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THE SEMANTICS OF SETSWANA NOUN CLASSES

by

SEENG ANGELINA KGUKUTLI

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MARCH 1994
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I am particularly grateful to my family and my special friend Azikhwelwa who showed love and courage during stressful course of my research.

I owe special thanks to:

— Prof. E.B. van Wyk, for his valuable criticism of this work, his unprofitable support, assistance and motivation whereby I felt proud to be one of his scholars.

— The typist, Mrs. M.C. Uys, who worked under unbearable pressure to make this work a success.

— Vista University (African Language Department); my friends and Bakwena a word of thanks is expressed for finding time to advise and to guide me at all times in my endeavours.
Die meeste inligting in hierdie studie rakende naamwoordklasse is welbekend. Die doel is egter om, met inagneming van bestaande beskouings in dié verband, die semantiese kenmerke van naamwoordklasse in Setswana te beskryf/herdefinieer.

Op grond van so 'n vergelykende uiteensetting is dit moontlik om die kernbetekenis, wat klasse van mekaar onderskei, te identifiseer. Verder word klem gelê op die semantiese verskille tussen naamwoordklasse, wat veral duidelik word wanneer dieselfde stam en/of wortel ook in ander naamwoordklasse voorkom. Die semantiek van die onderskeie naamwoordklasse word beskryf na aanleiding van basiese naamwoorde, afgeleide naamwoorde en leenwoorde.

Semantiese kenmerke word interpreteer as [menslik]; [meervoud]; [lewend]; bv. Klas 1:

```
[ menslik ]
[ ongemerkt ]
[ enkelvoud ]
```

Die onderliggende morfeme van naamwoordklasse in Setswana, asook die allomorfe en omgewings waarin dit voorkom, word beskryf.

Ten opsigte van getalsverhouding: dit blyk dat daar 'n semantiese verhouding is tussen naamwoordpare, maar dat die groepering en numering van naamwoordklasse probleme skep ten opsigte van onder andere oorvleueling. Vir die doel van hierdie studie is elke naamwoordklas in Setswana, asook die onderliggende kenmerke van die ooreenstemmende klas, beskryf. Waar daar egter twee klasse voorkom met soortgelyke semantiese kenmerke, soos byvoorbeeld 1 en 2, word dit saam groepeer.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Various sets of nouns have been established as noun classes in Setswana as well as in other African languages. Generally speaking, a class of nouns is made up of words that have a specific prefix and are in turn linked with a unique set of concords which are morphophonemically related to the prefix. Each class is regarded to contain nouns sharing certain semantic features. However, these semantic characteristics are by no means clear-cut for every class.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the semantic characteristics of the noun classes of Setswana. An approach different from that which is customary in describing the semantics of noun classes will be followed, in that I will attempt to establish those semantic features which uniquely characterize each class and distinguish it from other classes rather than to list the various types of nouns occurring in it. The concept "core meaning" will be employed in this regard. (See Section 1.7).

In this chapter an overview will be given of the numbering and grouping of noun classes in publications on Setswana (1.2.1) as well as the prefixal morphemes employed (1.2.3). This will be followed by a discussion of the views of different authors on the semantics of the noun classes of Setswana (1.3) and of Bantu languages in general (1.4), the relation between noun classes and number (1.5), and semantic typologies of noun classes that have been suggested (1.6). The chapter will be concluded with a restatement of the aim of the research and of the method followed.

The arrangement of the chapters that follow, is eclectic. Where there is a fairly simple singular–plural relation between two semantically similar classes, they will be grouped together for the purpose of discussion. Cf. Chapter 2 (Cl 1, 1a, 2 and 2a), Chapter 3 (Cl 3 and 4), Chapter 4 (Cl 7 and 8) and Chapter 5 (Cl 9 and 10). Classes 5, 11 and 14 are grouped into one chapter (Chapter 6) because of their complex number relation to plural classes. A special chapter (Chapter 7)
is devoted to Cl 6 because of its semantic complexity and its complex number relations to other classes. Chapter 8 comprises the infinitive (Cl 15) and locative classes (Cl 16, 17, 18) which have no plural counterparts.

1.2 NOUN CLASSES OF SETSWANA

1.2.1 Numbering and Grouping in Existing Publications

In most Setswana publications authors did not number classes separately but grouped them together in pairs. Let us look how Setswana grammarians like Cole (1955), Setshedi (1980), Crisp (1905), Whokey (1938) and Sandilands (1953) classify nouns

Crisp's (1905:5) noun classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  mo-</td>
<td>2  ba-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  mo-</td>
<td>4  me-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  le-</td>
<td>6  ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  se-</td>
<td>8  li-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 i</td>
<td>10 i-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 lo-</td>
<td>6 ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 bo-</td>
<td>6 ma-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crisp's (1905) classification involves overlapping, like class 6 (three times) and class 10 (two times).
Wookey's (1938:24) noun classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>se-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>lo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>bo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>le-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>no prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>no prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>go-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wookey (1938) renders a completely different numbering. His numbering involves much overlapping like Cl 3 and 4 (singular), Cl 3, 6 and 7 (plural) and also Cl 4, 5 and 8 (plural).

Sandilands' (1953:27) noun classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVa</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Va</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>se-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>lo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>le-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIIIa</td>
<td>lo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>bo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>go-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sandilands (1953) shows a different noun classification from that of Cole (1955), Crisp (1905), Setshedhi (1980) and Wookey (1938). He includes subdivisions for
nouns which take different morphemes. There is much overlapping of nouns taking singular prefixes classes III and IV. Also there is overlapping for plural prefixes classes \( di- \) and \( ma- \).

Cole's (1955:69) noun classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ba-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>bô-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>me-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>di-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>diN-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>diN-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>fa-, go-, mo-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cole groups singular and corresponding plural together as single classes, except in the case of the infinitives and locative classes. This involves duplication of \( ma- \) in his classes 3 and 7 and of \( diN- \) in his classes 5 and 6.

Setshed's (1980:28) noun classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ba-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>me-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>di-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>diN-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>di-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Setshed's classification is the same as that of Cole except for classes 1a and 9, which he does not distinguish.
Prefixal morphemes

In the formalization of morphemes, the following sound segments conventions will be used:

- \( \sim \) = phonologically conditioned distribution
- \( \approx \) = morphologically conditioned distribution
- \( \times \) = free variation
- \( : \) = suppletive alternation
- capital letters = sound segments which undergo phonological change

Prefixal morphemes are as follows:

Class 1: mo-

\{mo-\} = \{mo- \sim m- \sim \eta w-\}

\(|mo-\) is the basic form and it occurs before various noun stems whether monosyllabic or polysyllabic

- Example 1:
  - mo-tho: 'person'
  - mo-setsana: 'girl'

- Example 2:
  - *mo-busi > mmusi: 'ruler or governor'
  - *mo-betli > mmetli: 'artist'

\(|m-\) is found before stems commencing with \(|b-\) which changes to \(|m-\)

- Example:
  - *mo-busi > mmusi: 'ruler or governor'
  - *mo-betli > mmetli: 'artist'

\(|\eta w-\) occurs before basic stems beginning with the vowels a and é

- Example:
  - *mo-ana > ngwana: 'child'
  - *mo-etsi > ngwetsi: 'bride, daughter-in-law'

Class 2: ba-

\{ba-\} = \{ba- : b- : bA-\}

\(|ba|\) is the norm variant and occurs before various noun stems whether monosyllabic or polysyllabic

- Example:
  - ba-tho: 'people'
  - ba-setsana: 'girls'
  - ba-busi: 'rulers, governors'
|b−| is found in *betsi* 'brides, daughters-in-law`
|bA−| is suppletive alternant found in *betswana* 'Tswana people'

**Class 3: mo−**

{mo−} = |mo− ~ m− ~ ƞw−|

|mo−| is the basic form and occurs before various stems
e.g. *mo−tse* 'village'

|m−| is a phonologically conditioned variant occurring in
*mrous o* 'rule, government'

|ƞw−| is a phonologically conditioned variant occurring before basic stems commencing with |a|
e.g. *mo−aga > ngwaga* 'year'

**Class 4: me−**

{me−} = |me−|

|me−| This class prefix does not have variant forms. It occurs before various stems cf. *me−tse* 'villages'

**Class 5: le−**

{le−} = |le− : Ǿ|

|le−| is the norm variant and found in:
e.g. *lelapa* 'home'
*lekwalo* 'letter'

|Ǿ| is a suppletive alternant occurring with few nouns
e.g. *lapa* 'home'
*tsatsi* 'sun'

**Class 6: ma−**

{ma−} = |ma− : mA−|

|ma−| is the norm variant of class 6
e.g. *madi* 'blood'
*mašwi* 'milk'
|mA—| occurs in nouns like metsi 'water' < *ma–etsi.

Class 7: se–
\{se–\} = |se–|

|se–| is the basic form with no allomorphs
  e.g. se–lepe 'axe'

Class 8: di–
\{di–\} = |di–|

|di–| is the basic form which is the plural of class 7
  e.g. di–lepe 'axes'

Class 9: n–
\{n–\} = |n–| ~ n– ~ ɲ ~ ŋ ~ N– ~ ∅|

|n–| is the norm variant occurring before monosyllabic stems commencing with alveolars
  e.g. n–twa |ŋtwa| 'fight, battle'
       n–ta |ŋta| 'lice'

|ŋ–| is an allomorph of n occurring with monosyllabic stems commencing with labials
  e.g. m–phô |ŋphɔ| 'gift, prize'

|ɲ–| occurs before monosyllabic stems commencing on alveolars
  e.g. n–kô |ŋkɔ| 'nose'
       n–kgô |ŋkxɔ| 'bucket'

|ŋ–| occurs before monosyllabic stems commencing with palatals
  e.g. n–tswa |ŋtʃwa|

|N–| zero nasal occurring before occlusivized polysyllabic stems,
  e.g. kgôsi 'chief' = *|n + x ɔsi|
       kgomo 'cow' = *|n + x omo|
|∅| zero allomorph occurring with loan words,
  e.g.  
  bese  'bus'
  buka  'book'

Class 10: din-

{din—} = {diŋ— ~ dim— ~ diŋ ~ diŋ ~ diN— ~ di— ∅}

|din—| is the basic norm occurring before monosyllabic stems commencing with alveolars,
  e.g.  
  din–twa  |diŋtwa|  'fights, battles'

|dim—| occurs before monosyllabic stems commencing with labials,
  e.g.  
  dim–phö  |dirphö|  'gifts, prizes'

|diŋ—| occurs before monosyllabic stems commencing with alveolars,
  e.g.  
  din–kgö  |diŋkxho|  'buckets'
  din–kô  |diŋkô|  'noses'

|diŋ—| occurs before monosyllabic stems commencing with palatals,
  e.g.  
  din–tśwa  |diŋtʃwa|  'dogs'

|diN—| occurs before occlusivized polysyllabic stems,
  e.g.  
  di–kgösi  |dikxhösi|  = *|din + xosi|

|di∅| occurs with loan words,
  e.g.  
  di–bese  'buses'
  di–buka  'books'

Class 11: lo–

{lo—} = {lo— : ∅}

|lo—| is the basic form which occurs before various stems
  e.g.  
  lo–kwalo  'book'
  lo–bone  'lamp'

|∅| is a suppletive alternatant occurring in kwapa 'home'
Class 14: 
{bo−} = |bo− : b−|

|bo−| is the norm variant occurring before polysyllabic and monosyllabic stems,
e.g. bogobe 'porridge'
     bobē 'evil'

|b−| suppletive alternant occurring before |ɔ|
e.g. boko 'brain'

Class 15: go−
{xo−} = |xo−|

|xo−| is the norm variant and it occurs before various verb stems,
e.g. go tسامaya 'to walk'

Classes 16, 17 and 18

Class 16: fa−
{fa−} = |fa− : fA−|

|fa−| occurs before primitive stem
  e.g. fa + −tshe 'under, underneath'
  |fA−| occurs in felo 'place'

Class 17: go−
{xo−} = |go−| there is no allomorph and it occurs before basic stem −dimo
e.g. go− + −dimo 'on top'

Class 18: mo−
{mo−} = |mo−| is the basic form and takes the stem −rago
e.g. mo− + rago 'backwards, at the back'
1.3 SEMANTICS OF NOUN CLASSES IN PUBLICATIONS ON SETSWANA

All authors in Setswana characterized noun classes semantically by listing types of nouns appearing in them. This reveals an enormous amount of semantic overlap.

The semantic content of Setswana noun classes as discussed by authors on the language will be illustrated. Each class will be discussed with Cole's views as reference point.

Class 1
Cole (1955:70) calls this class a class of 'personal nouns'. He distinguished the following semantic types:

regular nouns,
   e.g. motho    'human being, person'
         monna    'man'

tribal and national names,
   e.g. moTswana 'Tswana person, Tswana speaker'

names of non–Tswana peoples,
   e.g. moPedi 'Pedi person, Pedi speaker'

tribal names (close contact with Tswana),
   e.g. Mosarwa 'Bushman'
         Mokalaka 'Kalanga tribesman'

miscellaneous nouns,
   e.g. mong    'owner'

deverbatives,
   e.g. moagi    'builder'
Class 2

It is the plural counterpart of class 1.

e.g.  
  *batho* 'human beings, people'
  *banna* 'men'
  *baTswana* 'Tswana people'
  *baPedi* 'Pedi people'
  *Basarwa* 'Bushmen, Bushpeople'
  *beng* 'owners'
  *baagi* 'builders'

Class 1a

Authors like Cole (1955:72) and Ntsime and Krüger (1991:36) identify class 1a as a subclass of class 1. They identify the following semantic content:

(i) Proper names, e.g.  
  *Pule* 'Pule'

(ii) Kinship terms, e.g.  
  *rrre* 'father'

(iii) Animal names, e.g.  
  *Tau* 'Lion'

Class 2a

The prefix |bó—|, according to Cole (1955:72) indicates 'association or company of' and also 'distribution'

e.g.  
  Proper names,  
  *bóKgama* 'Mr. Hartebeeste'
  *bóMotheudi* 'Mr. Smith'

  Kinship terms,  
  *bórre* 'fathers, father and his associates'
  *bómmè* 'mothers, mother and her associates'

  Miscellaneous,  
  *bóPhage* 'wild cats'
  *bôngwale* 'girls'

Class 3

Cole (1955:75) indicates that this class (3 and 4) contains miscellaneous and impersonal nouns. He lists the following types of nouns.

e.g.  
  Miscellaneous,  
  *motse* 'village'
  *mosima* 'hole'

  Parts of the body,  
  *molomo* 'mouth'
  *molamu* 'stick'

  Tools, instruments,  
  *mosese* 'dress, skirt'

  Articles of clothing,  
  *morēba* 'sterile animal'

  Special terms (applied mainly to domestic animals)  
  *mokodue* 'weaned calf'
Natural phenomena,

Trees,

Animals,

Class 4
Class 4 is the regular plural counterpart of class 3. According to Cole (1955:77) 'plant or tree names' take plural prefix ma-, however.

E.g. makala 'camel thorn trees'
matlhware 'olive trees'

Nouns which take the prefix me- are as follows:

melelo 'fires'
metse 'villages'
esese 'dresses'
mekwepa 'black mambas'

Class 5
According to Cole (1955:79) this class accommodates the following:

Examples:

Miscellaneous,

leina 'name'
lefoko 'word'

Parts of the body,

letlalo 'skin'
le'nlie 'knee'

Animals,

lengau 'cheetah'
lenong 'vulture'

Plants,

legapu 'watermelon'
lephutshe 'pumpkin'

Natural phenomena,

lefifi 'darkness'
legadima 'lightning'

Collective nouns,

letsomane 'herd of sheep'
lekgotla 'council'

Personal names indicating national and tribal names of Non–Sotho Stock,

lekgoa 'white person'
lejuta 'Jew'
Persons indicating habit, social status, stage in life

Tribal regiments,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letagwa</th>
<th>'drunkard'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lealata</td>
<td>'maid servant'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenkwe</td>
<td>'The Leopard'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lejapoo</td>
<td>'The Bulleaters'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition Ntsume and Krüger (1991:45) mention nouns indicating 'matshwao a diruiwa mo tsebeng' i.e. earmarks on domestic animals.

Examples:
- lephaga
- letsekana
- lengena

Rakgokong (1986:63) also distinguishes nouns referring to uncommon things like

Examples:
- lelora 'type of soil used for making floor'
- lebu 'type of soil which cattle crave'

Class 6

This class is regarded as the plural form of class 5 by authors like Cole (1955:79). However class 6 contains nouns that cannot be said to indicate plurals. Therefore it is not a regular plural form of class 5 only.

Examples:
- Miscellaneous, maina 'names'
- Parts of the body, matlalo 'skins'
- Animals, mangau 'cheetahs'
- Plants, magapu 'watermelons'
- Personal nouns, magodu 'thieves'
- matagwa 'drunkards'

Collective nouns indicate neither singular nor plural. Cole (1955:81) identifies the following collective nouns.

Example:
- Basic (liquids and semi-liquids), maswi 'milk'
- mafura 'fat, oil'
- Aggregations of animals, malau 'large number of lions'
- manku 'large number of sheep'
- Abstract or semi-abstract, maatla 'strength'
- madu 'marks'
- Times and seasons, maabane 'yesterday'
- mariga 'winter'
Class 7

Cole (1955:84) listed the following semantic types.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous,</td>
<td>seleo</td>
<td>'thing'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts of the body,</td>
<td>sediba</td>
<td>'well'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals,</td>
<td>seatla</td>
<td>'hand'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruments, tools,</td>
<td>sehuba</td>
<td>'chest'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages,</td>
<td>seboko</td>
<td>'worm'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sekgokgo</td>
<td>'spider'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with (physical or mental</td>
<td>selepe</td>
<td>'axe'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defects),</td>
<td>setlhako</td>
<td>'shoe'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setswana</td>
<td>'Tswana language'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serolong</td>
<td>'Rolong dialect'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sefofu</td>
<td>'blind person'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>segole</td>
<td>'maimed person'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following semantic types according to Ntsime and Krüger (1991:49) are also included in class 7.

Nouns denoting place and shelters for birds and small animals,

- e.g. seleo 'sleeping place (wild animals)'
- serobe 'breeding pan'
- sentlhaga 'birds nest'

Nouns denoting diseases (no plural),

- e.g. seswagadi 'epilepsy'
- seebana 'epilepsy'

Class 8

This class forms the plural of class 7

Examples:

- dilato 'things'
- diatla 'hands'
- dihuba 'chests'
- dikgokgo 'spiders'
- dilepe 'axes'
- difofu 'blind people'
- dilao 'sleeping places'
**Class 9**

The class is typified by Cole (1955:86) as follows:

Examples:

- **Miscellaneous,**
  - *tlala* 'hunger'
  - *pèo* 'seed'

- **Animals,**
  - *pòdi* 'goat'
  - *pitse* 'horse'

- **Parts of the body,**
  - *mpa* 'stomach, belly'
  - *tsèbè* 'ear'

- **Tools, instruments,**
  - *pitsa* 'pot'

- **Household articles,**
  - *kòbò* 'blanket'

- **Natural phenomena,**
  - *pula* 'rain'

- **Persons of status,**
  - *kgòsi* 'chief'
  - *ngaka* 'doctor'

- **Collectivity (with singular prefix)**
  - *nna* 'crowd of men'
  - *tshadi* 'crowd of women'

Rakgokong (1986:100) mentions nouns denoting abstractions of activity, e.g. 
- *njō* 'act of eating'
- *thatano* 'act of loving'

**Class 10**

Class *diN*- forms the plural of class 9

Examples:

- **Animals,**
  - *dipòdi* 'goats'

- **Miscellaneous,**
  - *dipeò* 'seeds'

- **Parts of the body,**
  - *ditsebe* 'ears'

- **Tools,**
  - *dipitsa* 'pots'

- **Natural phenomena,**
  - *dipula* 'rains'

- **Personal names indicating status**
  - *dikgòsi* 'chiefs'

**Class 11**

This is a problematic class in Setswana because nouns belonging to this class are dialectical. In the other Sotho languages, as in South Sotho and North Sotho, this class no longer exists and has been absorbed into class 5.
A small number of nouns, particularly those having basic stems, are not absorbed into class 5. This has been established from Tswana mother tongue speakers, e.g. loapi 'sky', lore 'walking stick', logata 'brain skull'.

Setshedi (1980:35) and Cole (1955:91) believe that class 11 is a variant form of class 5. Thus the prefix le- seems to override prefix lo-.

Snyman et al (1991:6) indicate the semantic content of class 11 as follows:

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parts of the body</th>
<th>lonao</th>
<th>'foot'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>lotlhokwa</td>
<td>'match stick'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural phenomena</td>
<td>logadima</td>
<td>'lightning'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rakgokong (1986:64) describes this class as indicative of big size or greater intensity, e.g. lonaka 'horn with muti', lofuka 'big wing'.

Nouns designating length were identified by Moloto and Malao (nd:52), e.g. lorako 'high wall', lore 'stick'.

Although class 11 is a problematic class, Cole (1955:91) distinguished the following:

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>lobaka</th>
<th>'reason'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lobota</td>
<td>'big wall'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts of the body</td>
<td>lolemé</td>
<td>'tongue'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lonao</td>
<td>'leg'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural phenomena</td>
<td>logadima</td>
<td>'lightning'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lorole</td>
<td>'dust'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and instruments</td>
<td>lobôné</td>
<td>'lamp'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lobati</td>
<td>'door'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract and semi—abstract</td>
<td>lobelo</td>
<td>'race'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lotlatlana</td>
<td>'dusk'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class 14
This class according to Cole (1955:93) includes abstract and semi–abstract nouns, and also collectives. He listed them as follows:

Abstract nouns derived from nouns,
e.g. *bonna* 'manhood'
    *bogatlapa* 'coward'

Abstract nouns derived from pronouns,
e.g. *bonna* 'myself'
    *boèna* 'himself'

Abstract nouns derived from qualificative stems,
e.g. *bobe* 'evil'
    *bontle* 'beauty'

Abstract nouns derived from verb stems,
e.g. *botshelo* 'life'
    *boitumelo* 'enjoyment'

Abstract nouns derived from adverbs,
e.g. *bokgakala* 'farness'
    *bogaufi* 'nearness'

Semi–abstract, e.g. *bothito* 'warmth'
    *bokèo* 'sin'

Collectives, e.g. *boboa* 'wool'

Nouns with locative significance,
e.g. *Botswana*
    *boguè* 'son–in–laws place'

Ntsime and Krüger (1991:60) identify nouns designating directions,
e.g. *Bothaba* 'East'
    *Borwa* 'South'
In addition Rakgokong (1986:67) distinguishes nouns denoting indefinite place, e.g. bôlêbêlêbê 'somewhere, elsewhere' bokaeka 'somewhere'

Class 15
It includes only infinitive forms of verbs. No number is indicated, cf.  

\[ \text{go tsamaya} \quad \text{'to walk, travel'} \]
\[ \text{go bua} \quad \text{'to talk, speak'} \]

According to Crisp (1905:6) the plural is formed by adding ma- to the verb  

\[ \text{e.g. mabo} \quad \text{'returnings'} \quad < \quad \text{go boa} \quad \text{'to return'} \]
\[ \text{mayo} \quad \text{'goings'} \quad < \quad \text{go ya} \quad \text{'to go'} \]

Classes 16, 17 and 18
These are locative classes. They are non-indicative of number. Cole (1955:97) asserts that locative classes function mainly as adverbs.

Class 16:
\[ \text{e.g. fatshe} \quad \text{'down, on the ground'} \]
\[ \text{feñó} \quad \text{'place, locality'} \]

Class 17:
\[ \text{e.g. godimo} \quad \text{'on top, above'} \]
\[ \text{goñó} \quad \text{'place, locality'} \]
\[ \text{goñé} \quad \text{'a far place, far away'} \]

Class 18:
\[ \text{e.g. morago} \quad \text{'the back, at the back'} \]
\[ \text{mmñógo} \quad \text{'together, side by side'} \]

1.4 SEMANTICS OF NOUN CLASSES IN PUBLICATIONS ON BANTU LANGUAGES IN GENERAL

The discussion will be restricted to Meinhof and Van Warmelo (1932) and Givón (1971). Both made a survey of the semantic content of noun classes in Bantu Languages.

Meinhof distinguishes 23 classes and the singular and plural forms comprise separate classes. On the other hand Givón identifies 15 classes and grouped them into sets, and each class has strong semantic features.
Meinhof's noun classification with Tswana equivalents
cf. (1906:28–60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mu-</td>
<td>va-</td>
<td>mu-</td>
<td>mi-</td>
<td>li-</td>
<td>ma-</td>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>vi-</td>
<td>ni-</td>
<td>li-</td>
<td>lu-</td>
<td>tu-</td>
<td>ka-</td>
<td>vu-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>pa-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>mu-</td>
<td>pi-</td>
<td>ru-</td>
<td>ri-</td>
<td>ga-</td>
<td>gi-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semantic content of Meinhof's noun classes, cf. (1906:28–60) applied to Setswana

**Class 1**
Class for persons as independently acting beings,
e.g. *motho* 'person'

**Class 2**
It is a regular plural of class 1. It is used to form plurals of names of persons,
e.g. *batho* 'people'
Class 3
Meinhof distinguished the following:
(a) Persons not in an independently acting capacity, e.g. molekane 'friend'
(b) Natural phenomena, e.g. mosi 'smoke'
(c) Parts of the body, e.g. molomo 'mouth'
(d) Certain animals, e.g. mmutla 'hare'
(e) Plants and that which is manufactured from plants, e.g. morogo 'wild spinach'
more 'herb'

Class 4
It is regarded as a regular plural counterpart of class 3.
  e.g. melomo 'mouths'
  merògo 'wild spinaches'
  mebutla 'hares'

Class 5
It includes the following semantic types:
(a) One of pair, e.g. leoto 'leg'
(b) Objects with a double aspect, e.g. leleme 'tongue, language'
(c) Fruit cut in halves, e.g. legapu 'watermelon'
(d) Abstract nouns, e.g. lerato 'love'
(e) Augmentative: in Tswana we use a suffix -gadi.

Class 6
It consists of the following:
(a) Pairs of objects, e.g. matho 'pair of eyes'
(b) Collective nouns, e.g. masimo 'farms'
(c) Abstract nouns, e.g. maatla 'strength'
(d) Liquids e.g. mašwi 'milk'

Class 7
Class 7 comprises the following nouns.
(a) Instruments, customs and languages,
  e.g. selepe 'axe'
  Setswana 'Tswana language'
  setso 'culture, custom'
(b) Abstract concepts,
   e.g. *sello*  'crying'

(c) Words for thing and people held in contempt,
   e.g. *semumu*  'mute person'

Class 8
Meinhof regards class 8 as regular plural counterpart of class 7.
   e.g. *dilepe*  'axes'
   *ditso*  'customs'
   *dillo*  'cryings'
   *dimumu*  'mute people'

Class 9
Meinhof says that the basic semantic content of class 9 is animal names and also abstract nouns.
   e.g. *nku*  'sheep'
   *tiro*  'work'

Class 10
According to Meinhof class 10 is a plural representative of class 9 and class 11.
   e.g. *dinku*  'sheep'
   *ditiro*  'deeds, works'

Class 11
The following nouns according to Meinhof were found
   (a) Objects occurs in collections,
       e.g. *lonna*  'too many men, males'
   (b) Augmentatives (not applicable in Setswana)
   (c) Abstract nouns,  e.g.  *lorato*  'love'

Class 14
Apart from being used for diminutives, in Setswana it contains
   (a) Deverbatives,  e.g.  *boago*  'dwelling place'
   (b) Various nouns,  e.g.  *bontle*  'beauty'
       *bojalwa*  'beer'

Class 15
Class for infinitives,  e.g.  *go tsamaya*  'to walk'
Class 16, 17 and 18
Classes for locative nouns.

Class 16 e.g. fatshe 'under, underneath'
Class 17 e.g. godimo 'on top, upwards'
Class 18 e.g. morago 'backward'

Givón's noun classification and its semantic content
(1971:33)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes:</th>
<th>Singular/Plural</th>
<th>Semantic content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td></td>
<td>plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td></td>
<td>fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/8</td>
<td></td>
<td>inanimates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td></td>
<td>animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td></td>
<td>elongated objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>small objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>masses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/16</td>
<td></td>
<td>paired body parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>infinitive nominalizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 NOUN CLASSES AND NUMBER

The most widespread inherent category realized in nouns is that of number. Number involves a distinction between singular and plural. Singular implies reference to a single object or thing and plural to more than one object. But in some cases plurality is not only an indication of number.

For the purpose of this study nouns will be divided into two types, viz. count and non—count nouns. Count nouns indicate objects that can be counted and are mostly concrete, whereas non—count nouns are those that name masses, qualities, states of mind and the like.

The concept "plurality"
The following types of plurality may be distinguished:
(a) **Distributive plurality**
Van Wyk (1987:35) defines it as 'sets of semantically identical individuals'
e.g. bôrre 'fathers'
bômmê 'mothers'
bômalome 'maternal uncles'

(b) **Associative plurality**
It means 'sets consisting of an individual or individuals plus other individuals who are associated with him without being semantically identical' says Van Wyk (1987:36),
e.g. bôrre 'father plus friends, neighbours, relatives, peers'
bôMosidi 'Mosidi plus friends, peers'

(c) **Collective plurality**
Richards et al (1985:46) define collective plurality as 'collection of people, animals, or things as a group',
e.g. manku 'flock of sheep'
mabitse 'troop of horses'
On the other hand Van Wyk (1987:42) says 'collective plurals denote sets of individuals or denoting multitudes of individuals'.
e.g. magomo 'herd of cattle'
manku 'flock of sheep'

(d) **Type plurality**
Type plurality refers to different kinds of the same thing. This is often found with mass nouns,
e.g. majalwa 'kinds of beer'
magôbe 'kinds of porridge'

(e) **Mass nouns**
Richards et al (1985:66) say mass noun is 'a noun which does not usually occur in the plural'. However, Palmer (1976:125) states that 'semantically, mass nouns are nearer to plural than to singular forms of count nouns'.
e.g. mabele 'wheat corn'
moriri 'hair'
Summary
With regard to number the following types of nouns can therefore be distinguished.

(a) Count nouns
Nouns denoting single individual referents,
e.g. nkü 'a sheep'

(b) Non-count nouns
Nouns denoting referents that cannot be counted. This includes
mass nouns,
e.g. mobu 'soil'
names of liquids,
e.g. metsi 'water'
many abstract nouns,
e.g. lerato 'love'
infinitive,
e.g. go tsamayo 'to walk'
etc.

(c) Distributive plurals
Nouns denoting individual referents which can be enumerated,
e.g. dinku (tse pedi) 'two sheep'

(d) Collective plurals
Nouns denoting collections or great numbers of referents which cannot be enumerated
e.g. magomo 'herds, great numbers of cattle'

(e) Type plurals
Nouns denoting types of referents and not individual referents,
e.g. majalwa 'types of beer'

(d) Associative plurals
Nouns denoting more than one non-identical individual,
e.g. bôrre 'father and them'

1.6 SEMANTIC TYPOLOGIES OF NOUN CLASSES

Noun classes very seldom have exclusive semantic content and they often contain a wide variety of nouns. For that reason it is necessary to distinguish different semantic types.
Basson (1989:14) and Twala (1992:30) classified noun classes on semantic grounds as follows:

1.6.1 Exclusive homogeneous classes:
Contain only nouns with particular meanings and all such nouns, viz. class 15.

1.6.2 Non-exclusive homogeneous:
Contain only nouns of a certain semantic type but do not contain all such nouns, viz. classes 1 and 2, class 16 and class 17.

1.6.3 Heterogeneous with strong semantic association:
Contain different semantic types, but a certain semantic type dominates the classes.

Basson classifies the following classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6.4 Heterogeneous with weak semantic association:
Include variety of nouns where specific types are not strongly representative, e.g. classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 AIM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH METHOD

The views of authors on Setswana, and also of Meinhof on Bantu languages in general, regarding the meanings of noun classes amount to no more than lists of various semantic types occurring in each class. Such lists reveal an enormous
amount of overlap between different classes, to such an extent that specific semantic features can be identified for only a very few classes, e.g. Cl 1, 2, 15 and 16/17/18. With these exceptions, then, it is impossible to determine what distinguishes one class semantically from another.

In this study it is accepted that semantic overlap between noun classes occurs extensively. It is based on the hypothesis, however, each class has in principle, certain semantic characteristics which distinguishes it from all other classes. These characteristics constitute core meanings or basic meanings on which various other types of nouns are overlaid.

The core meanings are the distinguishing semantic features of noun classes, in most cases hidden behind and obscured by a balast of non—typical nouns. A mere listing of types of nouns occurring in each class is unlikely to reveal core meanings sufficiently. A different methodology to study the semantics of noun classes is therefore indicated.

In this study, an attempt will be made to establish core meanings on the basis of contrasts between classes. The basic assumption is that the core meaning of a class emerges most clearly in those cases where the same noun stem is used in different classes. Compare for instance, a series like the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cl 1</th>
<th>Cl 2</th>
<th>Cl 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>monna</td>
<td>banna</td>
<td>senna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mosimane</td>
<td>basimane</td>
<td>sesimane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cl 9</th>
<th>Cl 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nna</td>
<td>bona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tshimane</td>
<td>bosimane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of this, it can be concluded that the core meanings of the respective classes include the following:

- Cl 1 = 'person'
- Cl 2 = 'persons'
- Cl 7 = 'typical behaviour'
- Cl 9 = 'multitudes'
- Cl 14 = 'status of being'
For the purpose of such an analysis, four types of nouns will be considered, viz. basic nouns, deverbatives, nouns derived from non-verbal parts or speech and adoptives. Adoptives are included on the assumption that an adoptive is placed in a particular class for either phonological or semantic reasons. If there are no phonological reasons, then the core meaning of a particular noun will determine the choice of the prefix.

Ideally the results of the analysis should be presented in a constrained semantic theory. For this purpose, feature theory seems to be the most appropriate. Some of the semantic features established lend them indeed to interpretation in terms of this theory, e.g. [+ human], [+ plural], [+ animate], etc. Most features, however, are difficult to interpret in terms of plus or minus values without deviations into theoretical issues which will take me beyond the immediate topic.

In this thesis, results will be formalized in an informal version of feature theory, in which features are indicated without giving plus or minus values. Features will be presented in matrix format with alternative features or feature sets enclosed in curly brackets and inclusive feature sets in square brackets.
CHAPTER 2

CLASSES 1, 2, 1α AND 2α

2.1 CLASS 1

2.1.1 Basic nouns

Class |mo—| nouns signify persons, i.e. they are nouns indicating ordinary people in an unqualified sense.

- *monna* 'man'
- *mosimane* 'boy'
- *ngwana* 'child'
- *Motswana* 'Tswana speaker, Tswana person'
- *ngwetsi* 'daughter—in—law'

2.1.2 Deverbatives

Nouns derived from verbal roots ending in |—i| in class 1 denote the agent of an action. Rakgokong (1986:83) says that deverbatives of class 1 indicate 'agentives' meaning personal deverbatives in unqualified sense or moderate habits as compared to those in classes 7 and 8 which indicate expertise.

- *moagi* 'builder'
- *mokwadi* 'writer, author'
- *moroki* 'sewer'

- *seagi* 'expert builder'
- *sekwadi* 'expert writer, author'
- *seroki* 'expert sewer'

2.1.3 Adoptives

Adoptives belonging to class 1 denote personal nouns.

- *moKresete* 'Christian'
- *moJuta* 'Jew'
- *moAspotola* 'Apostle'

- *Kristu* <
- *Jew* <
- *Apostle* <
2.2 CLASS 2

This class shows the same semantic characteristics as class 1 i.e. personal nouns. In principle there is correlation in terms of singular and plural, in that class 2 is the regular plural counterpart of class 1. It indicates distributive plurality.

Basic Nouns

e.g.  
  banna  'men'
  basimane  'boys'
  bana  'children'
  Batswana  'Tswana people, speakers'

Deverbatives

e.g.  
  baagi  'builders'
  bakwadi  'writers, authors'
  badiri  'workers, laborers'
  baroki  'sewers'

Adoptives

e.g.  
  baKresete  'Christians'
  baJuta  'Jews'
  baApostola  'Apostles'

2.3 CLASS 1a

2.3.1 Basic nouns

The semantic feature of class 1a which is exclusive to other classes like classes 1 and 2, is that it signifies

Proper names,  
e.g.  
  Mosidi
  Mmapula

Kinship terms,  
e.g.  
  rre  'father'
  malome  'maternal uncle'

Animals,  
e.g.  
  Mmutla  'Hare'
  Khudu  'Tortoise'
Animal nouns mentioned above can also be found in class 9 but in class 1a they are personified. That means, its basic meaning conveys that of personal names.

2.3.2 Derived Nouns

Class 1a cannot take deverbatives and adoptives. Nouns of class 1a are countables and they indicate a single person or animal.

2.4 "CLASS 2a"

Authors like Cole (1955) mentions that class 2a is the plural form of class 1a. Be as it may be, class 2a is not regarded as a 'genuine class' by Van Wyk (1987:34) since it does not have a true prefix like other classes.

But for the purpose of this discussion we will include it (class 2a) as part of noun prefixes. The class 2a prefix is added to the full noun of proper names, kinship terms and animals. Semantically it indicates distributive plurality, associative plurality and respect.

\[ \text{e.g. } b\text{"orr}e \rightarrow \text{'fathers'} \]
\[ b\text{"orr}e \rightarrow \text{'father and his company or associates'} \]
\[ bo\text{"Khudu} \rightarrow \text{'Mr. Tortoise'} \]

2.5 CONCLUSION

Classes 1 and 2 personal nouns are count nouns i.e. they can be enumerated or individuated. Classes 1a and 2a show semantic features lacking in classes 1 and 2. It can be concluded that class 1a denotes personal nouns, viz. proper names and kinship terms and also personified animal names. And class 2a signifies distribution as well as association.

All authors referred in Chapter 1 identify classes 1 and 2 as classes indicating persons. But they fail to mention that they include unmarked personal nouns or personal nouns in an unqualified sense.

The meanings of the classes discussed can therefore be formalized as follows:
3.1 CLASS 3

3.1.1 Basic nouns

This class contains various types of nouns, none of which is characteristic of this class only. These have been treated comprehensively by authors such as Cole (1955) cf.

- e.g. motse  'village'
- molamu  'stick'
- molapo  'watercourse'

The distinguishing semantic feature of this class which it does not share with other classes, is the fact that it contains the names of trees,

- e.g. motlhware  'olive tree'
- mokala  'camel-thorn tree'
- morula  'morula tree'

Therefore, the meaning 'tree' can be regarded as one of the basic meanings of class 3.

In addition, class 3 basic stems when used with other classes as 5 and 11 denote unmarked entities, e.g.

- molora  'ash'
- mobu  'soil'
- moretlwa  'berry-bush'

:  lelora  'ash-like soil'
:  lebu  'brack soil'
:  loretlwa  'thicket of berry bush'

Not all class 3 nouns indicate number i.e. singular or plural as in

- mowa  'air, air current'
- moriri  'hair'
3.1.2 Deverbatives

Deverbatives in class 3 ending with |−o| are all of the impersonal type. Such nouns may denote concrete or abstract results of actions. When contrasted with other classes, class 3 nouns denote the manner or style in which an action is performed, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moroko</td>
<td>'style, manner of sewing'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moago</td>
<td>'style, manner of building'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mojo</td>
<td>'style, manner of eating'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seroki</td>
<td>'expert sewer'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seagi</td>
<td>'expert builder'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sejo</td>
<td>'food'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoko</td>
<td>'sewing'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kago</td>
<td>'building'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>njo</td>
<td>'eating'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The semantic feature of deverbatives i.e. style or manner of action performed, may be taken as a distinguishing feature of this class.

3.1.3 Adoptives

Adoptives of class 3 all seem to be determined phonologically and not semantically, since all are derived from words starting on |m|,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mmepe</td>
<td>'map'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mmidi</td>
<td>'mealie'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mmotorokara</td>
<td>'motor car'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be noticed that in their Setswana form loans employ the allomorph |m−| of the prefix {mo−} which is clearly conditioned by the corresponding phoneme in English or Afrikaans and not by any semantic characteristic of this class.
3.2 CLASS 4

3.2.1 Basic nouns

Class 4 is the regular plural counterpart of class 3. The plurals seem to be only of a distributive type, the corresponding singulars being mostly count nouns.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{metse} \quad 'villages'
  \item \textit{melamu} \quad 'sticks'
  \item \textit{melapo} \quad 'watercourses'
\end{itemize}

The semantic feature which class 4 does not share with its counterpart class 3 is tree names, which take the plural of class 6. Cf. e.g.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{mokala} \quad 'camel thorn': \textit{makala} \quad 'camel–thorn trees'
  \item \textit{motlhware} \quad 'olive tree': \textit{matlhware} \quad 'olive trees'
  \item \textit{morula} \quad 'morula tree': \textit{marula} \quad 'marula trees'
\end{itemize}

From the above mentioned examples, it appears that the distinguishing semantic feature of class 3 is lacking in the case of class 4.

3.2.2 Deverbatives

Deverbatives belonging to class 4 ending with \textit{--o} denote style of acting and also concrete and abstract results as compared to those in class 9, e.g.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{meroko} \quad 'styles, manners of sewing': \textit{thoko} \quad 'sewing'
  \item \textit{meago} \quad 'styles, manners of building': \textit{kago} \quad 'building'
  \item \textit{mediro} \quad 'ceremonies': \textit{tiro} \quad 'work'
  \item \textit{meepo} \quad 'mines': \textit{kepo} \quad 'digging'
\end{itemize}

One can say that deverbatives of class 9 indicate action and result performed in class 4 i.e. manner or style of acting.

3.2.3 Adoptives

Foreign acquisition of nouns are phonologically modified. They signify a variety of concrete objects or instruments.
e.g. mebepe 'maps'
    mebidi 'mealies'
    mebotorokara 'motor cars'

3.3 CONCLUSION

From the preceding analysis, it would seem that class 3 has two semantic features which it does not share with other classes, viz.

(a) names of trees
(b) deverbatives denoting manner or style of acting

Other nouns occurring in this class are non-exclusive and could therefore be labelled as miscellaneous. The core meanings of classes 3 and 4 would then be represented as follows:

(a) names of trees (class 3 only)
(b) deverbatives denoting manner or style of acting
(c) miscellaneous nouns

In conclusion, I do agree that in Setswana majority of plants are found in class 3 as distinguished by Meinhof and Givón but are specifically tree names. That is the feature distinguished by Cole.

The semantic features of classes 3 and 4 are formalized as follows:

Class 3

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Tree} \\
[ \text{Deverbative} ] \\
[ \text{Impersonal} ] \\
[ \text{Manner} ] \\
[ \text{Singular} ]
\end{array}
\]

Class 4

\[
\begin{array}{c}
[ \text{Deverbative} ] \\
[ \text{Impersonal} ] \\
[ \text{Manner} ] \\
[ \text{Plural} ] \\
[ \text{Distributive} ]
\end{array}
\]
CHAPTER 4

CLASSES 7 AND 8

4.1 CLASS 7

4.1.1 Basic nouns

Class 7 consists of a variety of nouns which can be described as nouns of general nature. However, personal nouns in this class express disability or abnormality but not in an unfavourable sense as in class 5,

- *sefofu* 'blind person'
- *segôle* 'maimed person'
- *semumu* 'mute person'

Noticeable characteristic of abstracts nouns belonging to this class is that of 'exceptionality' (in a person or phenomenon) as compared with other classes,

- *seriti* 'dignity or way of acting'
- *sefifi* 'mishap, misfortune'
- *moriti* 'shade'
- *lefifi* 'darkness'

Nouns signifying languages and habits are core meanings of class 7,

- *Setswana* 'Tswana language, custom'
- *Sepedi* 'Pedi language, custom'

Habit or manner of acting

- *senna* 'manliness'
- *sesimane* 'boyishness'

The common semantic feature of these two groups seems to be 'manner' or 'style'.

4.1.2 Deverbatives

Personal deverbatives of class 7 ending with |−i| exclusively denote persons with extraordinary abilities in contrast with those in classes 1 and 2 which are ordinary.

Personal nouns

e.g. seagi 'expert builder' : moagi 'builder'
    sekwadi 'expert writer, author' : mokwadi 'author, writer'
    seoki 'expert nurse' : mooki 'nurse'
    seroki 'expert sewer' : moroki 'sewer'

The semantic difference brought by class 7 deverbatives is that the focus is on professional performance or prominence or exceptional skill.

Impersonal deverbatives ending with |−i| include objects like

sebolai 'weapon'
setshwari 'holder (equipment)'

4.1.3 Nouns derived from other parts of speech

Nouns derived from other parts of speech indicate habit or manner,

 e.g. sewena 'yourself'
    senna 'myself'

These derived nouns express mannerism as compared to basic nouns such as

senna 'manliness' which signify status of being.

4.1.4 Adoptives

Loan words of class 7 appeared to be phonologically conditioned. That means classification is not based on semantic characteristics of class 7 Setswana nouns,

e.g. setulo 'stool' < Afr. stoel
    senotlolo 'key' < Afr. sleutel
    setifikeite 'certificate' < Afr. sertifikaat
    setèrata 'street' < Afr. straat
Adoptives of class 7 express distribution of equipment or objects. These nouns are count nouns.

4.2 CLASS 8

4.2.1 Basic nouns

Class 8 is the regular plural form of class 7. The majority of basic nouns which take prefix \( \text{di-} \) are of the distributive type, e.g.

- **Personal**
  - \( \text{difofu} \) 'blind people'
  - \( \text{digöle} \) 'maimed people'

- **Impersonal**
  - \( \text{dlepe} \) 'axes'
  - \( \text{dilhare} \) 'trees'

Some of the nouns belonging to class 7 lack or cannot take plural prefix \( \text{di-} \). That is, nouns denoting customs, way, habit-like, personality, e.g.

- \( *\text{disadi} \)
- \( *\text{difi} \)

4.2.2 Deverbatives

Deverbatives in class 8 mostly convey the same meaning as in class 7 and are of distributive character.

- **Personal nouns**
  - \( \text{diagi} \) 'expert builders'
  - \( \text{dikwadi} \) 'expert writers'
  - \( \text{dibini} \) 'expert dancers'
  - \( \text{diroki} \) 'expert sewers'

- **Impersonal nouns**
  - \( \text{ditshwari} \) 'holders, clippers'
  - \( \text{dibolai} \) 'weapons'
4.2.3 Adoptives

Adoptives of class 8 are phonologically conditioned as class 7. They carry the identical semantic content as their counterparts i.e. singulars,

\[ \text{e.g.} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{ditulo} & \quad \text{'stools'} \\
\text{dinotlolo} & \quad \text{'keys'} \\
\text{ditifikeite} & \quad \text{'certificates'} \\
\text{ditërata} & \quad \text{'streets'}
\end{align*} \]

4.3 CONCLUSION

The core meaning of classes 7 and 8 can be established as classes of:

(a) personal nouns denoting abnormality.
(b) abstract nouns indicating languages, customs, habits, mannerisms.
(c) deverbatives denoting expert agents, which is distinguishing semantic feature of these classes.

Though Givón classify these classes as 'inanimate' which is not true in all cases particularly in Setswana.

Here are the formalized semantic features of classes 7 and 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 7</th>
<th>Class 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deverbative</td>
<td>Deverbative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Skill</td>
<td>Personal Skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deverbative</td>
<td>Deverbative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Impersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom</td>
<td>Custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural Distributive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5

CLASSES 9 AND 10

5.1 CLASS 9

5.1.1 Basic nouns

It contains variety of nouns of which animals nouns are predominant as indicated by Meinhof (1932) and Givón (1971). Class 9 animal nouns indicate individual species as compared to those in class 6 which indicate collectivity and class 11 which indicates multitudes. Examples

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Cl 9} & \text{Cl 6} & \text{Cl 11} \\
nku & \text{'sheep'} & \text{manku} & \text{'}flock of sheep'} & \text{lonku} & \text{'}many sheep'} \\
kgomo & \text{'cow'} & \text{magomo} & \text{'}herd of cattle'} & \text{logomo} & \text{'}many cows'} \\
\end{array}
\]

With the exception of animal nouns, concrete objects and few personal nouns represent this class, e.g.

Concrete objects

- thipa  'knife'
- pitsa  'pot'

Personal nouns

- kgosi  'chief'
- ngaka  'doctor, witchdoctor'

The personal nouns indicated above, when compared with those in class 1 indicate rank and status unlike those in class 1 where they express persons in unqualified sense.

Furthermore, personal nouns of class 9 which are peculiar to classes 1 and 2 indicate collections, e.g.
5.1.2 Deverbatives

Class 9 deverbatives ending in \(-o\) denote results of activities and also concrete objects as compared to those in class 3 which signifies manner or style of acting, e.g.

- kago 'building': moago 'style or manner of building'
- tiro 'work, deed': modiro 'ceremony'
- thoko 'sewing': moroko 'style or manner of sewing'

It appears deverbatives of class 9 ending in \(-o\) signify results of activities in concrete terms.

Fruit names are found in class 9 and they signify single fruits of trees appearing in class 3, cf.

- thula 'morula fruit': morula 'morula tree'
- thetlwa 'moretlwa berry': moretlwa 'Grewia flava berry bush'
- tlopi 'motlopi fruit': motlopi 'Boscia albitrunca'
- kgalokga 'mokgalo berry': mokgalo 'wag-'n-bietjie tree'

In addition, class 9 fruit names are distributive but cannot take plural form.

5.1.3 Adoptives

It is assumed that adoptives appearing in class 9 are in the majority. Semantically, these adoptives signify concrete objects and are countables, but impersonal in nature, e.g.

- bese 'bus'
- baesekele 'bicycle'
- lori 'lorry'
- buka 'book'
5.2 CLASS 10

5.2.1 Basic nouns

Class 10 which is the plural form of class 9 shows the same semantic characteristics of class 9. Except in case of fruit names. Basic nouns of class 10 express distributive plurality, e.g.

- Persons indicating status: dikgosi 'chiefs', dingaka 'doctors'
- Animals: dinkwe 'leopards', dikgomo 'cows'
- Equipments: dinkgô 'buckets', dipitsa 'pots'

From the above mentioned examples it seems personal nouns denoting collections do not take the regular prefix |diN−| though expressing plurality.

On the other hand, class 10 may take the plural form of class 6. But class 6 nouns render a different meaning with those of class 10. The semantic contrast lies on individual things versus multitudes, e.g.

- dintlo 'houses': mantlo 'many houses'
- dinku 'sheep': manku 'many sheep'
- ditau 'lions': malau 'many lions'

5.2.2 Deverbatives

Class 10 deverbatives ending in |−o| share the semantic characteristics of its counterpart, i.e. class 9 deverbatives. But not all deverbatives of class 9 take the regular plural prefix of class 10 like in

- theko 'sewing': *dithoko.

Furthermore, class 10 deverbatives express distributive plurality with countable nouns, e.g.


5.2.3 Adoptives

There is a regular singular—plural correspondence between adoptives of classes 9 and 10. The core meaning is the same, that is of concrete objects or equipments,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dibese} & \quad \text{'buses'} \\
\text{dibaesekel} & \quad \text{'bicycles'} \\
\text{lori} & \quad \text{'lorries'} \\
\text{dibuka} & \quad \text{'books'}
\end{align*}
\]

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The core meaning of class 9 i.e. animal class which viewed by authors such as Givón is not a watertight classification. Classes 9 and 10 show variety of nouns. The obscurity is caused by listing nouns according to their semantic typification, cf. Cole 1.3.

The core meanings of class 9 and 10 established with reference to Cole, Meinhof and Givón can be summarised as follows:

(a) crowds with [+ human] stems.
(b) non—human "thing" in the case of adoptives.
(c) deverbatives indicating results of acting and concrete objects.
(d) animals.

The core meanings of class 9 and 10 can be formalized in this manner.
Class 9

Person
  Rank
    Multitude

Deverbative
  Result
    Process

Fruit

Animal
  Unmarked

Singular

Class 10

Person
  Rank

Deverbative
  Result
    Process

Fruit

Animal
  Unmarked

Plural
  Distributive

---000---
CHAPTER 6

CLASSES 5, 11 AND 14

6.1 CLASS 5

6.1.1 Basic nouns

Class 5 contains nouns of the personal and impersonal type. The noticeable semantic feature of personal nouns is that they have an unfavourable connotation,

\[ \text{e.g.} \quad \text{lesilo} & \quad \text{'fool, idiot'} \\
\text{legodu} & \quad \text{'thief'} \\
\text{lesutlha} & \quad \text{'untidy person'} \]

This includes nouns denoting non-Tswana persons with an implied unfavourable connotation, e.g.

\[ \text{le Thosa} & \quad \text{'Xhosa person, speaker'} \\
\text{le Pedi} & \quad \text{'Pedi person, speaker'} \\
\text{le Zulu} & \quad \text{'Zulu person, speaker'} \]

These latter nouns also occur in class 1 without the unfavourable connotation, cf.

\[ \text{le Thosa} & \quad \text{'Xhosa person'} : \quad \text{moThosa} & \quad \text{'Xhosa person'} \\
\text{le Pedi} & \quad \text{'Xhosa person'} : \quad \text{moPedi} & \quad \text{'Pedi person'} \\
\text{le Zulu} & \quad \text{'Zulu person'} : \quad \text{moZulu} & \quad \text{'Zulu person'} \]

Another type of nouns which are not common to other classes are those which indicate one of a pair, e.g.

\[ \text{leitho} & \quad \text{'eye'} \\
\text{leoto} & \quad \text{'leg'} \\
\text{lenqôle} & \quad \text{'knee'} \]

Animal names found in class 5 imply particular or specific characteristics, unlike those in class 9 which are generic, cf.
6.1.2 Deverbatives

Class 5 deverbatives ending in \(|-i|, |-\gamma|\) and \(|-a|\) signify the following semantic features:

(a) Persons with undesirable behaviour or status 
   e.g. letagwa 'drunkard'
       lefetwa 'spinster'

(b) Abstract results of actions
   e.g. lebôkô 'poem'
        leagô 'society'

(c) Concrete results of actions
   e.g. lekwalô 'letter'

(d) Non-personal actions
   e.g. lediri 'verb' (grammatical)

Personal deverbatives ending in \(|-a|\) have an unfavourable connotation as compared to those in class 14 which denote the results or consequences of an action, e.g.

letagwa 'drunkard': botagwa 'drunkness'
lefetwa 'spinster': bofetwa 'spintership'

Moreover parts of speech takes class 5 prefix \(|le-|\) which probably implies an abstract result, e.g.

lefoko 'word'
leina 'noun, name'
6.1.3 Adoptives

Most of foreign acquired nouns found in class 5 are non-African and they signify personal nouns with unfavourable connotation (degoratily) as compared to those in class 1 which express different nations or ethnic groups, e.g.

- *le Juta* 'Jew'
- *le Jeremane* 'German'
- *le Potoketsi* 'Portuguese'

This semantic feature (unfavourable connotation) applies to persons who are Africans, but not classified under indigenous groups of Africa, e.g.

- *le Aforekannere* 'Afrikaner'

Adoptives which are impersonal indicate concrete objects or things, e.g.

- *legalase* 'glassware'
- *lebokoso* 'box'
- *lebenkele* 'shop'

6.2 CLASS 11

6.2.1 Basic nouns

Class 11 |lo-| poses a problem in Setswana because there are few nouns which belong to this class and the majority of them indicate the same semantic content as class 5. Thus, it is dialectical.

Class 11 includes miscellaneous nouns of which the stems can be used in other classes like class 5. Rakgokong (1986:100) holds a view that class 11 nouns express 'unusual things or huge things' unlike those in class 5 which express ordinary things, e.g.

- *lonaka* 'horn with muti'
- *lonao* 'big foot'
- *logaga* 'big cave'

: *lenaka* 'horn'
: *lenao* 'foot'
: *legaga* 'cave'
This would seem to be the core meaning of class 11.

Another distinguishing semantic feature of class 11 is that personal and animal nouns denote multitudes, e.g.

- lonna: 'many men'
- lonya: 'many children'
- lonku: 'many sheep'
- logomo: 'many cows'

### 6.2.2 Deverbatives

Deverbatives nouns of class 11 ending with |→| denote abstract results and concrete results, e.g.

- loratô: 'love'
- losô: 'death'
- lokwalô: 'book'
- lotsenô: 'income'

Class 11 deverbatives indicating abstract result overlap in meaning with those in class 3, e.g.

- lonkô: 'smelling' : monko: 'smelling'

In case when class 11 deverbatives are contrasted with classes 9 and 11 deverbatives which denote result of activity, the focus (class 11) result of activity is more on collections or processes, e.g.

- loago: 'community' : kago: 'building'
- lotseno: 'income' : botseno: 'entrance'

This seems to be a distinguishing feature of class 11 deverbatives.
6.3 CLASS 14

6.3.1 Basic nouns

The class 14 prefix |bo-| restricts this class to abstract nouns. Only a handful of concrete objects are found. Though class 14 abstract basic nouns share the basic stems of other classes, it denotes status or condition of being, e.g.

- *botho* 'personality'
- *bogosi* 'chieftainship'
- *bosadi* 'womanhood'
- *motho* 'person'
- *kgosi* 'chief'
- *mosadi* 'woman'
- *setho* 'custom'
- *segosi* 'chief-like'
- *sesadi* 'womanish'

Some basic nouns which do not share their semantic feature with other classes indicate abstract conditions, e.g.

- *bosula* 'bitterness'
- *botshe* 'pleasantness'
- *boroko* 'sleep'

6.3.2 Deverbatives

Class 14 deverbatives ending in |-o| indicate locality and those ending in |-i| indicate status of being.

(i)

- *boago* 'dwelling place'
- *bodulo* 'dwelling place'
- *botsamao* 'place of walking'
- *botseno* 'entrance'
- *bodiso* 'herding place'

(ii)

- *boagi* 'citizenship'
- *botthathobi* 'inspectorate'
- *bokwadi* 'writing'

However, these deverbatives cannot be pluralized irrespective of |bo-| being the singular form of class 14.
6.3.3 Adoptives

Adoptives found in class 14 are phonologically and not semantically conditioned. Most of these nouns are countables, e.g.

- borotho 'bread' < Afrikaans 'brood'
- bolêke 'container' < Afrikaans 'blik'
- borukhu 'pair of pants' < Afrikaans 'broek'

6.4 CONCLUSION

From the above discussion one can say that classes 5 and 11 have their exclusive noticeable features though assumed dialectical. Their semantic differences appear as ordinary vs large or huge objects.

It appears that class 14 basic nouns, semantically signify abstraction irrespective of whether they share their basic stems with other classes. That is a distinguishing feature of class 14.

The core meanings of classes 5, 11 and 14 are represented as follows:

Class 5

Person
Unfavourable
Animal
Characteristic
Deverbative
Result
One of a pair
Singular
Class 11

- Object
  - Unusual
- Person
- Animal
- Multitude
- Deverbative
- Collective
  - Singular

Class 14

- Abstract
- Condition
- Deverbative
- Locality
  - Singular
CHAPTER 7

CLASS 6

7.1 CLASS 6

7.1.1 Basic nouns

Class 6 contains various types of nouns and there is a regular singular—plural correspondence with class 5. Class 6 forms the distributive plural of class 5 countable nouns which show the following semantic types, e.g.

**Personal nouns**
- magodu 'thieves'
- masilo 'fools, idiots'

**Impersonal nouns**
- mabitsa 'graves'
- maphutshe 'pumpkins'

**Pairs (parts of the body)**
- maoto 'legs'
- matlho 'eyes'

Class 6 also forms the plural of class 3 nouns which are tree names, e.g.
- makala 'camel—thorn trees'
- matlhware 'olive trees'
- marula 'morula trees'

It furthermore forms collective plurals of a number of class 9 nouns, e.g.
- masimo 'many gardens'
- mantlo 'many houses'
- magosi 'many chief'

The plural prefix |ma—| also signifies:
(a) **Mass nouns**

Here, the nouns indicate neither singular nor plural

**Liquids:**

- *məsi* 'milk'
- *mədi* 'blood'

**Semi-liquids:**

- *madila* 'thick milk'
- *mafura* 'fat, oil'

These nouns are nearer to plurals but cannot be individuated. They are therefore neither singular nor plural.

(b) **Collective plurality**

The nouns are in collection or group as opposed to that in class 11 which signify multitudes, e.g.

- *magomo* 'too many cows'
- *manku* 'too many sheep'
- *malau* 'too many lions'
- *logomo* 'herd of cattle'
- *lonku* 'flock of sheep'

According to Van Wyk (1987:42) 'collective plurals are not used with numerals, since the members of collective sets are not countable'.

(c) **Type plurality**

This type of nouns are normally used in their plural form of class 6. They indicate type or kinds of things. In addition they also represent countables, e.g.

- *majalwa* 'kinds of beer'
- *magobe* 'kinds of porridge'
- *magong* 'kinds of wood'

### 7.1.2 Deverbatives

Semantically, deverbatives, ending in |–ɔ| which take prefix |ma–| of class 14 signify the following

**Locality**

- *madisɔ* 'herding places'
- *maduɔ* 'dwelling places'
It also expresses distribution of concrete objects, e.g.

- *makwa* - 'letters'
- *maboki* - 'poems'

### 7.1.3 Adoptives

Class 6 adoptives constitute a variety of nouns indicating concrete objects. These nouns are distributive in nature, e.g.

- *malomo* - 'kinds of flowers, flowers'
- *mabenkele* - 'shop'
- *marukhu* - 'pairs of pants'
- *makeisene* - 'locations, kinds of locations'

Moreover, class 6 adoptives denote type of things.

### 7.2 CONCLUSION

It seems class 6 is not a regular plural form of class 5 only because it forms plurals of singular classes such as classes 3, 5, 9 and 14. Due to these semantic overlapping, class 6 constitute core meanings which are summarised as follows:
Class 6

[ [ Diverse Cl 5 ] [ ] ]
[ [ Trees Cl 3 ] [ ] ]
[ Plural Distributive ]
[ [ Diverse Cl 9 Plural Collective ] [ ] ]
[ Diverse Cl 14 Plural Type ]
[ Liquid Mass ]
CHAPTER 8

CLASSES 15, 16, 17 AND 18

8.1 CLASS 15

It is well-known that class 15 is a class of infinitives because it exhibits certain verbal characteristics. Class 15 is semantically classified as exclusive homogeneous class by scholars such as Basson (1989) and Twala (1992), e.g.

- go tsamaya  'to walk'
- go tshameka  'to play'
- go ruta  'to teach'
- go bua  'to speak, talk'

Infinitives indicate neither singular nor plural.

8.2 LOCATIVE CLASSES

We have few locative nouns which are found in classes 16, 17 and 18. These nouns are original or basic and cannot be derived from verb stems.

The distinguishing semantic feature of classes 16, 17 and 18 is that they express locality or place when contrasted with other classes.

Class 16:  e.g.

- fatshe  'on the ground'
- felo  'place'  :  selo  'thing'

Class 17:  e.g.

- godimo  'on top, top'  :  modimo  'God'  :  ledimo  'ghost'
- golô  'somewhere else'
Class 18: eg.

- marago ‘at the back’
- motsheo ‘that side’
- moseja ‘over that side’

There is no number indication with classes 16, 17 and 18.

8.3 CONCLUSIONS

It is interesting to note that there is no number relations with regard to infinitives and locative nouns, i.e. singular–plural correspondence. Another fact is that deverbatives occur in most classes except locative classes. The feature ‘locality’ which constitute the core meanings of other classes such as class 14, is found in deverbatives versus original (classes 16, 17 and 18).

The semantic content of classes 15 and locative classes may be presented as follows:

Class 15
(a) Infinitives

Classes 16, 17 and 18.

(b) Locality or place. This feature was not distinguished by Givón.
CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 NOUN CLASSES AND NUMBER

The research does not claim finality but a landmark of new ideas which have been overlooked in Setswana publications. It is apparent that by grouping noun classes into singular—plural pairs serves as a practical method. This is evident in chapters 6, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

Again, plurality is not applicable to all classes cf. Chapter 7. It is evident that specific semantic features can be identified in various classes, hence semantic classification of nouns by Basson (1989) and Twala (1992) justify the contents of each class. The inclusion of deverbatives and adoptives make it easier or possible to establish core meanings which were obscured or referred to as miscellaneous.

Furthermore, the presence of a prefix alone as noticed in other classes cf. Chapter 6 and 6,3 does not always determine number. Therefore it is important to separate noun classes in order to determine what distinguishes one class semantically from another to establish core meanings in which distinguishing semantic features should be unveiled.

9.2 SEMANTICS OF NOUN CLASSES

Though it is not easy to distinguish one class semantically from others, core meanings serve as distinguishing semantic features of noun classes.

In the analysis of semantics of Setswana noun classes we have come to the conclusions that the noun classes show the following semantic typification.

Classes 1 and 2
Class of unqualified or unmarked persons.
Classes 1a and "2a"
Contain original nouns like:
(a) proper names
(b) animals (personified)
(c) kinship terms

Classes 3 and 4
Contain variety of nouns in which the following are distinguished:
(a) tree names (class 3)
(b) deverbatives denoting manner or style of an action
(c) miscellaneous nouns.

Class 5
Consists of the following:
(a) personal nouns which denote connotation
(b) one of a pair
(c) deverbatives denoting result of an action
(d) miscellaneous nouns

Class 6
Contains the following semantic typification:
(a) mass nouns
(b) type nouns
(c) pair/collection
(d) deverbatives denoting abstract and concrete result, locality and concrete objects
(e) miscellaneous nouns

Classes 7 and 8
Consist of the following:
(a) personal nouns indicating disability
(b) personal deverbatives indicating skill or expertise
(c) languages and customs
(d) habit or manner
(e) deverbatives denoting instruments
(f) miscellaneous nouns
Classes 9 and 10
Consist of the following:
(a) animal nouns
(b) personal nouns indicating status or rank
(c) deverbatives indicating result of an action
(d) miscellaneous nouns

Class 11
It is a class of:
(i) nouns signifying big or unusual things
(ii) deverbatives denoting abstracts and results of an action

Class 14
Consists of variety of nouns of which are:
(a) abstract condition
(b) persons indicating status of being

Class 15
Class of infinitives

Classes 16, 17 and 18
These are locative classes, i.e. nouns indicate place or locality.
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