

〈特集「受動表現」〉

Passive constructions in Southern IsiNdebele (S407) 南ンデベレ語 (S407) の受動表現

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要旨：本稿は、語研論集 14 号(2009)所収の調査票にもとづいて収集した南ンデベレ語(S407) (バントゥ系；南アフリカ共和国)の受動表現に関する記述的資料を提供するものである。

Abstract: This article presents descriptive data on various passive constructions in Southern isiNdebele, a southern Bantu language spoken in South Africa. The data was collected through the questionnaire “Passive expressions” designed in *Journal of the Institute of Language Research* 14, 2009.

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1. Introduction

Ndebele are Bantu-speaking African peoples who live primarily in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces in South Africa. The Ndebele are ancient offshoots of the main Nguni-speaking peoples and began migrations to the Transvaal region in the 17th century. There are two main dialects of language within the Southern Ndebele, isiNala and isiNzunza. The official language used Ndebele people is a standardized language contained in the spelling rules and orthography of isiNdebele. It was first introduced at the institution of higher learning in 1997.

The goal of this paper is to describe passive constructions in Southern isiNdebele, a Southern Bantu language mainly spoken in the Mpumalanga Province in South Africa as well as in eSwatini. Statistics from Census 2022 (Statistics South Africa, 2022) show that 490,865 people (9.86% of the population) in South Africa speak Southern isiNdebele as their first language. The passive morpheme is -(i)w-, which attaches to the verb stem. In this section, an overview of the language is presented.

2. Basic data

This section shows the passive data in Southern isiNdebele based on the questionnaire “Passive expressions” appeared in *Journal of the Institute of Language Research* 14 (2009). Each entry has a passive form. The



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orthographic representation of sentences is in italics. Morpheme-by-morpheme lines with gloss appear below the sentence. In all examples, the passive morpheme is *-(i)w-*. The first example shows the simple passive form in isiNdebele.

(1) Simple passive [Item 1-1]

U-Mvelo ubetjhwe nguSuhla

U-Mvelo u-betjh-w-e ngu-Suhla

1-Mvelo SM1-hit-PASS-FV by-Suhla

‘Mvelo was hit by Suhla’

Passives in isiNdebele can be formed with inalienable parts (2a) or alienable parts (2b). The passive can also have a type of causative meaning as in (3).

(2) Passives with non-person subject [Item 1-2]

a. *Inyawo likaMvelo lihlatjwe nguSuhla.*

I-nyawo li-ka-Mvelo li-hlatj-w-e ngu-Suhla

5-foot ASSC5-Mvelo SM5-step-PASS-FV by-Suhla

‘Mvelo’s foot was stepped on by Suhla.’ (inalienable)

b. *Isikhwama sakaMvelo setjwe nguSuhla*

I-si-khwama saka-Mvelo se-tj-w-e ngu-Suhla

AUG-7-wallet ASSC7-Mvelo SM7-steal-PASS-FV by-Suhla

‘Mvelo’s wallet was stolen by Suhla.’ (alienable)

(3) Causative meaning [Item 1-3]

b. *Isikhwama saka-Mvelo besetjwe nguSuhla.*

I-si-khwama saka-Mvelo be-setj-w-e ngu-Suhla

AUG-7-wallet ASSC7-Mvelo SM2-steal-PASS-FV by-Suhla

‘Mvelo had his wallet stolen by Suhla.’

The examples (4-6) present the non-canonical use of passive. In (4), the intransitive verb ‘to cry’ cannot be passivized. The agent phrase is not obligatory as shown in (5). A sentence with a generic agent uses passive forms as in (6).

(4) Intransitive verbs [Item 1-4]

Izolo umntwana ulilile. Ngalokho, akange ngilale.

Izolo u-m-ntwana u-lil-il-e. Ngalokho, aka-nge ngilale.

last.night AUG-1-baby SM1-cry-PST-FV so NEG-I sleep.all

‘Last night, the baby cried. So, I couldn’t sleep at all.’

(5) Omitting the agent [Item 1-5]

umakhiwo omutjha wakhiwa (ngu-Mvelo).

u-makhiwo omu-tjha wa-kh-iw-a (ngu-Mvelo)

AUG-3.building 3-new SM3-build-PASS-FV by-Mvelo

‘A new building was built (by Mvelo).’

(6) No passive in generic subject [Item 1-6]

IsiFrench sikhulunywa eCanada

I-si-French si-khuluny-w-a e-Canada

AUG-7-French SM7-speak-PASS-FV LOC-Canada

‘French is being spoken in Canada.’

The results of an action are expressed in examples (7-8). In (7), the ‘wallet’ is stolen by a person, and the passive is used. In (8), the ‘picture’ hangs on the wall, but isiNdebele does not use a passive in that example.

(7) Results of an action [Item 1-7]

Isikwanyana sami setjiwe ngu-Mvelo.

I-si-kwanyana sami se-tj-iw-e ngu-Mvelo.

AUG-7-wallet POSS7 SM7-steal-PASS-FV by-Mvelo

‘The wallet was stolen by Mvelo.’

(8) Outcome of an action [Item 1-8]

Isithombe silenge ebodeni.

I-si-thombe si-leng-e e-bod-eni

AUG-7-picture SM7-hang-FV LOC-wall-LOC

‘A picture hangs on the wall.’

Example (9) shows that a sensory verb such as *thanda* ‘to love’ can be passivized.

(9) [Item 1-9]

U-Mvelo uthandwa nguSuhla.

U-Mvelo u-thand-w-a ngu-Suhla.

AUG-Mvelo SM1-love-PASS-FV by-Suhla

‘Mvelo is loved by Suhla.’

The messenger verb ‘to tell’ is passivized in (10). The by-phrase of the passive must precede the direct quotation.

(10) [Item 1-10]

USuhla utjelwe nguMvelo “ngena ngaphakathi ekamarweni”

U-Suhla u-tjel-w-e ngu-Mvelo “ngena ngaphakathi e-kamarw-eni”

AUG-Suhla SM1-tell-PASS-FV by-Mvelo enter inside LOC-room-LOC

‘Suhla was told by Mvelo, “Enter inside the room ” ’

The subject of a passive sentence can be interpreted as the subject of the following clause as in (11a). The object of an active sentence cannot be deleted in the subject of a following clause as in (11b).

(11) Complex clauses

a. *U-Mvelo wabizwa nguSuhla.*

U-Mvelo wa-biz-w-a ngu-Suhla

AUG-Mvelo SM1-call-PASS-FV by-Suhla

kodwana njenganje ungaphakathi ekamarweni likaSuhla.

kodwana njenganje u-nga-pha-kathi e-kamarw-eni li-ka-Suhla.

and now SM1-be-16-inside LOC-5.room-LOC 5-ASSC-1.Suhla

‘Mvelo was called by Suhla, and is in Suhla’s room now.’ [Item 1-10a]

b. *USuhla ubiza u-Mvelo.*

U-Suhla u-biz-a u-Mvelo

AUG-suhla SM1-call-FV AUG-Mvelo

kodwana u-Mvelo ungaphakathi ekamarweni likaSuhla.

kodwana u-Mvelo u-nga-pha-kathi e-kamarw-eni lika-Suhla.

and AUG-Mvelo SM1-be-16-inside LOC-5.room-LOC ASSC-1.Suhla

‘Suhla called Mvelo, and Mvelo is in Suhla’s room now.’ [Item 1-10b]

3. Additional passive sentences

This section presents passive sentences with different types of subjects. These additional examples further show the productivity of passive formation in isiNdebele.

(12) Passive versus active

a. Passive

Utjani bebudliwa yikomo

U-tjani be-budl-iw-a yi-komo

15-grass SM2-eat-PASS-FV 9-cow

‘The grass was eaten by the cow’

b. Active

Ikomo idle Utjani

I-komo i-dl-e U-tjani

9-cow SM9-eat-PST 15-grass

‘The cow ate the grass’

(13) More examples

- a. *Umnyango uvulwe nguJohn.*
U-m-nyango u-vul-w-e ngu-John
AUG-3-door SM3-open-PASS-FV by-John
‘The door is opened by John’
- b. *Umdlalo udlalwe izolo.*
U-m-dlalo u-dlal-w-e izolo
AUG-3-play SM3-perform-PASS-FV last.night
‘The play was performed last night’
- c. *Ingadi ithelelelwa ngamalanga.*
I-n-gadi i-thelelel-w-a ngamalanga
AUG-9-garden SM9-water-PASS-FV daily
‘The garden is being watered daily’
- d. *Iphrojethi itjhejwa nguSarah.*
I-phrojethi i-tjhej-w-a ngu-Sarah
9-project SM9-manage-PASS-FV by-Sarah
‘The project is managed by Sarah’
- e. *Umdlango ukhanjelwe ngibo boke.*
U-m-hlangano u-khanjel-w-e ngibo boke
AUG-3-meeting SM3-attend-PASS-FV people all
‘The meeting is attended by everyone’
- f. *Umbiko uzakuthunyelwa ngoLosihlanu.*
U-m-biko u-za-kuthunyel-w-a ngo-Losihlanu
AUG-3-report SM3-FUT-submit-PASS-FV by-Friday
‘The report will be submitted on Friday’
- g. *Imodere ilungiswe ngumakhenikha.*
I-modere i-lungis-w-e ngu-makhenikha
9-car SM9-fix-PASS-FV by-mechanic
‘The car was fixed by the mechanic’

4. Conclusion

This paper has shown passive sentences in Southern isiNdebele. The passive constructions are formed with the morpheme *-(i)w-*. The generic subject in (6) does not allow passive forms. Other patterns show that passives in Southern isiNdebele pattern are similar to other Southern Bantu languages.

Abbreviations

- 1, 2, 3, ...: Noun class numbers
1SG, 2PL, ...: Person and Number
AUG: Augment (initial vowel prefixed to a noun class prefix)
CJ: Conjoint (a verbal form obligatorily followed by a post-verbal constituent)
COMP: Complementiser

DJ: Disjoint (a verbal form usually not followed by a post-verbal constituent)

FV: Final Vowel (default inflectional suffix of the finite verb)

INF: Infinitive

LOC: Locative

NEG: Negative marker

OM: Object Marker

PASS: Passive

PERF: Perfect

POSS: Possessive pronoun

SM: Subject Marker

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