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Ndebele is not a grammatical gender language. It does not use grammatical agreements for sex differentiation of nouns in grammatical constructions. The noun system differentiates animacy, singular and plural, and other semantic categories through noun classes. However, at lexical level the language has masculine, feminine and neuter lexis. The gender is expressed through grammatically gendered noun stems and through affixation. The Ndebele culture has been described as based on a patriarchal social structure and the distribution of lexical gender within the language is reflective of the cultural gender expectations. This paper describes Ndebele kinship terms in the context of gender and further argues that the terminology actively or passively does gender. The kinship terms were collected through intuition, observations, interviews and document analysis and they were analysed through the lenses of hegemonic masculinities and othering theories to establish the operation of gender within the system. The analysis establishes that the kinship terms are distributed across the classes of masculine, feminine and neuter. There are gender specific terms and others that are derivatives. The derivation affixes are predominantly feminine affixes used on neuter or masculine stems to derive feminine terminology. This is reflective

of the patriarchal system as there is subtly inference to the fact that feminine terms can be derived from masculine ones through affixation not the other way round. The terms are first analysed linguistically to describe them, and later engaged discursively on how they propound gendered perceptions.

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Humans, just like other animal species, have biological and social connections. These connections create commonalities based on birth and social interests. Such commonalities between animals and within their groups give rise to the concept of kinship. Unlike other animals, humans have the ability to organise these commonalities using language and culture. Human aggregates organise their kinship around the concepts of birth, marriage and social interests (Fox 1983), while sex and age are used to distinguish and label kinship types (Knight 2008). Such organisation wades into the discourses of power and hierarchisation. The patrilineal and matrilineal structures in kinship systems affect the language used to name kin in communities. The Ndebele, who are the focus of this study, are an Nguni linguo-cultural group in Zimbabwe with strong historical, linguistic and cultural links to the Zulu of South Africa (Ndlovu 2021). Ndebele culture is patriarchal (Ndlovu 2021) and the kinship system is patrilineal (Radcliffe-Brown & Forde 2015), this prompts an interest into how the Ndebele language treats gender. While there are several studies on language and gender, and Ndebele language and gender in particular, not much has been done to investigate how Ndebele kinship terms encode gender.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the gender implications of the patrilineal system on Ndebele kinship terminology. Doing gender is to understand it as a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction (West and Zimmerman 1987). The encoding of gender and its treatment in kinship terminology is in this paper treated as doing gender. It is based on Pilcher's (2017) idea of how names do gender by contributing to gender identities, difference and inequalities. In this paper this idea is applied on kinship terminology. The paper seeks to answer the question as to how femininity is treated or created in the conception of Ndebele kinship terminology and how gendered hierarchisation and distinctions are applied to structure both male and female kin. The paper highlights the key features of the Ndebele kinship system and moves on to demonstrate how these features, which are generally patriarchal and patrilineal, help create gendered kinship terminology. The study is an ethnopragmatic study of Ndebele kinship terms as these can only be understood when studied in the context of the culture that produces them. Goddard (2004: 1211) uses the term ethnopragmatics to refer to 'explanations of speech practices which begin with culture-internal ideas, i.e., with the shared values, norms, priorities, and assumptions of the speakers, rather than with any presumed universals of pragmatics'. Kinship terminologies are culture-specific discourse practices and the patriarchal nature of Ndebele culture influences the gendered structure in their kinship terminology.

Kinship

The concept of kinship cannot be defined univocally in both general and domain specific environments. While in a more general sense kinship may denote affinity between entities

based on shared characteristics, in the domain of biological science, for example, genetic relatedness is perceived as kinship. Both these ideas on kinship apply in the general anthropological understanding and application of kinship. While there is no unilateral definition of kinship in anthropology, the general understanding is that when we set-out to study kinship, we study how humans engage each other within the basics of – reproduction, siblingship, parenthood, and socialisation etc (Fox 1983). While anthropology emphasises blood and marriage kinship, sociology extends kinship to social connections outside of blood and marriage relations (Allan 2021; Schneider 1984). The environments that necessitate kinship in humans are similar to those of other animals except that humans have the ability to categorise and name their biological and social connectedness (Fox 1983). Kinship systems are important social structuring as they determine identity and belonging, and the obligations people have to each other. Kinship terminologies discussed in this paper are linguistic manifestations of the intricate sociocultural expectations within kinship systems.

According to Crossman (2019) kinship is the most universal of human relations and is based on connections brought about through birth, marriage, and adoption. He further states that in sociology, kinship is broadened to include people outside the family or descent unit. Haraway (2015) concurs by extending the concept of kinship or kind beyond ancestry or genealogy through her idea of "making-kin". These distinctions give rise to the three types of kinship which are consanguineal that is based on blood relations, affinal that is based on marriage, and social that is based on closeness due to shared social groups or activities

(Schneider 1984). Kinship is first organised into levels of closeness. These levels are primary, secondary and tertiary kinship (Ulanska, Kuzmanovska, Kirova, & Ivanova 2021). These levels operate within consanguineal and affinal kinship types. Primary consanguineal kinship includes the relations of father, mother, son, daughter, sister, and brother, while primary affinal kinship is between husband and wife. Relations that are only primary to Ego's primary kin but not primary to Ego are at Ego's secondary kinship level. When this net is widened, it results in the tertiary level relationships. These levels apply to all human aggregates including the Ndebele. Ndebele kinship also includes "making-kin" (Haraway 2015), here, people who are not connected genetically or affinally are made kin. However, in Ndebele these people are subsumed into the genetic categories without any distinction such as for example, step child. Kinship systems use sex and age to further categorise relatives (Lancaster 1971). Such distinctions wade into gender as male and female kin are named differently in the majority of the cases. The broadness of the kin-net differs according to what different cultures emphasise. Western and North American cultures emphasise the nuclear family over distant kin (Lowes 2020). The terms, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister form the basic family in this system. All distant kin are bifurcated into uncle/aunt and cousin categories depending on their generation. Also, they do not make a distinction between paternal and maternal relatives; this is a bilateral principle of descent. The Ndebele system is the opposite as it caters for distant kin and is patrilineal. Kinship systems become heavily gendered because they are organised to trace lineage and inheritance.

Ndebele kinship

The Ndebele are found in Zimbabwe and they belong to the Nguni group. The Ndebele culture has been described as patriarchal (Sayi 2017). According to Johnson (2007: 29) 'patriarchy's defining elements are its male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centred character'. Such social structuring forms the basis for a gendered kinship terminology. Their kinship system is similar in most general features to the other African cultures (Morgan 187; Van Warmelo 1931). Describing African kinship systems, Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (2015) state that most de-emphasise the nuclear family and are patrilineal. It is common in African kin systems to use a single term for two or more types of relatives, for example, father may refer to all primary, secondary and tertiary relatives of one's father within his generation (Prinsloo and Bosch 2012). The treatment of cross cousins usually marks the difference within Southern African cultures (De Beer, Costello and Maree 1994). In Ndebele and other Nguni cultures, cross cousin marriage is not allowed. Kuper (1979) describes the Nguni kinship system as patrilineal, tracing descent and inheritance from the father's line. The classification and descriptions used in patrilineal systems give rise to kinship hierarchisation. Ndebele kinship is tied to caste and nationhood (Hughes 1956) hence; it encodes certain power relations such as gender. The deployment of sex in the categorisation and description of Ndebele kinship terminology culminates in these terms doing gender. The gendered nature of Ndebele kinship terms become part of the discourse on language and gender.

Language and gender

This paper is inspired by the Whorfian view of language as a mirror of social reality (Hartono, Suparto and Hassan 2021). Language expresses a culture and it mirrors norms and values within that particular culture. Kinship terminology are one case of verbalising culture. Language can be a window into the gendered practices in society as it can do gender. Crowley (2013) alludes to a history of how language has been used for purposes of exclusion along the boundaries of class and gender in the United Kingdom. He further states that language is used to create and validate social formations. According to Smith, Rosenstein, Nikolov, and Chaney (2019) language embodies gender stereotypes and biases that reinforce existing gender hierarchies that subordinate women. Lewis and Lupyan (2020) concur and further state that gender stereotypes in society are reflected in the language. Patriarchal social structure supports and is in turn supported by gendered language. Johnson (2007) demonstrates the nexus between language and patriarchy in English. He avers that female terms are prone to pejoration which is an indictment on the gendered nature of language. Just like other aspects of language, the classification and description of kinship mirrors the categories and hierarchies within family and clan structures.

Other cultural and language aspects that are closely related to kinship terminology are naming conventions and systems. Pilcher (2017) demonstrates that names and naming in societies go beyond their referential functions to "doing gender". Ngubane (2013) affirms that in Zulu culture, the desired child is male and the naming system confirms this. He further

opines that in Zulu culture, female names are usually derivatives from male names. Ngubane argues that for example, the Zulu name *Sipho* "Gift" is a male name but if the child turns out to be female the name is prefixed with the feminine prefix no- deriving the female name *Nosipho* "mother of gift". This observation is important in this analysis because the main thesis is also that most female Ndebele kinship terms are derivatives. This situation serves to authenticate male terms as basic. Ndlovu (2022) also notes that Ndebele language reflects masculine domination as women terms are usually the passive forms of active male terms. For example, men are the ones who actively marry women in Ndebele heterosexual marriage (*bayathatha* "they take") while women are the passive objects of the act of marriage (*bayathathwa* "they are taken"). These inequalities, he argues, are extended to the naming system whereby males are named using active verbs and women using the passive forms. Stone and King (2018) explore the nexus between kinship and gender and they conclude that family structures influence gender roles in different cultures. Gingrich, Heiss and Kommer (2021) also link kinship terminology to gender asymmetries in their study of Yemen societies. In this paper I also argue that kinship terms just like lexis and names betray the asymmetries of status and power along gender lines in society.

Theoretical framework

This paper engages with the theory of hegemonic masculinity. While the theory of hegemonic masculinity has been revised extensively to cater for the treatment of subordinate men and women, this paper engages the theory as it relates to gender hierarchy (Mensah 2021).

The theory is engaged at its basic definition as a practice that legitimises the domination of women by men in society (Connell 1995). The theory is engaged at the level of this tenet to analyse the operation of gender in Ndebele kinship terminology. Hegemonic masculinity derives from Marxist theories of cultural hegemony whereby one social class exerts power and influence over others, creating a hierarchy (Morrell, Jewkes, Lindegger, & Hamlall 2013). Connell (1995) advises that hegemonic masculinity is the configuration of gender practice to create and legitimise patriarchy. While hegemonic masculinity is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities, the subalternity of women is primal (Messerschmidt 2019). The central concern of hegemonic masculinity is that images of femininity are subordinated. Cultural beliefs and practices (including kinship systems) are manipulated to condition women to consent to their domination (Smith 2010).

According to Scott-Samuel (2009) the cycle of hegemonic masculinity involves patriarchal society, gendered socialisation, and power inequalities. Hegemonic masculinity is political, cultural and economic leadership based on the subordination of othered groups such as women (Morrell, Jewkes, Lindegger, & Hamlall 2013). Scott-Samuel (2009: 159) avers that 'hegemonic masculinity is the form of masculinity which is culturally and politically dominant at a particular time and place'. Hegemonic masculinities incorporate cultural dynamics that help men to maintain a stranglehold on the leading and dominant position in society.

Language is structured to reflect ideas on power and gender in a society. Language as a discursive practice can be used to maintain dominance or to facilitate transformation. Lan-

guage is packaged and used by both the dominant male and subordinate female groups to reinforce perceived male domination (Lears 1985). According to Clyne (1994: 3) 'cultural values constitute "hidden" meanings underlying discourse structures'. The structure of some masculine, feminine, and neuter Ndebele kinship terms betray hegemonic masculinity. Ndebele kinship terminology operate within a patriarchal and patrilineal society and they help create and maintain the patriarchies. Hegemonic masculinity is important and useful for the understanding of gender relations in a society. Kinship terminologies are constructed on generation and gender to create hierarchies of kinship. This is justification for the engagement of hegemonic masculinity as an analytical tool in this paper.

Research methodology

The study is an ethnopragmatic approach to kinship terminology systems. Goddard (2004: 1211) contends that 'active metaphorising is a culture-specific speech practice which demands explication within an ethnopragmatic perspective'. Kinship systems are rooted in cultural practice and can only be understood within a culture through an ethnopragmatic approach within qualitative research. According to Denzin (1995) qualitative research strives to understand real-world processes as narrated by those who have experienced these processes. The research employs qualitative research methodology, which, according to Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2020) offers rich descriptive reports of the individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings as well as the meanings and interpretations given to events and experiences.

The research made use of participant and nonparticipant observations and semi-structured interviews. These tools allow for quick understanding in participants and interviewees (Denzin 1995). The interviews had several fixed questions on consanguineal and affinal kinship terminology at the three levels of primary, secondary and tertiary kinship. Intuitive knowledge was one of the tools used to collect data as the researcher belongs to the culture under study. Document analysis was also used as sources for some terminology and their meanings. A total of 18 consanguineal and 23 affinal terms were collected. These were analysed thematically along the gender dimensions of masculine, feminine and neuter.

Findings and analysis

All Ndebele kinship terms that were gathered are here presented and ordered thematically according to consanguineal and affinal kinship. The terms are also presented and analysed according to gender. The descriptors *omdala/omncane* "older/younger" are used to differentiate kin of the same type and generation according to age.

Masculine Ndebele kinship terms

In Ndebele, kin men are referenced by twelve terms, five consanguineal and seven affinal ones. The term *baba* is used for the father and grand father and all their male siblings on both the consanguineal and affinal sides. The descriptors, *omkhulu* "big", *omncane* "younger", *omdala* "older", and *-zala* "in law" are used to specify the type of father. The other categories are son, brother, brother-in-law, and uncle. The kinship terms and their translations are tabulated in table 1.

Table 1: Masculine Ndebele kinship terminology

Consanguineal

Ndebele masculine terminology	Gloss and description
Baba-mkhulu father-big *(omdala/ omncane)*	"Big father"- grandfather-both grandfathers (siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Baba (omdala/ omncane)	Father- (siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Ndoda-na man-small	Son- (including sons to parents' same sex siblings and cross/parallel cousins)
Mnewethu/bhudi	Brother- (including male parallel cousins)
Ma-lume mother-male	Uncle- (mother's brother and all her male cross/parallel cousins)

Affinal

Ndebele masculine terminology	Gloss and description
Baba-mkhulu-zala father-big-in-law *(omdala/ omncane)*	Grandfather-in- law- (and all his male siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Baba-zala father-in-law *(omdala/ omncane)*	Father-in-law- (and all his male siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Seka-sebele father of-sebele *(omdala/ omncane)*	Grandfather to Ego's daughter/son in law (-older/younger)
Mkhwe-nyana in-law-son *(omdala/ omncane)*	Son in law- (and all his male siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Mkhwe-nye-thu in-law-son-sibling	Brother-in-law- (Ego's sister's husband and all his male siblings and cross/parallel cousins)
Mfumbesi	Brother-in-law- (Ego's wife's sister's husband and all his male siblings and cross/parallel cousins)
Ma-lume mother-male	Uncle- (mother in law's brother and all her male cross cousins)

Masculine terms are used for father, brother, son, and uncle. While Kuper (1979: 375) has argued that in the Nguni kinship system, 'only parents' same-sex siblings are normally distinguished as "older" or "younger"', this data shows that this also applies to grand parents. The grandfather is a big father and the suffix *-zala* is used to derive grandfather in law and father-in-law. Son corresponds to son in law and brother corresponds to brother-in-law. However, there are two types of brothers-in-law, the one married to one's sister and the other married to a sister to one's wife. The uncle is always the brother or cousin to one's mother. The brothers to both paternal and maternal grandfathers are referred to using the same term for grand father. All the kinship terms but *malume* are masculine and are not derived from feminine terms. The term *malume* for the maternal uncle is linked to the feminine

term for mother *ma(ma)*. The term means 'male mother'. The term *bhudi* for brother is a borrowing from Afrikaans *boet* which also means brother. This borrowing has gained currency and is popularly used than the Ndebele term *mnewethu*.

Feminine Ndebele kinship terms

Ndebele kins women have sixteen different terms, six for consanguineal and ten for affinal kinship. Unlike the masculine terms, there are different terms for mother and grandmother. However, the female siblings to the mother, grandmother, grandaunt and their in-law counterparts are also differentiated using the descriptors older, younger, and in law. Other categories are sister, daughter, and aunt as demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Feminine Ndebele kinship terminology

Consanguineal

Ndebele feminine terminology	Gloss and description
Gogo (omdala/ omncane)	Grandmother both grandmothers (and all their female siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Baba-mkhulu-kazi father-big-female *(omdala/omncane)*	Grandaunt sisters to both grandfathers (and all their female siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Mama (omdala/ omncane)	Mother (and all her female siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Ndoda-kazi man-female	Daughter (female child and all her female cross/parallel cousins)
Dade-wethu /sisi sister-sibling	Sister (Ego's older female sibling and all older female parallel cousins)

Baba-kazi father-female	"Female father"- paternal aunt (father's sister and all his female cross/parallel cousins)

Affinal

Ndebele feminine terminology	Gloss and description
Gogo-zala grandmother-in-law *(omdala/omncane)*	Grandmother in law both grandmothers in law (and all their female siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Baba-mkhulu-kazi-zala father-big-female-in-law *(omdala/omncane)*	Grandaunt in law both sisters to grandfathers in law (and all their female siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Naka-sebele mother of-sebele *(omdala/omncane)*	Grandmother to Ego's daughter/son in law (-older/younger)
Mama-zala mother-in-law *(omdala/omncane)*	Mother-in-law (and all her female siblings and female cross/parallel cousins-older/younger)
Malokazana (omdala/ omncane)	Daughter in law (and all her female siblings and female cross/parallel cousins-older/younger)
Dade-wethu sister-sibling	Sister-in-law Ego's brother's wife
Baba-kazi father-female	Female father paternal aunt in law- (father in law's sister and all his female cross/parallel cousins)
Nyanewethu	Sister-in-law women married to one man or those married to brothers
Ma-lume-kazi mother-male-female	Female uncle wife to Ego's maternal uncle and all wives to Ego's mother's male cross/parallel cousins
Mlamu	Younger sister to Ego's wife

In the feminine categories, feminine terms are used for grandmother, mother, sister, sister-in-law, and daughter in law. The terms for daughter, paternal aunt, grandaunt and the maternal uncle's wife are derived from masculine terms. The English/Afrikaans borrowing *sisi* for sister has also gained currency as a Ndebele kinship term.

Neuter Ndebele kinship terms

There are thirteen neuter Ndebele kinship terms in the data, seven that are basic consanguineal and six that are affinal. The great grand parents, nephews and nieces, siblings, cousins, spouses, and parents whose children are married have neuter kin terms. The term *sbali* is also used by a man for both male and female siblings to the wife. Table 3 gives the neuter Ndebele kin terms and their translations.

Table 3: Neuter/common Ndebele kinship terminology

Consanguineal

Ndebele masculine terminology	Gloss and description
Khokho (omdala/omncane)	Great grandparents (both grandparents and all their siblings and cross/parallel cousins -older/younger)
Mzali	Parent (from the verb *zala* to give birth)
Mntw-ana person-small	Child (for a man, his children include his wife)
Mnawami	Younger sibling (including parallel cousins)
Mfo-wethu brother-sibling	Brother- sibling (including parallel cousins)
Mzukulu	Nephew/niece (also includes grandchildren)
Mzawami	Cousin (cross cousin only)

Affinal

Ndebele masculine terminology	Gloss and description
Mkami	Spouse
Mne-wethu/bhudi brother-sibling	Brother (Ego's brother and brother's wife)
Mkhwe-nyana in-law-son	Son in law- (where Ego is son in law the term is also used for Ego's female siblings, cross and parallel cousins)
Sbali	Sibling-in-law- siblings to Ego's wife
Mkhongi	Marriage go-between
Sebele (omdala/omncane)	Ego's parents to his wife's parents-older/younger

While the rest of the terms are neuter, the terms *mfowethu*, *mkhwenyana*, *mnewethu*, and *sbali* have masculine inferences in their meaning or usage. *Mfowethu* "brother" is a masculine term used as neuter to refer to both male and female siblings. The term *mkhwenyana* "son in law" is the masculine opposite of the feminine *malukazana* "daughter in law". However, the term is also used in its neuter sense to cover female siblings, cross and parallel cousins to the son in law. *Sbali* "sibling-in-law" is a recently developed term used bidirectionally by a brother-in-law and both male and female siblings to his wife. Suffice to note that this does not apply to a sister-in-law and siblings to her husband.

Discussion

The Ndebele kinship terminology does gender, and the patriarchal system in the Ndebele culture can be read in the kinship terminology. Some of the terms betray the gendered social structure. The morphology of some of the terms shows some masculine biases and some masculine terms are used as default neuter. Only the term *malume* for maternal uncle is a feminine derivative, however, it too, has patriarchal undertones from what the discussants said. Suffice to note that in this discussion and analysis, siblings in Ndebele include parallel cousins, and in the case of the generation of parents and grand parents, it includes the cross cousins too. The gendered implications in some Ndebele kinship terminology are discussed below.

The gendered morphology of some Ndebele kinship terms

Some of the terms in the data are a result of morphological derivations. While the descriptors big, older, and younger are used to differentiate some Ndebele kin of the same generation, the affixes *-lume*, *-kazi*, and *-zala* are used to derive masculine, feminine and in law terms respectively. This section discusses the gendered affixes *-kazi* and *-lume* and the terminology they derive.

The majority of gendered terminology are those that derive feminine terms from basic masculine terms. This trend is confirmed by Kuper (1979) who states that in Nguni, the basic term *-baba* may take the feminine suffix *-kazi*. Four terms in the data display this type of gendered morphology and these are *babakazi* "female father", *malumekazi* "female uncle", *babamkhulukazi* "female grandfather", and *ndodakazi* "female son". The term *baba* "father" is masculine but the female siblings to Ego's father are also identified as his fathers albeit, female ones. The descriptor *-omkhulu* "big" is used to derive the term *babamkhulu* for grandfather from the basic term *baba*, and it too, takes the suffix *-kazi* to derive female grandfathers. While this trend may appear to assign fatherhood to females, which is prestigious in a patrilineal and patriarchal society, the fact that there are no basic feminine terms for these categories is in itself doing patriarchy. In these cases, the basic terms are masculine and femininity is derived from "basic" masculinity.

It has been noted elsewhere that Ndebele and other Nguni cultures prefer boy children to girl ones (Ndlovu 2021, Ngubane 2013) and this trend is confirmed by the kinship terms for children. As Ngubane (2013) has noted that some names for girls are derived from boy names using various morphological strategies, the suffix *-kazi* is also used to derive the Ndebele word for daughter *ndodakazi* from the term *ndodana* "son". The derivation path is as follows:

ndoda "man" + *-ana* "diminutive suffix" =*ndod(a) ana* "small man/son" + *-kazi* "feminine suffix" = *ndoda(na)kazi* "female son/daughter".

The term *ndodakazi* suggests (according to Ngubane 2013) that the desired child is a boy but if it turns out to be a girl, then an affix is used. This has been identified in Nguni personal names whereby girls are named using affixation on boy names because the desired children, generally are boys (Ndlovu 2022, Ngubane 2013). The affixation creates secondary children in daughters with sons being the primary or basic children. In affinal kinship, the term for the maternal uncle's wife *malumekazi* follows the same derivation path. *Malume* is a masculine designation for the mother's male siblings but their wives do not have a basic kin term. They are identified only as female uncles through affixation by the feminine suffix *-kazi*. While the term *malume* is practically masculine, it is morphologically a masculine term derived from a feminine one and it is the only such derivation in Ndebele. The derivation of feminine terms from masculine ones is an example of hegemonic masculinity whereby images of femininity are subordinated.

Malume, the arguably masculine derivative

In Ndebele, the kin term for the maternal uncle *malume* is built on a feminine basic term for mother *mama* and the masculine suffix *-lume*. This is a deviation from the common practice of deriving feminine terms from masculine ones using the suffix *-kazi*. Anthropological linguists looking at Nguni have also confirmed this derivation. Kuper (1979) asserts that *mama* may also take the masculine suffix *-lume*, yielding the term *-malume*. Doke and Vilakazi

(1948) concur and translate the term *malume* literally to "male mother". While Ndebele uses the term *-ndoda* for man, the term *-lume* is cognate to various Bantu terms for man such as *-nlume*, *-rume*, this attests the term *-lume* as the original or older term for man in Ndebele. The derivation schema for *malume* is:

ma(ma) "mother" + *lume* "masculine suffix" = *malume* "male mother".

Such a derivational path is in agreement with social practice as the maternal uncles are treated like mothers not fathers by their nephews and nieces. The social distance between child and father is generally wider than between child and mother in Ndebele and nephews and nieces enjoy the mother-child social closeness with their maternal uncles. Interview data shows that the maternal uncle in Ndebele is devoid of the father features such as the seriousness and being aloof from their children. The uncle is very close to his nieces and nephews. While *malume* derives a masculine term from a feminine one, *malume* in Ndebele culture is a reduced masculinity devoid of the typical father stereotypes. Nephews and nieces have a joking relationship with their *malumes* and these are the men to whom they can share their problems as to a mother. It would appear that the derivation path is actually:

ma- "feminine prefix" + *lume* "noun stem (man)" = *malume* "female man".

Such schema derives the term by prefixing the feminine *ma-* prefix to the masculine stem *-lume*. This way, the masculinities inherent in manhood are weakened by diluting them

with the "weaker" femininity prefix. The term also bolsters and reflects hegemonic masculinities despite the fact that it is built on femininity.

Masculine as default neuter

Hegemonic masculinities are also done through neuter kinship terms in Ndebele. Masculine terminology is in some cases designated as the default neuter. Suffice to state that feminine terms are not used as default neuter, it is always the masculine terms used in this way. Basic masculine terms such as *mfowethu*, *mnewethu/bhudi*, *mkhwenyana*, and *sbali* have been extended to include female kin. This way, these masculine terms become default neuter as they also reference female kin.

The terms for brother and sister are *mnewethu/mfowethu* and *dadewethu* respectively. Kuper (1979) identifies the basic terms for brother and sister as *-fo* and *-dade* respectively. These, he further argues, may be augmented by the additional terms *-mna* and *-mne*. As early as (1871), Morgan observed that in the Nguni kinship system *umfo* is used for brother and the use is convenient as it caters for both older and younger brother. This convenience is now extended to sisters whereby *mfowethu* now includes one's female siblings too. The designation of the masculine term *mfowethu* as default neuter establishes key siblings to be brothers and the term can only be extended to include females. The term *mfowethu*, which caters for both younger and older brothers, is not preferred in cases where honour is desired. Instead, the honorific *mnewethu/bhudi* are used for elder brother. These too are used as default neuter. A brother's wife is also called a brother. It would appear that there is no need to call the

wife using a different term from your brother, her husband. The wife is called a brother without assigning the attendant patriarchal privileges that come with being a man.

Other masculine terms that designate default neuter are the terms for son in law and brother-in-law. It emerges that the term *mkhwenyana*, which is Ndebele for son in law, is also used for female siblings, cross and parallel cousins to the son in law. Suffice it to note that male siblings to a daughter in law are not called *malukazana* "daughter in law" but they are elevated a generation up and are called father-in-law or *sebele*. *Sebele* designates parents to Ego's child in law. Male siblings to a daughter in law are elevated to the generation of her parents yet, female siblings to a son in law are not elevated.

Instead, the term for son in law is extended to include them as a default neuter.

Interview data established that the term *sbali* for brother-in-law derives from the Nguni verb *bala* "count". It is said that the term was originally used for a son in law who has paid *lobola* "bride price". Only after *ukubala imali ya-malobolo* "counting the *lobola* money" to the in laws can the siblings to the sister who has been married call the brother-in-law *sbali*. This term is now gender neutral in the sense that the brother-in-law also calls both male and female siblings to his wife *sbali*. While *sbali* is now gender neutral, it is worth noting that it is only used by the brother-in-law not by the sister-in-law. The designation of masculine terms as default neuter does gender in that it prioritises masculine kin and feminine kin are incorporated. Another neuter term that demonstrates Ndebele hegemonic masculinities is *-mntwana* "child". When a man talks of his children, he includes his wife too. The word

for children *abantwana* is also used in Ndebele to refer to women or females as *abesintwana*.

Conclusion

The Ndebele kinship system, just like the culture, is patrilineal and patriarchal. There are two distinct types of kinship terms consanguineal and affinal terms. In both categories, the kinship terms are gendered, there are masculine, feminine and gender-neutral terms. The kinship terms exhibit tendencies of hegemonic masculinities as they show some male biases. Some female kinship terms are derived from basic masculine terms by affixing the feminine suffix *-kazi* to male terms. Such derivations establish a feminine image that is subordinated to masculinities and patriarchy. There is only one term *malume* that derives a masculine term from a feminine one. However, this too displays some gendered preferences for masculinity as the feminine term weakens the masculinities in *malume*. Hegemonic masculinities are also entrenched in Ndebele kinship terminology through the designation of male terms as default neuter terms. Basic masculine terms are extended to include some female kin categories. However, not a single female basic term is extended to include male kin in the same kin category. This confirms the male privileges in Ndebele culture and how male is the dominant and desired gender. The kinship terms confirm the subordinate position of women and also, that men are the basic kin while women are only included in some masculine terms.

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