bends the knees"  
b. **Matsolo ya nkhinsama**  
"The knees are bends"

### 4.2.3 Inalienable possession

According to Voeltz (1976) and Satyo (1985) as cited by Du Plessis and Visser (1992), this is the syntactic phenomenon which is also known as the syntax of body parts. An inalienable body part may be used as an adjunct of an intransitive verb. The inalienable possession which started off as a possession in the subject of the intransitive verb, ended up as adjunct of that verb. However, this adjunct shares the theta-role to be found in the subject position, having no theta-role of its own, e.g.:

- (13) a. **[Nomu wa manana] wu-hombolokile**  
 b. **[Manana] u-hombolokile [nomu]**  
 "The mother is bending the mouth"

**nomu** is an adjunct.

## 4.3 SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION

Bend verbs are classified into six semantic categories as indicated below:

### 4.3.1 Bend

To force into a move or angle away from a straight position, there are three verbs in this category:

#### Verb 1: Khotsa

- (14) a. **[jaha] ri khotsa darata**  
 "The boy bends the wire"  
 b. **[mfenhe] yi khotsa ncila**  
 "The monkey bends the tail"

**Verb 2: Ghova**

- (15) a. **[Wanuna] u ghova nsimbhi**  
“A man bends the iron”
- b. **[Ndlopfu] yi ghova nxakwa**  
“An elephant bends the trunk”

**Verb 3: Korhama**

- (16) a. **[Nhwanyana] wa korhama loko a rhula thini**  
“The girl bends when she takes off the bucket”
- b. **[Homu] ya korhama loko yi phohla etshangeni**  
“The cow bends when it goes out of the kraal”

**4.3.2 Bend or Fold**

There are two verbs in this category:

**Verb 1: Petsa**

- (17) a. **[Nhwanyana] u petsa xipereta**  
“The girl bends the pin”
- b. **[Mfenhe] yi petsa darata**  
“The monkey bends the wire”

**Verb 2: Khinya**

- (18) a. **[Wansati] u khinya rhoko**  
“The woman folds the dress”

- b. **[Ndlopfu] yi khinya nxakwa loko yi kwatile**  
“The elephant bends the trunk when angry”

#### 4.3.3 Bend or Twist

There are two verbs in this category:

##### Verb 1: Soholoka

- (19) a. **[Manana] u ta soholoka nhamu loko a rhwala ndzhwalo wo tika**  
“The mother will twist the neck when she carries heavy load”
- b. **[Mbhongolo] yi ta soholoka nhamu loko yo wela ekheleni**  
“The donkey will twist the neck when it falls into a cage”

##### Verb 2: Soholota

- (20) a. **[Kokwani] u soholota voko ra n'wana**  
“The old woman twist the hand of the child”
- b. **[Nghala] yi soholota nhamu ya mhala**  
“The lion twist the neck of the Impala”

#### 4.3.4 Be crooked

There are two verbs in this category:

##### Verb 1: homboloka

- (21) a. **[Manana] u homboloka nomo hikwalaho ka vuvabyi**  
“The mother twisted the mouth because of illness”

- b. **[Ndlopfu] yi ta homboloka timhondzo loko yi kula**

“The elephant will twist the ivory as it grow”

### Verb 2: Gombonyoka

- (22) a. **[Manana] u ta gombonyoka nenge hikwalaho ka vuvabyi**

“The mother will be bending the leg because of stroke”

- b. **[Mfenhe] yi ta gombonyoka ncila hi ku bohiwa**

“The monkey will be bending the tail because of tied up”

### 4.3.5 Lean over; incline

#### Verb 1: Voyama

- (23) a. **[Jaha] ra voyama leswaku ri nga tivavisi**

“The boy leans so that he does not harm himself”

- b. **[Hanci] yi voyama nhamu loko yi jika ekhonweni**

“The horse leans the neck when it comes to a corner”

#### Verb 2: Keyama

- (24) a. **[Mukhegula] u keyama hi swisuti loko a tshama**

“The old woman leans with buttocks when she sits”

- b. **[Mfenhe] yi keyama hi swisuti**

“The monkey lean with buttocks”

### 4.3.6 Kneel

#### Only one verb: Nkhinsama

- (25) a. **[Wansati] u nkhinsama hi matsolo loko a nyika nuna swakudya**  
 “The woman kneel by her knees when she gives her husband food”
- b. **[Mbhongolo] ya nkhinsama hi matsolo loko yi phohla darata**  
 “The donkey kneel by its knees when it get out through the wire”

## 4.4 LEVELS OF REPRESENTATION IN TRANSITIVE BEND VERBS

The transitive bend verbs may be classified into five subgroups, e.g. **khotsa**, **ghova**, **petsa**, **khinya** and **soholota**.

### Verb 1: Khotsa

Argument structure: [AGR<sub>1</sub> = Animate]

- (26) Human: **[Jaha] ri khotsa darata**  
 “The boy bends the wire”
- Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi khotsa ncila**  
 “The monkey bends the tail”

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = Physical object]:

### On the object of khotsa:

- [ARG<sub>2</sub> = **Swilo leswi ncincaka xivumbeko kumbe swirho swa miri kutani swi khotseka**  
 “Something that can change its shape or the body parts that are bendable”

**(27) Jaha ri khotsa [darata]**

“The boy bends the wire”

**Mfenhe yi khotsa [ncila]**

“The monkey bends the tail”

Things that are capable of bending in this way are: **miri** (body); **tsolo** (knee); **nhamu** (neck); **darata** (wire); **simbhi** (iron), e.g.

Artifacts:

- (i) Instruments: **hamula** (hammer); **pulayizi** (pliers); **mavoko** (hands); **ribye** (stone)
- (ii) House hold articles: **lepula** (spoon), **mukwana** (knife); **foroko** (fork)
- (iii) Garden: **xipedi** (spade); **bheyila** (axe); **piki** (pick-axe); **harika** (rake); **puluhu** (plough)
- (iv) Plants: **rihlanga** (seed); **byanyi** (grass), **rhavi** (branch)
- (v) Body parts: **rintiho** (finger); **tsolo** (knee); **nhamu** (neck); **voko** (hand); **nenge** (leg); **ncila** (tail).

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = INSTRUMENT]

The verbs above may accept a shadow argument, i.e. [hi NP]. The instrument may be an artifact like pliers or a body part, e.g.:

- (28) a. Artifact  
**Ndzi khotsa darata hi pulayizi**  
 “I bend the wire with the plier”
- b. Body part  
**Ndzi khotsa darata hi voko**  
 “I bend the wire with the hand”

(29) Instrument – subject alternation:

**[Pulayizi] yi khotsa darata**

“The plier bends the wire”

Event structure:

Event 1 = process; act of bending

(30) **N’wana u khotsa darata**

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(30) **N’wana u khotsa darata** (an act)

“The child bends the wire”

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending, may be indicated as follows:

(31) a. **Darata leyi nga khotseka**

“A wire which is bent”

b. **Rhavi leri nga khotseka**

“A branch which is bent”

[1cp]:

(32) Bend: **Ndzi khotsa darata**

“I am bending the wire”

**Ndzi khotsa jekejeke**

“I am bending the reed”



[lis]:

bend – change of state

Verb 2: ghova

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]:

(33) Human: **[Wanuna] u ghova darata**

“The man bends the wire”

Animal: **[Ndlopfu] yi ghova rhavi**

“The elephant bends the branch”

On the object of ghova

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = **Swilo leswi ncincaka xivumbeko kumbe swirho swa miri kutani swi ghoveka**

“Something that can be change its shape or the body parts that are bendable”

(34) **Jaha ri ghova [darata]**

“The boy bend the wire”

**Ndlopfu yi ghova [rhavi]**

“The elephant bend the branch”

Things that are capable of bending in this manner are: **nhlana** (back bone); **nhamu** (neck); **ncila** (tail); **nsimbhi** (iron); **darata** (wire) e.g.

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = instrument]:

The verbs above may accept a shadow argument, i.e. [hi NP]. The instrument may be an artifact like hammer.

(35) **Ndzi ghova darata hi hamula**

“I bend the wire with the hammer”

Instrument-subject alternation

- (36) **[hamula] yi ghova darata**  
“The hammer bends the wire”

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

- (37) **Jaha ri ghova darata** (an act)  
“The boy bends the wire”

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending, may be indicated as follows:

- (38) a. **Darata leyi nga ghoveka**  
“A wire which is bent”  
b. **Rhavi leri nga ghoveka**  
“A branch which is bent”

[Icp] :

- (39) Bend: **Ndzi ghova darata**  
“I am bending the wire”

[lis]

bend – change of state

Verb 3: Petsa

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]:

- (40) Human: **[Wansati] u petsa rhoko**  
“The woman folds the dress”

Animal: **Mfenhe yi petsa darata**  
 “The monkey folds the wire”

On the object of **petsa**

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = **Swilo leswi nga tiya, swi ncincaka xivumbeko na swona swi petseka hi ku olova**

“Something hard, change its shape and fold easily”

(41) **N’wana u petsa [phepha]**

“The child folds the paper”

**Mfenhe yi petsa [darata]**

“The monkey folds the wire”

Things that are capable of bending in this manner are: **phepha** (paper); **harhani** (thread); **rhoko** (dress); **sangu** (mat); **darata** (wire); **lakani** (sheet); **buruku** (trouser), e.g.

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = instrument]:

The verbs above may accept the shadow argument, i.e. [hi NP]. The instrument may be an artifact like plier.

(42) a. **Ndzi petsa darata hi pulayizi**

“I fold the wire with the plier”

b. **Ndzi petsa phepha hi voko**

“I fold the paper with the hand”

Instrument-subject alternation

(43) **[Hamula] yi petsa darata**

“The hammer folds the wire”

### Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of folding

- (44) **N'wana u petsa phepha** (an act)  
"The child folds the paper"

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending may be indicated as follows:

- (45) a. **Darata leyi nga petseka**  
"A wire which is folded"
- b. **Phepha leri nga petseka**  
"A paper which is folded"

[lcp]

- (46) Fold: **Ndzi petsa darata**  
"I am folding the wire"

[lis]

bend – change of state

### Verb 4: Khinya

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (47) Human: **[Wansati] u khinya rhoko**  
"The woman folds the dress"
- Animal: **[Ndlopfu] yi khinya rhavi**  
"The elephant folds the branch"

On the object of khinya:

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = **Swilo leswi nga ncincaka xivumbeko kumbe swirho swa miri hi ku khinyeka**

“Something that can change its shape or the body parts that are bendable”

(48) **Nhwanyana u khinya buruku**

“The girl folds the trouser”

**Ndlopfu yi khinya rhavi**

“The elephant folds the branch”

Things that are capable of bending in this manner are: **rhoko** (dress); **hembhe** (shirt); **rhavi** (branch); **nceka** (linen).

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = instrument]:

The verbs above may accept a shadow argument, i.e. [hi NP].

(49) a. Artifact:

**Ndzi khinya rhoko hi njara**

“I fold the dress with the thread”

b. Body part:

**Ndzi khinya rhoko hi mavoko**

“I fold the dress with the hands”

Instrument-subject alternation:

(50) **[njara] yi khinya rhoko**

“The thread folded the dress”

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(51) **N'wana u khinya rhoko** (an act)

"The child folds the dress"

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending may be indicated as follows:

(52) a. **Buruku leri khinyiweke**

"A trouser which is folded"

b. **Nguvu leyi khinyiweke**

"A dress which is folded"

[lcp]

(53) Fold: **Ndzi khinya rhoko**

"I am folding the dress"

[lis]:

bend – change of state

#### Verb 5: Soholota

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(54) Human: **[Kokwani] u soholota voko ra n'wana**

"The old woman twists the hand of the child"

Animal: **[Nghala] yi soholota nhamu ya mhala**

"The lion twists the neck of the impala"

#### On the object of soholota

[ARG<sub>2</sub> = **Swilo leswi nga ncincaka xivumbeko kumbe swirho swa miri hi ku soholotiwa**

"Something that can change its shape or body parts by twisting and bend"

(55) **Nhwanyana u soholota voko ra n'wana**

"The girl twists the hand of the child"

**Nghala yi soholota nhamu ya mhala**

"The lion twists the neck of the impala"

Things that are capable of bending in this manner are: **voko** (hand); **nhamu** (neck); **rintiho** (finger); **ntambhu** (thread); **phayiphi** (pipe).

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = instrument]

The verbs above may accept a shadow argument, i.e. [hi NP].

## (56) a. Artifact

**Ndzi soholota voko hi mhandzi**

"I twist the arm with the timber"

b. **Ndzi soholata byanyi hi voko**

"I twist the grass with the hand"

Instrument – subject alternation

(57) **[Mhandzi] yi soholota voko**

"The timber twists the hand"

Event structure:

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(58) **Nhwanyana u soholota voko ra n'wana (an act)**

"The girl twists the hand of the child"

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending may be indicated as follows:

- (59) a. **Voko leri nga soholotiwa**  
“A hand which is twisted”
- b. **Byanyi lebyi nga soholotiwa**  
“A grass which is twisted”

[lcp]:

- (60) Twist: **Ndzi soholota voko**  
“I twist the hand”

[lis]

Bend – change of state

#### 4.5 LEVELS OF REPRESENTATION IN INTRANSITIVE BEND VERBS

The intransitive bend verbs may be classified into three subgroups: **soholoka**, **homboloka** and **gombonyoka**.

##### 4.5.1 The verbs **soholoka**, **homboloka** and **gombonyoka**

These three verbs are distinguished from the other intransitive verbs because their external argument may be interpreted as patient.

##### Verb 1: **Soholoka**

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = bodypart]

- (61) **[Nhamu] yi soholokile**  
“The neck is twisted”



Inalienable possession

(62) **[Nhamu ya manana] yi-soholokile**

**[Manana] u-soholokile [nhamu]**

“The mother twisted the neck”

**[Voko ra n’wana] ri-soholokile**

**[N’wana] u-soholokile [voko]**

“The child twisted the hand”

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(63) **Wansati u soholoke nhamu** (an act)

“The woman twisted the neck”

Event 2 = state, The state, which is the result of bending

[lcp]

bend: twisted

(64) **Ku soholoka nhamu**

“To twist the neck”

[lis]

bend – change of state

Verb 2: **homboloka**

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = body part]

(65) **[Nomu] wu hambolokile**

“The mouth is twisted”

Inalienable possession

- (66) a. **[Nomu wa n'wana] wu-hombolokile**  
**[N'wana] u-hombolokile [nomu]**  
 "The child twisted the mouth"
- b. **[Rintiho ra n'wana] ri-hombolokile**  
**[N'wana] u-hombolokile [rintiho]**  
 "The child twisted the finger"

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

- (67) **N'wana u ta hamboloka nomo hi vuvabyi**  
 "The child will twist the mouth because of illness"

Event 2 = state, The state, which is the result of bending

[lcp]

bend: be crooked; twisted

- (68) **Ndzi hamboloka nomo**  
 "I twist the mouth"

[lis]

bend – change of state

Verb 3: gombonyoka

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = body part]

- (69) a. **Nenge wu gombonyokile**  
“The leg is twisted”
- b. **Ncila wu gombonyokile**  
“The tail is twisted”

Inalienable possession

- (70) **[Nenge wa n’wana] wu-gombonyokile**  
**[N’wana] u-gombonyokile [nenge]**  
“The child twisted the leg”
- [Ncila wa mbyana] wu-gombonyokile**  
**[Mbyana] yi-gombonyokile [ncila]**  
“The dog twisted the tail”

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

- (71) **N’wana u ta gombonyoka nenge hikwalaho ka vuvabyi**  
“The child will be bending the leg because of stroke”

Event 2 = state; The state, which is the result of bending

[lcp]

bend: twist

- (72) **Ndzi ta gombonyoka nenge**  
“I will twist the leg”

[lis]

bend – change of state

#### 4.5.2 The verbs *voyama* and *korhama*

These two intransitive verbs are restricted in the selection restriction on their external arguments although such arguments may also be interpreted as patients.

##### Verb 1: *voyama*

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = body part]

Such arguments may only be animate or a body part:

(73) **[Hanci] yi voyama [nhamu] loko yi jika hi rivilo ekhonweni**

“The horse lean the neck when it run fast to the corner”

Body part: **nhloko** (head); **nhamu** (neck); **switshamo** (buttocks); **nhlana** (backbone)

##### Inalienable possession

(74) **[Nhamu ya n'wana] yi-voyamile**

**[N'wana] u-voyamile [nhamu]**

“The child leaned the neck”

##### Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of leaning

(75) **Jaha ri voyama nhloko leswaku ri nga tivavisi**

“The boy lean head so that he does not harm himself”

Event 2 = state; The state, which is the result of bending.

[lcp]

bend: incline, bend down, lean

(76) **Ndzi voyama nhloko**

[lis]

bend – change of state

Verb 2: korhama

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

Such argument may only be animate or a body part

Animate

(77) Human: **[nhwanyana] u korhama nhloko loko a rhula thini**  
“The girl bends the head when she takes off the bucket”

Animal: **[Homu] yi korhama nhloko loko yi phohla etshangeni**  
“The cow bends the head when it gets out of the kraal”

Body part: **nhlana** (back bone); **nhloko** (head); **swisuti** (buttocks)

Inalienable possession

(78) **[Nhloko ya homu] yi-korhamile**  
**[Homu] yi-korhamile [nhloko]**  
“The cow is bending the head”

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(79) **Nhwanyana u korhama nhloko loko a rhula thini (an act)**  
“The girl bends head when she take off the bucket”

Event 2 = state; The state, which is the result of bending.

[lcp]

bend: to bow, incline, bend forward

(80) **Ndzi korhama nhloko**

“I bend the head”

[lis]

bend – change of state

#### 4.5.3 The verbs *keyama* and *nkhinsama*

These two verbs are distinguished from the verbs above because they may appear with a shadow argument which is represented by [hi NP] and their external argument may only be animate.

##### Verb 1: *keyama*

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(81) Human: **[Mukhegula] u keyama hi swisuti**  
“The old woman lean with buttocks”

Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi keyama hi switshamo**  
“The monkey lean the buttocks”

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = buttocks]

(82) **Mukhegula u keyama hi [swisuti]**  
“The old woman bends the buttocks’

**Mfenhe yi keyama hi [swisuti]**

“The monkey bends the buttocks”

Things that are capable of bending in this way are: **switshamo** (buttocks); **miri** (body)

Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(83) **Mukhegula u keyama hi swisuti**

“The old woman bends the buttocks”

Event 2 = state; The state, which is the result of bending.

[lcp]

bend: incline, lean

(84) **Ndzi keyama swisuti**

“I bend the buttocks”

[lis]

bend – change of state

Verb 2: nkhinsama

Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

(85) Human: **[Wansati] u nkhinsama hi matsolo loko a nyika nuna swakudya**

“The woman bend the knees when she gives the husband food”

Animal: **[Mbhongolo] ya nkhinsama hi matsolo loko yi phohla darata**

“The donkey bend the knees when it get out through the wires”

[S – ARG<sub>1</sub> = knees]

(86) **Wansati wa nkhinsama [hi matsolo] loko a nyika nuna swakudya**

“The woman bends when she gives the husband food”

**Mbhongolo ya nkhinsama [hi matsolo] loko yi phohla darata**

“The donkey bends when it gets out through the wire”

A thing that is capable of bending in this manner is: **matsolo** (knees)

### Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(87) **Manana u nkhinsama hi matsolo** (an act)

“The mother bends the knees”

Event 2 = state; The state, which is the result of bending.

[lcp]

bend: kneel, go down on the knee, bend the knee

(88) **Ndzi nkhinsama hi matsolo**

“I bend with the knees”

[lis]

bend – change of state



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been reached with regard to the Break and Bend verbs in Xitsonga. In this chapter the findings will be presented in the form of a summary of the functions of the Break and Bend verbs and their constructions.

#### 5.1 BREAK VERBS

##### 5.1.1 Syntactic categories

The Break verbs may be classified into three different categories depending on the type of verbs:

(a) Transitive verbs with two arguments

- (1) **[Mufana] u-phema [vuswa]**  
“The boy breaks the porridge”

In (1) above the two arguments which are assigned by the verb **phema** appear in brackets.

(b) Verbs with transitive and intransitive suffixes

The verbal root may appear with a transitive suffix [-l-] or an intransitive suffix [-k-]:

- (2) a. **[Manana] u-konyomu-l-e [xikomu]**  
“The mother broke the handhoe”
- b. **[xikomu] xi-konyomu-k-ile**  
“The handhoe is broken”

In (2) above the verbal root **[konyomu]** carries the meaning represented by break. The verb in (2a) has a transitive suffix [-l-]. In such a case the two arguments in brackets are allowed to appear. But in (2b) the intransitive suffix [-k-] will only allow the one argument **[xikomū]**.

(c) Ideophones with transitive and intransitive suffixes

The ideophones may appear with transitive and intransitive suffixes.

The ergative ideophone

- (3) a. Transitive: **[Wansati] u-te khatlu [kamba]**  
 "The woman broke the leaf"
- b. Intransitive: **[Kamba] ri-te khatlu**  
 "The leaf is broken"

With a transitive suffix:

- (5) **[Manana] u-khatlu-l-e [kamba]**  
 "The woman broke the leaf"

With an intransitive suffix

- (6) **[Kamba] ri-khatlu-k-ile**  
 "The leaf is broken"

### 5.1.2 Assignment of argument

(a) Transitive verbs

Transitive verbs to be regarded as two place predicates. Their predicate argument structure thus allows two arguments where the one argument is an external argument and the second one an internal argument. According to the theta-theory, transitive verbs have two theta-

roles, the one theta-role is to be found in the subject position and the other one in the object position of the verb.

These theta-roles may have a number of semantic interpretations. The transitive break verbs have an external argument, which is an agent, and an internal argument, which is a patient.

- (7) **[N'wana] u-phema [vuswa]**  
 "The child is breaking the porridge"

(b) Verbal roots with transitive and intransitive suffixes

The verbal root with suffixes [-k-] and [-l-] assigns two internal arguments, i.e. agent and patient.

- (8) a. [e] [-phatlu-] [agent, patient]

The verbal suffixes [-k-] or [-l-] have to appear with this root:

- b. **[-phatlu-l-]**  
**[-phatlu-k-]**

These verbal suffixes control the transitivity of the verb: the suffix [-l-] has a causative semantic feature. Both arguments above them appear while the agent argument has to be moved.

- c. [agent<sub>i</sub>-phatlu-l-t<sub>i</sub> patient]

This movement is compulsory for the sake of case assignment. The subject argument in (8a) above is empty and the agent NP which has now moved to this empty subject position in (8c) above, will receive nominative case. The moved NP leaves behind a trace [t] with which it is coindexed. The remaining internal argument, i.e. the patient, will then be assigned accusative case.

The suffix [-k-] controls the agent argument with the result that only the patient argument will surface.

d. [e] [-phatlu-k<sub>i</sub>- [agent<sub>i</sub>, patient]]

This control relation is indicated by coindexing with [i]. The patient argument is then moved to the empty subject position to receive nominative case:

(e) [patient<sub>i</sub> [-phatlu-k<sub>i</sub>-[agent<sub>i</sub>, t<sub>i</sub>]]

The trace [t] which is left behind after this movement, is coindexed with [i] in (e) above. The suffix [-k-] thus has an anti-causative semantic feature.

- (9) a. **Musa u-phatlule [xifaki]**  
"Musa broke the cob"
- b. **[xifaki] xi-phatlukile**  
"The cob broke"
- c. **Vafana va-phatlule [rhavi]**  
"The boys broke the branch"
- d. **[rhavi] ri-phatlukile**  
"The branch broke"

(c) Ideophones with transitive and intransitive suffixes

The ideophone with the semantic feature of [break] has the features of an ergative verb. Ergative verbs denote a change of state and they appear in the same d-structure as the verbal root **phatlu** in (8a) above: the ideophone will then also assign two internal arguments:

(10) [e] [t<sub>lomu</sub> [agent, patient]]

The ideophone has no external argument. Therefore one of the internal arguments has to move to this empty subject position to receive nominative case:

In the first place, the agent argument will be moved to receive nominative case. In this case, the patient argument remains in its place and will receive accusative case from the verb.

- (11) a. [Agent<sub>i</sub> [t<sub>lomu</sub> [t<sub>i</sub>, patient]
- b. [Nsovo] [u-te t<sub>lomu</sub> [phepha]  
 "Nsovo tear the paper"

In the second place, the patient argument will be moved to the empty subject position. This patient argument will now receive nominative case. The agent argument will then not surface, because it will be controlled by the patient argument in the subject position:

- (12) a. [patient<sub>i</sub>/<sub>l</sub> [t<sub>lomu</sub> [agent<sub>i</sub>,t<sub>i</sub>]
- b. [phepha] ri-te t<sub>lomu</sub>  
 "The paper tear"

The control relation is indicated by the coindexing with [i] and the trace relation with [j].

These ergative ideophones may also appear with the intransitive suffix [-k-] and the transitive suffix [-l-] or [-s-] as above with the verbal root **phatlu**. The transitive suffix [-l-] or [-s-] will allow movement of the agent argument:

- (13) a. [e] [t<sub>lomu</sub>-l-[agent, patient]
- b. [agent<sub>i</sub>] [t<sub>lomu</sub>-l-[t<sub>i</sub>, patient]
- c. [Nsovo] u-t<sub>lomule</sub> [phepha]  
 "Nsovo tear the paper"

The intransitive suffix [-k-] will control the agent argument with the result that the patient will have to move to fill the empty subject position:

- (14) a. [e] [tlomu-k<sub>i</sub>-[agent<sub>i</sub>, patient]]  
 b. [patient<sub>i</sub>] [tlomu-k<sub>i</sub>-[agent<sub>i</sub>, t<sub>i</sub>]]  
 c. [Phepha] ri-tlomukile  
 "The paper tear"

Control is indicated by coindexation with [i].

- (15) a. **N'wana u-te tlibu [njara]**  
 "The child broke off a thread"
- b. **N'wana u-tlibule [njara]**  
 "The child broke off a thread"
- c. **[Njara] yi-te tlibu**  
 "The thread broke off"
- d. **[Njara] yi-tlibukile**  
 "The thread broke off"

### 5.1.3 Levels of representation

The following levels of representation have been dealt with in the case of each break verb: it is shown below by means of the verb **pHEMA**:

- (a) Argument structure

Selection restrictions on the subject of **pHEMA**: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = animate]

- (16) a. Human: **[N'wana] u-phema xinkwa**  
 "The child is breaking off bread"
- b. Animal: **[Mfenhe] yi-phema lamula**  
 "The baboon is breaking off an orange"

Selection restrictions on the object of **phema**: [ARG<sub>2</sub>: physical object]

**Swilo leswi phemekaka hi ku olova na swona swi dyekaka**

“Something which can easily be broken and be edible”

- (17) a. **N’wana u-phema [vuswa]**  
“The child is breaking off porridge”
- b. **Mfenhe yi-phema [lamula]**  
“The baboon is breaking off an orange”

Things that are capable of breaking in this manner are **apula** (apple); **xibundwa** (mielie bread); **xinkwa** (bread); **vuswa** (porridge); **pyere** (pear).

(b) Event structure

[Event<sub>1</sub>] = process: act of breaking

- (18) **N’wana u-phema xinkwa** (an act)  
“The child is breaking off bread”

[Event<sub>2</sub>] = state: **swiphemu** (small pieces)

(c) [lcp]: break; cut; break off

**Ndzi- phema xinkwa**

“I am breaking bread off”

(d) [lis]: break – break off – change of state

#### 5.1.4 Semantic features

There are five categories of semantic features:

- (a) Break: Break off

Verb 1: phema

- (19) **N'wana u-phema [vuswa]**  
“The child is breaking off porridge”

Verb 2: konyomu-l/k-

- (20) **Wanuna u-konyomule [fasitere]**  
“The man broke off the window”

**[fasitere] ri-konyomukile**  
“The window broke off”

Verb 3: phatlu (k/l)

- (21) a. **Wanuna u-te phatlu [xifaki]**  
“The man broke off the cob”
- b. **Wanuna u-phatlule [xifaki]**  
“The man broke off the cob”
- c. **[Xifaki] xi-te phatlu**  
“The cob broke off”
- d. **[Xifaki] xi-phatlukile**  
“The cob broke off”



Verb 4: khatlu (k/l)

- (22) a. **Mbuti yi-te khatlu [byanyi]**  
“The goat broke off the grass”
- b. **Mbuti yi-khatlule [byanyi]**  
“The goat broke off the grass”
- c. **[Byanyi] byi-te khatlu**  
“The grass broke off”
- d. **[Byanyi] byi-khatlukile**  
“The grass broke off”

Verb 5: thibu (k/l)

- (23) a. **N’wana u-te thibu [njara]**  
“The child broke off a thread”
- b. **Nxalati u-tlhibule [njara]**  
“Nxalati broke off a thread”
- c. **[Njara] yi-te thibu**  
“The thread broke off”
- d. **[Njara] yi-tlhibukile**  
“The thread broke off”

Verb 6: petlu (k/l)

- (24) a. **Ntsako u-te petlu [ndyelo]**  
“Ntsako broke off a plate”

- b. **Ntsako u-petlule [ndyelo]**  
"Ntsako broke off a plate"
- c. **[ndyelo] yi-te petlu**  
"The plate broke off"
- d. **[ndyelo] yi-petlukile**  
"The plate broke off"

Verb 7: phemu (k/l)

- (25) a. **Nsovo u-te phemu [khumbi]**  
"Nsovo broke off the wall"
- b. **Nsovo u-phemule [khumbi]**  
"Nsovo broke off the wall"
- c. **[khumbi] ri-te phemu**  
"The wall broke off"
- d. **[khumbi] ri-phemukile**  
"The wall broke off"

Verb 8: tloму (k/l)

- (26) a. **Sthembile u-te tloму [phepha]**  
"Sthembile broke off the paper"
- b. **Sthembile u-tlomule [phepha]**  
"Sthembile broke off the paper"
- c. **[phepha] ri-te tloму**  
"The paper broke off"

d. **[phepha] ri-tlomukile**

“The paper broke off”

(b) Split and crack

Verb 1: pandza

(27) **Gavaza u-pandza [apula]**

“Gavaza is splitting an apple”

Verb 2: tshova

(28) **Musa u-tshova [nkukulu]**

“Musa is splitting the broom”

Verb 3: phata

(29) **Nsovo u-phata [xikotlola]**

“Nsovo is cracking the bowl”

Verb 4: phamu (k/l)

(30) a. **Wanuna u-te phamu [khumbi]**

“The man cracked the wall”

b. **Wanuna u-phamule [khumbi]**

“The man cracked the wall”

c. **[khumbi] ri-te phamu**

“The wall cracked”

d. **[khumbi] ri-phamukile**

“The wall cracked”

Verb 5: khehle (k/is)

- (31) a. **Nhwana u-te khehle [mbita]**  
“The girl cracked the clay pot”
- b. **Nhwana u-khehlise [mbita]**  
“The girl cracked the clay pot”
- c. **[Mbita] yi-te khehle**  
“The clay pot cracked”
- d. **[Mbita] yi-khehlele**  
“The clay pot cracked”

(c) Smash and crushVerb 1: kherha

- (32) **N’wana u-kerha [pyere]**  
“The child smashes the pear”

Verb 2: faya

- (33) **Wanuna u-faya [nghilazi]**  
“The man smashes the glass”

Verb 3: phyandlasa

- (34) **Mukhalabya u-phyandlasa [tandza]**  
“The old man smashes an egg”

**Verb 4: kandza**

- (35) **N'wana u-kandza [timanga]**  
“The child stamps the peanuts”

**Verb 5: pyanya**

- (36) **Jaha ri-pyanya [vuswa]**  
“The young man crushes the porridge”

**Verb 6: bvanyangeta**

- (37) **Nhwana u-bvanyangeta [huku]**  
“The girl crushes the chicken”

**Verb 7: vandza**

- (38) **Nhwanyana u-vandza [timongo]**  
“The girl crushes the marrows”

**Verb 8: khandla**

- (39) **N'anga yi-khandla [murhi]**  
“The traditional doctor crushes the medicine”

**Verb 9: pfotlo (k/s)**

- (40) a. **Wanuna u-te pfotlo [xitshatshana]**  
“The man smashed the basket”
- b. **Wanuna u-pfotlose [xitshatshana]**  
“The man smashed the basket”

- c. **[Xitshatshana] xi-te pfofelo**  
“The basket is smashed”
- d. **[Xitshatshana] xi-pfofelo**  
“The basket is smashed”

Verb 10: caka (nyetek/nyetel)

- (41) a. **Jaha ri-te caka [nghiilazi]**  
“The boy smashed the glass”
- b. **Jaha ri-cakanyetele [nghiilazi]**  
“The boy smashed the glass”
- c. **[nghiilazi] yi-te caka**  
“The glass is smashed”
- d. **[Nghiilazi] yi-cakanyetekile**  
“The glass is smashed”

Verb 11: pyetle (k/tel)

- (42) a. **N’wana u-te pyetle [rhama]**  
“The child crushed rama”
- b. **N’wana u-pyetelele [rhama]**  
“The child crushed rama”
- c. **[rhama] yi-te pyetle**  
“Rama is crushed”
- d. **[rhama] yi-pyetelekile**  
“Rama is crushed”

(d) Demolish

Verb 1: hlanhla

- (43) **Mufana u-hlanhla [nyama ya nhloko ya homu]**  
“The boy demolishes the meat of the head of the cow”

Verb 2: mbundzu (x/k)

- (44) a. **Wanuna u-te mbundzu [khumbi]**  
“The man demolishes the wall”
- b. **Wanuna u-mbundzuxe [khumbi]**  
“The man demolishes the wall”
- c. **[khumbi] ri-te mbundzu**  
“The wall is demolished”
- d. **[khumbi] ri-mbundzukile**  
“The wall is demolished”

Verb 3: hodlo (k/s)

- (45) a. **Musa u-te hodlo [xitlati]**  
“Musa demolished the barn”
- b. **Musa u-hodlose [xitlati]**  
“Musa demolished the barn”
- c. **[xitlati] xi-te hodlo**  
“The barn is demolished”

- d. **[xitlati] xi-hodlokile**  
“The barn is demolished”

Verb 4: hahlu (k/l)

- (46) a. **Jaha ri-te hahlu [lwangu]**  
“The boy demolished the roof”
- b. **Jaha ri-hahlule [lwangu]**  
“The boy demolished the roof”
- c. **[lwangu] ri-te hahlu**  
“The roof is demolished”
- d. **[lwangu] ri-hahlukile**  
“The roof is demolished”

Verb 5: hidzii (muk/mul)

- (47) a. **Jaha ri-te hidzii [switina]**  
“The boy demolished the bricks”
- b. **Jaha ri-hidzimule [switina]**  
“The boy demolished the bricks”
- c. **[Switina] swi-te hidzii**  
“The bricks are demolished”
- d. **[Switina] swi-hidzimukile**  
“The bricks are demolished”



(e) Tear

Verb 1: rharhambuta

- (48) **Manana u-rharhambuta [lapi] hi mukwana**  
“The mother tears the linen with knife”

Verb 2: Kavutlula

- (49) **Kokwani u-kavutlula [khavichi] hi voko**  
“Grand mother tears the cabbage with hand”

Verb 3: handzu –l/k-

- (50) **Wansati u-handzula [nceka]**  
“The woman tore the linen”

Verb 4: kwamu (k/l)

- (51) a. **Tatana u-te kwamu [rihanti]**  
“The father tore off the bark”
- b. **Tatana u-kwamule [rihanti]**  
“The father tore off the bark”
- c. **[rihanti] ri-te kwamu**  
“The bark is torn off”
- d. **[Rihanti] ri-kwamukile**  
“The bark is torn off”

Verb 5: tlupu (k/l)

- (52) a. **N'wana u-te tlupu [phepha]**  
"The child tore to shreds the paper"
- b. **N'wana u-tlupule [phepha]**  
"The child tore to shreds the paper"
- c. **[Phepha] ri-te tlupu**  
"The paper is torn to shreds"
- d. **[Phepha] ri-tlupukile**  
"The paper is torn to shreds"

Verb 6: tlwebu (k/l)

- (53) a. **Wansati u-te tlwebu [rhoko]**  
"The woman tore the dress"
- b. **Wansati u-tlwebule [rhoko]**  
"The woman tore the dress"
- c. **[rhoko] yi-te tlwebu**  
"The dress is torn"
- d. **[rhoko] yi-tlwebukile**  
"The dress is torn"

Verb 7: mpfarhu (k/l)

- (54) a. **Musa u-te mpfarhu [buruku]**  
"Musa tore the trouser"

- b. **Musa u-mpfarhule [buruku]**  
“Musa tore the trouser”
- c. **[Buruka] ri-te mpfarhu**  
“The trouser is torn”
- d. **[Buruku] ri-mpfarhukile**  
“The trouser is torn”

Verb 8: kakatlulu (kakatlula)

- (55) a. **Kokwani u-te kakatlulu [nsiha]**  
“The old lady tore the nerve”
- b. **Kokwani u-kakatlula [nsiha]**  
“The old lady tore the nerve”
- c. **[nsiha] wu-te kakatlulu**  
“The nerve is torn”
- d. **[nsiha] wu-kakatlukile**  
“The nerve is torn”

## 5.2 BEND VERBS

### 5.2.1 Syntactic categories

The bend verbs in Xitsonga may be classified into two syntactic categories, i.e. transitive and intransitive bend verbs:

(a) Transitive bend verbs

The external argument is the agent and the internal argument is patient, e.g.

- (56) a. **[Jaha] ri khotsa darata**  
“The boy bends the wire”
- b. **[Mfenhe] yi khotsa ncila**  
“The baboon bends the tail”
- c. **Wanuna u ghova nhamu**  
“The man bends the neck”
- d. **Mfenhe yi ghova darata**  
“The baboon bends the wire”

(b) Intransitive bend verbs

The intransitive bend verbs assign only one argument which is patient, e.g.

- (57) a. **Manana u soholoka nhamu**  
“The mother twisted the neck”
- b. **Nhamu ya soholoka**  
“The neck is twisted”
- c. **Manana u hamboloka nomo**  
“The mother twisted the mouth”
- d. **Nomo wa hamboloka**  
“The mouth is twisted”

(c) Inalienable possession

According to Voeltz (1976) and Satyo (1985) as cited by Du Plessis and Visser (1992), this is the syntactic phenomenon, which is also known as the syntax of body parts. An inalienable body part is used as an adjunct of an intransitive verb. The inalienable possession, which is

in the subject of the intransitive verb may end up as adjunct of the verb. This adjunct shares the theta-role found in the subject position and has no theta-role of its own.

- (58) **[Nomu wa Manana] wu-hombolokile**  
**[Manana] u-hombolokile [nomu]**  
“The mother is bending the mouth”

### 5.2.2 Semantic classification

- (a) Bend

Verb 1: khotsa (bend down)

- (59) **[N’wana] u khotsa darata**  
“The child bends the wire”

Verb 2: ghova (bend down, bow)

- (60) **[N’wana] u ghova nhloko**  
“The child bows the head”

Verb 3: Korhama (bend forward)

- (61) **N’wana u korhama miri**  
“The child bends the body”

- (b) Bend or Fold

Verb 1: petsa (bend or fold)

- (62) **N’wana u petsa phepha**  
“The child folds the paper”

Verb 2: khinya (bend; fold)

(63) **Nhwanyana u khinya hembe**

“The girl folds the shirt”

(c) Bend or twist

Verb 1: soholoka (bend; twist)

(64) **N’wana u soholoka nhamu**

“The child twists the neck”

Verb 2: Soholota (bend; twist)

(65) **Kokwani u soholota voko ra n’wana**

“The old woman twist the hand of the child”

(d) Be crooked

Verb 1: hamboloka (bend; crooked)

(66) a. **Kokwani u hamboloka nomu**

“The old woman twist the mouth”

b. **Nomo wa hamboloka**

“The mouth twists”

Verb 2: gombonyoka (bend; crooked)

(67) a. **N’wana u gombonyoka voko**

“The child bend the hand”

- b. **Voko ra gombonyoka**  
“The hand bent”

(e) Lean over, incline

Verb 1: Voyama (lean; incline)

- (68) a. **N’wana u voyama nhloko**  
“The boy lean the head”
- b. **Nhloko ya voyama**  
“The head lean”

Verb 2: Keyama (bending with buttocks)

- (69) a. **Musa u keyama swisuti**  
“Musa bends the buttocks”
- b. **Mfenhe yi keyama switshamo**  
“The monkey bends the buttocks”

(f) Kneel

Verb 1: nk hinsama (kneel, bow, go down on the knee)

- (70) a. **Wansati u nk hinsama hi matsolo**  
“The woman bends the knees”
- b. **Matsolo ya nk hinsama**  
“The knees are bend”





Instrument-subject alternation

(74) **[Hamula] yi khotso darata**  
“The hammer bends the wire”

(b) Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(75) **N'wana u khotso xipikiri** (an act)  
“The child bends the pin”

Event 2 = state: The state, which is the result of bending may be indicated as follows:

(76) a. **Xipikiri lexi nga khotseka**  
“A pin which is bent”

b. **Darata leyi nga khotseka**  
“A wire which is bent”

(c) [lcp]

(77) a. Bend: **Ndzi khotso xipikiri**  
“I am bending the pin”

b. Curve: **Ndzi khotso darata**  
“I am curving the wire”

(d) [lis]  
Bend – change of state

#### 5.2.4 Levels of representation in intransitive bend verbs

(a) Argument structure: [ARG<sub>1</sub> = body part]

(78) **[Nhamu] yi soholokile**

“The neck is twisted”

#### Inalienable possession:

(79) a. **[nhamu ya n’wana] yi-soholokile**

**[n’wana] u-soholokile [nhamu]**

“The child twisted the neck”

b. **[nhamu ya mbhongolo] yi-soholokile**

**[mbhongolo] yi-soholokile [nhamu]**

“The donkey twisted the neck”

(b) Event structure

Event 1 = process: act of bending

(80) **N’wana u soholoke nhamu** (an act)

“The child twisted the neck”

Event 2 = state: The state which is the result of bending

(c) [lcp]

Bend: twisted

**Ku soholoka nhamu**

“To twist the neck”

(d) [lis]

Bend – change of state

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