



**Journal of
CONTEMPORARY
SOCIETY & EDUCATION
(JCSE)**

**ISSN: 2709-832X (Print)
2709-8338**

EDITORIAL NOTE

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69778/2709-8338/2026/5.3/EN>

From Policy to Practice: Governance, Education, and Social Transformation in Africa:

Welcome to the October 2026 issue of the Journal of Contemporary Society and Education (JCSE). The sixteen articles assembled in this volume reflect the journal's commitment to rigorous, interdisciplinary scholarship on the pressing social, political, and educational challenges confronting contemporary Africa. Together, they illuminate a central tension of our time: the persistent gap between policy ambition and lived reality.

Several contributions in this issue grapple directly with the question of governance and service delivery. Motadi examines the opportunities and barriers shaping digital transformation in South African government departments, while Moloto and Pillay explore technology's influence on governance at the local municipal level. Akindele, Sanni, and Lamidi assess citizen satisfaction with public transportation in Lagos State, offering an important reminder that the legitimacy of the state rests on the quality of everyday services. Jutta and Alao interrogate the democratisation of the administrative state through South Africa's Government of National Unity, and Okudolo examines decentralisation and the effectiveness of local political leaders in Nigeria. Kambiri's analysis of governance challenges in managing internal displacement further underscores the consequences of normative commitment without implementation capacity. Agbor's critical perspectives on the operational independence of Elections Cameroon and the Constitutional Council round out this focus on democratic institutions.

Education remains a cornerstone of social progress, and this issue devotes considerable attention to it. Mtshali and Meyiwa assess the role of climate change education in maritime studies, while Modiba asks whether rural secondary schools are adequately managing learners with special educational needs associated with HIV/AIDS. Babalola interrogates the legal and policy complexities of foreign partnerships in Nigerian higher education, and Shabangu examines how school management teams respond to violence in rural South African schools. Nephawe and Mudimeli offer a distinctive contribution on the indispensability of English as a lingua franca in interpreting selected Pauline epistles.

The issue also foregrounds questions of gender, culture, and well-being. Nesane and Amaechi explore *Mamalo* as a resource for gender equality and women's empowerment in Limpopo, while Gudani, Khosa, and Nomatshila examine adolescents' perceptions of child support grant management through a family systems lens. Matheere offers an

exploration of the life journey of traditional healers in rural Limpopo, and Nkuna and colleagues provide an analytical study of compounding and naming in Siswati personal names. These articles remind us that social transformation is experienced at the level of culture, family, and community.

Collectively, these contributions demonstrate the vitality and breadth of contemporary social science research in Africa. They challenge scholars and policymakers alike to move beyond policy pronouncements toward meaningful implementation. We thank our authors and reviewers for their dedication and trust that this issue will stimulate further inquiry and debate.

Editor

Prof. TJ Mudau

Institute of Gender and Youth Studies

University of Venda, South Africa

Email: Thizwilondi.Mudau@univen.ac.za

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Presidential Elections As Participation In The Conduct Of Public Affairs Of A Country: Critical Perspectives On The Operational Independence Of Elections Cameroon (Elecam) And The Constitutional Council Avitus A. Agbor	7
2. Navigating The Green Transition: Assessing The Role Of Climate Change Education In Maritime Studies On Fostering Environmental Sustainability <i>Nhlanhla Mtshali, Ayanda Meyiwa</i>	29
3. Global Degrees, Local Dilemmas: Legal And Policy Complexities Of Foreign Partnerships In Nigerian Higher Education Grace Olubunmi Babalola, Abiodun Gbolagade	55
4. From Normative Commitment To Implementation Failure: Governance Challenges In Managing Internal Displacement In Africa Daniel Kambiri	89
5. Interrogating The Nexus Between Decentralization By Devolution And Effectiveness Of Local Political Leaders In Nigeria: Envisioning Beyond The Present Ikemefuna Taire Paul Okudolo	124
6. Citizen Satisfaction And Public Transportation In Lagos State: A Study Of Lagos State Metropolitan Transportation Agency <i>Iyiola Tomilayo Akindele Oluwole Kazeem Sanni, Kazeem Oyedele Lamidi</i>	147
7. Analysing The Influence Of Technology On Governance In South African Local Municipalities Phuti Ignatius Moloto Rosinah Pillay	176

8. An Analytical Study Of The Intersection Between Compounding And Naming:
A Case Study Of Siswati Personal Names
Khulisile Judith Nkuna, Nkosinathi Macdonald Lusenga, Sikhumbuzo Sibusiso Khoza, Sikhumbuzo Sibusiso Khoza

198
9. Adolescents' Perceptions Of Child Support Grant Management And Its Effects
On Well-Being In South Africa: A Family Systems Perspective
Lilimu Donald Gudani, Vinny Ntiyiso Khosa, Zanele Benedict Nomatshila

219
10. An Exploration Of The Life Journey Of Traditional Healers In Rural Areas: A
Case Study Based In Mohokone Village, Mopani District In Limpopo
Mahlomula Leften Matheere

243
11. From Policy To Practice: School Management Teams' Responses To School
Violence In Rural South African Schools
Maria Thobile Shabangu

261
12. Digital Governance And Transparency: Leveraging E-Government Systems To
Combat Corruption In South Africa
Motadi Masa Sylvester

280
13. Managing Learners With Special Educational Needs Associated With Hiv/Aids:
Are Rural Secondary Schools Coping?
Ngwako Solomom Modiba

304
14. Democratising The Administrative State: The South African Government Of
National Unity As A Framework For Professionalisation And Accountability
Lusanda Beauty Juta, Olaleke Michael Alao

329

15. Mamalo As A Resource For Gender Equality And Women Empowerment In
Vhembe District Communities Of Limpopo Province, South Africa
Nesane N.P, Mudau T.J, Amaechi K.E

352

16. Investigating The Indispensability Of English As A *Lingua Franca* In The
Explanation Of Selected Apostle Paul's Epistles
Farisani Thomas Nephawe, Lufuluvhi Maria Mudimeli

373

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69778/2709-8338/2026/5.3/a8>

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN COMPOUNDING AND NAMING: A CASE STUDY OF SISWATI PERSONAL NAMES

Khulisile Judith Nkuna

*Department of African Languages, Faculty of Humanities,
Social Sciences and Education, University of Venda, Thohoyandou,
South Africa.*

Email: khulisile.nkuna@univen.ac.za

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1427-3364>

Nkosinathi Macdonald Lusenga

*Department of Human and Social Sciences, University of Mpumalanga,
Mbombela Campus, Mbombela, Mpumalanga Province,
South Africa*

Email: Nkosinathi.Lusenga@ump.ac.za

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-6622-350X>

Sikhumbuzo Sibusiso Khoza

*Department of African Languages, Faculty of Humanities,
Social Sciences and Education, University of Venda,
Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, South Africa.*

Email: sikhumbuzo.khoza@univen.ac.za

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4056-5981>

Innocent Zitha

*University of Venda, Faculty of Humanities,
Social Sciences and Education, Department of English,
Media Studies and Linguistics, Private Bag X 5050
Thohoyandou, 0950, Limpopo Province, South Africa
(Cell) 0715430998; E-mail: innocent.zitha@univen.ac.za*

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1484-5058>

ABSTRACT

Personal names are significant indicators of social observation, particularly regarding gender roles and categories. Most studies on anthroponyms focus on the meanings of African personal names, naming patterns and practices, and their communicative functions. However, scholars have paid little attention to the linguistic aspects of

personal names, such as compounding and word-formation processes. Consequently, this study examines how the relationship between naming and compounding contributes to the formation of Siswati personal names. The study adopts a qualitative approach and is based on a sample of ten interviewees who provided information about their Siswati personal names. Additional data was collected from university graduation programmes that list graduates' names. The analysis draws on ethnopragmatic, social identity, and onomasiological theories. A compound noun is defined as a noun formed by combining two or more words into a single lexical item. The findings reveal that Siswati personal names formed through compounding follow several structural patterns, including verb + noun (e.g. -banga 'verb' + indlala 'noun' → Bangindlala 'personal name'), noun + verb stem or pronoun (e.g. Nkosi 'noun' + -nathi 'pronoun' → Nkosinathi), noun + adjective (e.g. imini 'noun' + -nhle 'adjective' → Minenhle), and noun + possessive pronoun (e.g. gugu 'noun' + letfu 'possessive pronoun' → Guguletfu).

Keywords: *anthroponyms, ethnopragmatic, social identity, gender roles, and onomasiological.*

INTRODUCTION

The term “compounding” refers to the process of joining two or more elements to form a single unit. In linguistics, it involves combining two words to create a new word (Nordquist, 2019). Nordquist further explains that compound words may be written as closed compounds (keyboard), hyphenated compounds (mind-blowing), or open compounds (chickpea). As a common method of word formation, compounding has proven effective in onomastic research, particularly in forming personal names.

Udoeye (2019) supports this view by arguing that compounding is ubiquitous across the world's languages, a claim supported by the extensive literature on compounding, including studies of African languages. To this end,

researchers have conducted numerous studies. For example, Udoeye (2019) has researched the phonology of the Igbo compound place names. The study focused on the effects of tones on compounds. Udoeye (2019) found language-universal restriction rules for compounding that also apply to Igbo personal names. Udoeye further observed that tonal fluctuations and regressive assimilation shape non-productive compounds.

Mashiri et al. (2015) conducted a related study on Zimblish, a linguistic blend of English and Zimbabwean languages, focusing on compound personal names. The study examined the morphological and semantic characteristics of personal names Zimbabwean parents create by combining at least two English words. It demonstrates that, although the

components are Standard English words recognizable to native English speakers, the resulting compound names acquire meanings that are semantically distinctive within the Zimbabwean cultural context. For example, the study identified names like Saymore, Herman, Goodluck, Lastboy, and several others. Mpande and Moyo (2008), in their study of name-bestowal in Nguni languages, found that Ngoni people use compounding in bestowing personal names. In their exploration of Nguni naming practice, they found that Nguni people use compounding not only to account for the history or derivation of their names but also to uncover the relationship between their linguistic expertise and the circumstances that compelled them to combine linguistic elements in the creation of personal names.

Mpande and Moyo (2008: 106) further expostulate that “of all Bantu languages, Nguni naming practices perhaps an extensive and apparent morphological and derivational semantic process for naming and therefore offers a fascinating opportunity to describe the morphological processes contained in the naming enterprise.” The authors further assert that personal names, as an integral part of a language, significantly influence syntax, since they are derived from both sentences and individual words. African personal name formation cannot be disconnected from language and culture. Machate et al. (2023) conducted a comparable study in the

same context and focus, examining the interface between compounding and naming. The study found that speakers have different preferences and styles when deriving personal names through compounding. Machate et al. discovered that some personal names resulted from compounding different parts of speech. For instance, *Bangindlala* (cause poverty) is a compound noun formed from a verb (-banga) and a noun (indlala). Machate et al. also found that some personal names are formed by compounding a noun and an adjective. For example, *Mbalenhle* (Beautiful flower) is derived from *imbali* (noun) + *-nhle* (adjective). The studies by Mpande and Moyo (2008) and Machate et al. (2023) are directly relevant to this research, as both examine the compounding strategy used to form personal names. These studies explore the relationship between compounding and naming in some African languages. However, in the South African context, scholarly inquiry at the intersection of onomastics and composition remains underexplored. Therefore, the study sought to address the following research questions:

- What regulates and guides the compounding patterns in Siswati names? and
- What is the significance of explaining and interpreting their meaning?

Morphology and compounding as linguistic undergirding concepts

The study is based on morphology and compounding; it is imperative to provide a brief background on both concepts because they form the study's foundation. Personal names derive from a language's linguistic features and reflect the linguistic landscape of the languages from which they are borrowed. The term morphology is derived from the Greek word *morphos*, meaning "form." It examines the internal formation and structure of words, as well as the patterns and principles that govern their composition (Hans-Jörg, 2015). Kosch (2018) concurs that morphology studies a word's internal structure. Machate et al. (2023) assert that morphology examines how words form through affixation. Taken together, these scholars suggest that morphology analyzes word formation through word structure.

In linguistics, compounds are words formed from two or more independent word types, such as a verb and a noun, a noun and a possessive pronoun, a noun and an adjective, or a verb and another verb (Zwane, 2020). This is regarded as an example of derivational morphology. Udoe (2019) describes compounding as a process that occurs when two or more nouns are joined to form one word. Machate et al. (2023:3), in their study about the interface between compounding and naming: a case study of Zulu personal names, concur with the above views as they defined compound nouns as "nouns made up of two or more

nouns that function as a single noun which can either be written as separate words or linked by hyphens." Understanding the concepts of morphology and compounding provides a solid foundation for contextualizing the Siswati compound personal naming practices examined in this study.

Compound personal names

The study of personal names has attracted the interest of numerous scholars worldwide, particularly in Africa (Thwala, 2015; Mandende et al. 2019; Thwala and Mayisela 2020; Lusekelo and Mtenga 2020; Mensah et al. 2021 and Machate et al 2023). These studies revealed that studying personal naming cannot be separated from studying how societies view their everyday lives, as names mirror the worldviews and philosophies of those societies. As such, naming and societal views are intertwined phenomena. Most previous work in onomastics has directed its attention and interest to personal names in general; there seems to be a fresh approach to the formation of personal names from a linguistic perspective. In particular, the focus is on the morphological and phonological features of personal names, and compounding is one feature of word formation that has attracted researchers' attention. As alluded to, the literature review shows that compounding is notably widespread in many world languages, including African languages.

Numerous studies have examined word formation in various languages, and the

classification of compounds remains a topic of ongoing debate in the literature. According to Scalise and Bisetto (2009), research has traditionally concentrated on roots and synthetic compounds. The authors elaborated on the distinction between these two types of compounds. They explained that root compounds are those whose head is not typically deverbal, or whose non-head constituent does not function as an argument of the verb from which the head is derived; in other words, the constituents are simple roots. In contrast, synthetic compounds are those whose head is a deverbal element formed through affixation, such as an -er noun, an -ing noun or adjective, or a passive participle in English, with the non-head constituent performing a syntactic function.

Pérez (2018: 4) distinguished the root and the synthetic compounds by providing the following illustration. He used the examples of a police dog and a bus driver. In the first example, Pérez notes that the root compound police dog consists of two-word roots, police and dog, which do not show any explicit verbal relationship. In contrast, *bus driver* is a synthetic compound in which the noun head, *driver*, is derived from the verb *drive*, while the non-head, *bus*, functions as its complement. This study is particularly relevant to the current research, as it provides the foundation for analyzing the relationship between compounding and the formation of Siswati personal names. As stated, compounding has been an integral part

of studies conducted in different languages. Udoeye (2019) studied the phonology of compound Igbo place names. His findings revealed that the principles governing the strong boundary condition in compounds are indeed universal and operate in Igbo place names. Udoeye further observed that non-productive compounds undergo tonal changes and regressive assimilation, whereas true compound place names remain largely unaffected by phonological alterations because of their strong internal boundaries. Although this study focuses on place names rather than personal names, it provides a useful foundation for data analysis and interpretation in the present study.

Tahat (2020) investigated morphological patterns in Arabic personal naming practices, focusing on the typology of personal names by morphological features to identify patterns in Jordanian personal names. Tahat explained the compositional process in Arabic, noting that when derivational morphemes are applied, words combine with stems in ways that either modify meaning or change the part of speech—for example, converting a verb into a noun. Specifically, Tahat notes that in the Arabic word *jatabadal*, replacing the bound morpheme *ja-* with the derivational prefix *mu-* forms *mutabadel*, thereby changing the word from a verb (“change”) to a noun (“interchange”). Understanding these rules of word formation and the

classification of morphological patterns in Jordanian personal names, as demonstrated by Tahat (2020), is crucial for the present study, as it can inform expectations and guide the analysis of the compounding processes in Siswati personal names.

Ramaeba et al. (2020) studied the socio-phonological and semantic aspects of twin naming in Botswana. The authors argued that compounding in name formation is common in Bantu languages, particularly Setswana and Sesotho. The authors analysed compounding in terms of gender in their languages. They gave a detailed explanation of how compounding occurs. They asserted that compounding occurs when the name adds a gender-indicative prefix to the base of the noun, as in *Mmapula* – *Mma* (“miss/mother of”) + *pula* (“rain”) or *Rrapula* (*Rapula*) – *Rra* (“Mr/father of”) + *pula* (“rain”). The gender prefixes *Rra* and *Mma* signify masculinity and femininity, respectively.

Mashiri et al. (2015) conducted an indistinguishable study in Zimbabwe that focused on Zimblish compound personal names. The authors pointed out four morphological classifications of compounding. Those were verb + noun/pronoun (trust + me) = Trustme, adjective + noun (good + girl) = Goodgirl, verb + adverb (praise + more) = Praisemore, verb + adjective (try + best) = Trybest. The results of this study are closely related to the current study,

as they raise questions about whether the current study will produce the same or different results.

The human desire to communicate through language in all situations is reflected in how Africans name things in general, including people. In this regard, Ekanjume-Ilongo et al. (2020) found that in Lesotho, the Basotho use their linguistic repertoire to derive people's names by combining different types of words to express their desires and feelings. One way Africans communicate with one another is by using personal names. Yeboah et al. (2021: 1371) support this, stating, “the analysis of compounding in human names describes the morphological process that explains their discovery or derivation.”

Although the above studies form the basis for this research, this study is likely to add new knowledge to the field of onomastics, as it differs somewhat from these studies. These reviews show that other compounding studies focused much on place names (Udoeye 2019), English words used to formulate personal names (Mashiri et al. 2015), how tones function in compounding (Udoeye 2019), the use of compounding in the processes of naming by the Ngoni from northern Malawi (Mpande and Moyo 2008) and the morphological analysis of Zulu family names (Zwane 2020). As far as we know, no research has been done on the explication between compounding and naming in Siswati personal names in South Africa.

The current study is important because it seeks to stamp out the gap in the literature.

Reflections of Siswati compound names

It has already been pointed out that some previous onomastics studies have revealed that African personal names reveal a variety of factors life such as the birth status and sex of the child, the circumstances of the child's birth, family history, parental status and expectations (Jauro et al. 2013; Olatunji et al. 2015; Mandende et al. 2019). While these studies have focused on the naming practice of African in general, the current explore Siswati compound names as it focuses. In other words, the emphasis is placed on the meaning of the formed words following the formation of the word. According to Ningsih and Rosa (2013), formulating new words and meaning is a significant characteristic of compounding. The authors also note that the meaning of a newly formed word may vary or correspond to that of the head and its modifiers. The meaning of the compound personal names has intrigued many scholars. In this way, the Zwane results (2020) showed that the formation of the clan names and their meanings are related to the fact that some Zulu clan names are derived from nouns and adjectives. Zwane gives an example of the formation and meaning behind the clan's name, Hlabangane ("slaughter four"). Zwane explains the origin of the clan's name as *Hlaba*

("slaughter") + *nga* ("per") + *ne* ("four"). The etymology of the clan's name, is an important point to consider in this section, indicates that the bestower of the clan's name was associated with an event in which the members of the clan slaughtered four cows during a traditional festival. Zwane also suggests that the originator of the clan's name was someone who observed the Hlabangane people performing the ritual repeatedly, and thus the killing of four cows became associated with this clan

Zwane further explained that the clan name "Mbatha" was bestowed upon this group because its members hunted animals that were difficult to kill and wore their skins. Accordingly, the present study focuses on the cultural and symbolic meanings of Zulu compound personal names, in addition to their linguistic structure. Zwane (2020:40) also noticed that some Zulu clan names originate from verb stems. According to Zwane, "the root of the Zulu verb carries the meaning of the main word, and the prefixes and suffixes are combined with the root to give the precise meaning of the word." Coates (1999: 27) expressed a similar view claiming that "the Zulu verb stem has the sense of the word and has the root and a verb suffix." Coates further states that the root gives the verb's meaning; therefore, the root is the basic unit that links the other parts of a word. Furnishing an example taken from the Zulu context, Zwane (2020:40) noted

that some Zulu clan names originate from verb stems. He explained that the clan name Mbhatha (“Cover your body” or “Get dressed”) derives from the root -*mbath-* (“dress”), with the addition of the suffix -*a*. The root -*mbath-* retains its core meaning of a garment or cloth, while the suffix -*a* is characteristic of all active verb stems. Zwane further explains that the name *Mbatha* was given to the people of the clan because they hunted animals that were difficult to kill and dressed themselves in their skins. Accordingly, this study focuses on the representation of compound nouns in Siswati, beyond their linguistic structure.

Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in three complementary theoretical perspectives: the Onomasiological Theory of Word Formation, Ethnopragmatic Theory, and Social Identity Theory. These perspectives are used together to explain the linguistic formation, cultural interpretation and social significance of compound personal names in Siswati. Morphology and compounding constitute the linguistic foundation of the study, while the three theories provide the analytical perspectives through which the names are examined.

Onomasiological Theory of Word Formation

The primary theoretical framework for analysing the formation of Siswati compound personal names is the Onomasiological Theory of Word

Formation associated particularly with Štekauer (2006). Onomasiology approaches word formation from the perspective of naming and focuses on how speakers select linguistic forms to express particular concepts, experiences or meanings. Rather than beginning with an existing word and examining its structure alone, an onomasiological approach considers the relationship between a naming concept and the linguistic expression selected to represent it.

This perspective is appropriate for the present study because Siswati personal names formed through compounding are meaningful linguistic constructions. Name-givers select and combine lexical elements to encode particular experiences, circumstances, expectations, beliefs and emotions. For example, names such as *Bonginkhosi* (‘thank God’), *Guguletfu* (‘our treasure’), *Siphosakhe* (‘his/her gift’) and *Velenkhosini* (‘one who came from God’) demonstrate that the naming process involves the deliberate selection and combination of linguistic elements to communicate particular concepts.

Onomasiological theory therefore enables the study to examine the relationship between a naming concept and the linguistic structure used to express it. In this study, the theory guides the analysis of the different structural patterns identified in the data, including Verb + Noun (V + N), Noun + Adjective (N + Adj), Noun + Possessive Pronoun (N + Poss), and Verb + Verb (V + V). The

theory consequently addresses the question of how Siswati speakers employ available linguistic resources to create compound personal names that communicate specific meanings.

Ethnopragmatic Theory

The second theoretical perspective is Ethnopragmatic Theory, particularly as developed by Goddard (2006). Ethnopragmatics examines language use in relation to the cultural values, beliefs, social practices and ways of understanding the world of particular speech communities. The approach is relevant to personal names because the meaning and significance of a name cannot always be fully understood from its linguistic structure or dictionary meaning alone. The circumstances surrounding the birth of a child, the experiences of the family and the intentions of the name-giver may contribute substantially to the interpretation of a personal name.

In the present study, ethnopragmatics provides a basis for interpreting compound personal names within the cultural context of Siswati-speaking communities. For instance, names referring to God, mercy, gifts, peace, family, inheritance and the homestead may express culturally meaningful beliefs and experiences. *Musawenkhosi* ('God's mercy') and *Siphosenkosi* ('God's gift') may, depending on the circumstances reported by the name-givers, communicate gratitude, religious belief or an understanding of the child's birth as an act of divine intervention.

Similarly, *Guguletfu* ('our treasure') may express affection and the value attached to the child within the family.

Ethnopragmatics therefore enables the researchers to move beyond the formal structure of compound names and examine the communicative intentions and culturally situated meanings attached to them. The theory is particularly useful in interpreting names associated with pregnancy, childbirth, family circumstances, religious beliefs, expectations and emotional experiences. Importantly, interpretations are treated as context-dependent accounts provided by participants and language custodians rather than as universally applicable meanings for all Siswati speakers.

Social Identity Theory

The third theoretical perspective is Social Identity Theory. Hogg and Terry (2000) explain social identity in terms of the relationship between individuals and the social groups to which they belong. Applied to anthroponymy, this perspective provides a useful framework for examining how personal names can function as markers of social, cultural and familial belonging.

Siswati personal names may communicate more than individual identification. They can index relationships between individuals and their families, communities, cultural traditions and systems of belief. Names such as *Siphosetfu* ('our gift') and *Tsandvolwetfu* ('our love') explicitly encode collective relationships through

the possessive element *-setfu/-wetfu*. Similarly, names referring to the homestead or family inheritance can communicate particular expectations concerning family continuity and social roles.

Social Identity Theory is also useful in examining the gender-related meanings associated with some of the names discussed in the study. Names referring to the protection or building of the homestead, for example, may reflect culturally constructed expectations concerning family responsibility and inheritance. However, such interpretations should be understood within the specific social contexts represented in the data and supported by participants' accounts and relevant literature rather than being generalized to all Siswati-speaking people.

Integration of the theoretical perspectives

The three theoretical perspectives complement one another by addressing different but interconnected dimensions of Siswati compound personal naming. Onomasiological theory explains how a naming concept is linguistically encoded through the selection and combination of lexical elements. Ethnopragmatic theory explains how the resulting name is interpreted within its cultural and communicative context, including the circumstances and beliefs associated with the naming event. Social Identity Theory explains how the name may communicate individual, familial, cultural and social identity.

The analytical relationship can therefore be represented as: Naming experience or concept → communicative intention → selection of linguistic elements → compounding → Siswati personal name → semantic meaning → cultural interpretation → social identity and social meaning.

Accordingly, the study does not treat compounding merely as a mechanical process of joining two or more linguistic elements. Instead, compounding is understood as a linguistic resource through which Siswati speakers transform experiences, beliefs, expectations and social relationships into personal names. The theoretical framework therefore establishes a connection between morphological form, naming motivation, cultural meaning and social identity.

Taken together, these perspectives provide an appropriate framework for answering the two research questions: first, how compounding patterns in Siswati personal names are structured and regulated; and second, how the meanings and significance of these names can be explained in relation to the cultural and social contexts in which they are bestowed.

Methodology

Research approach

The researchers employed the qualitative research method for this study. Creswell (1994) describes qualitative research as an effective approach conducted in natural settings, allowing the researcher to gain detailed

insights through close engagement with actual experiences. Coe (2012) defines it as exploring the meanings people use to make sense of their world, which is essential for understanding their behaviors. Similarly, Kura (2012) asserts that qualitative research facilitates a deeper understanding and interpretation of stakeholder perspectives on events, as well as the contextual analysis of large amounts of information. This method was deemed appropriate for the present study because it enables researchers to engage stakeholders directly about their choices of compound names in Siswati.

Data collection methods

The study used a combination of primary and secondary sources to compile the data. Ten participants were interviewed through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, and additional information was obtained by examining relevant documents. Interviews and document reviews are valuable tools for collecting data because they allow researchers and participants to discuss and analyze the topic in depth. Participants are usually more comfortable sharing their views in such a setup. In support of this, Nieuwenhuis (2011: 70) considers “an interview as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks a question to the participant in order to gather information and learn about the participant's opinions, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.” Those interviewed included two Siswati language educators, three Siswati cultural experts,

and five Siswati elders. The documents used were university graduation programs listing graduates' names, which we collected at various graduation ceremonies each year. Graduating students could obtain copies of the graduation books without needing permission to use them. They are like newspapers.

Sampling method

Participants were selected using a screening instrument to identify eligible interview participants. The process focuses on participants who can take part in the study. “This approach refers to situations where the components of the economy are selected based on their ease of access and availability.” (Maree and Pietersen 2011: 177). Similarly, Etikan et al. (2016) describe population selection as choosing members of a target group who meet specific criteria, such as accessibility, proximity, timeliness, and willingness to participate. We collected data in the town of Elukwatini, where we operate, as well as from graduation records.

Data analysis

The authors of this article are all Siswati lecturers with extensive knowledge of the language. Consequently, interpreting the meanings of the Siswati compound personal names collected was straightforward, as the authors provided the necessary interpretations alongside information from language custodian participants. Experts in the field further

verified these interpretations. Such methods ensured the reliability and validity of the findings presented in this article. The meanings of the Siswati compound personal names were carefully researched during study preparation. We recognize that the meaning of a person’s name often depends on the specific circumstances surrounding it (Ekanjume-Ilongo et al., 2020). Therefore, the interpretations of personal names presented here should not be generalized; they represent accurate accounts of the information provided by the participants. Our understanding is based solely on the data collected during the study, which

commenced in 2022 and concluded in early 2025.

Findings

After interpreting the collected Siswati compound personal names, we arranged them by the parts of speech combined to form the names and classified them in a table, along with their English translations. In the presentation, the information is divided into four categories: verb + noun, noun + adjective, noun + possessive noun, and verb + verb. Speakers of a language have different ideas and ways of expressing themselves as they choose personal names by combining different parts of speech.

Table 1: Personal names formed from verb plus noun

Personal Name	Verb	Noun	Meaning
Bangindlala	-banga	Indlala	One who caused hunger
Bonginkosi	-bonga	Inkosi	Thank God
Celimphilo	-cela	Imphilo	Ask for life
Letsakuthula	-letsa	Kuthula	Bring peace
Sentelumusa	-sentele	Umusa	Be merciful/ Have mercy
Tsandvucolo	-tsandza	Lucolo	Peace lover
Velenkhosini	-vala	Enkhosini (adverb of place from a noun inkhosi)	One who came from God
Vusumuti	-vusa	Umuti	Build the homestead

Looking at the compound personal names in Table 1, one can see that they refer to peace, suffering, and God. Names such as *Tsandvucolo* (“peace love”), *Bangindlala* (“One who caused hunger”), and *Velenkhosini* (“one who

came from God”) omit the final vowel /a/ from the verbs -banga, -bonga, -cela, -vusa, and -vela, respectively. The personal names in the above table show that the Swati-speaking people generally accept God in most aspects of their lives

and are a peace-loving nation. Their faith and trust in God is often reflected in their names. Their peace-loving spirit is

reflected in compound personal names such as *Sentelumusa* (“have mercy”) and *Letsakuthula* (“bring peace”).

Table 2: Personal names formed from noun plus adjective

Personal Name	Noun	adjective	Meaning
Mbalenhle	Imbali	-hle	Beautiful flower
Mphilenhle	Imphilo	-nhle	Beautiful live
Ndzabenhle	Indzaba	-nhle	Good news
Nkunzebovu	Inkunzi	-bovu	Red bull
Ntfombenhle	Intfombi	-nhle	Beautiful girl
Siphesihle	Sipho	-nhle	Beautiful gift
Siphokati	Sipho	-kati	Greatest gift
Velibanti	Live	-banti	Wide country

Table 2 above provides a thought-provoking combination of lexical items used to form Siswati compound personal names. A noun is combined with an adjective to produce a compound personal name. The compound personal names provided in this category talks about graceful appearance, nice or

goodlooking things. For example, *Siphesihle* (“beautiful gift”), *Mphilenhle* (“beautiful life”) and *Mbalenhle* (“beautiful flower”). These expressions convey the Swati’s appreciation for what is important in life and what they consider to be good.

Table 3: Personal names formed from noun plus possessive noun

Personal Name	Noun	Possessive pronoun	Meaning
Falakhe	Lifa	Lakhe	His inheritance
Guguletfu	Gugu	Letfu	Our treasure
Hlelolwenkhosi	Hlelo	Lwenkhosi	God’s plan
Musawenkosi	Musa	Wenkosi	God’s mercy
Siphosakhe	Sipho	Sakhe	His/Her gift
Siphosenkosi	Sipho	Senkosi	God’s gift
Siphosetfu	Sipho	Setfu	Our gift
Tsandvolwetfu	Lutsandvo	Lwetfu	Our love
Veletfu	Live	Letfu	Our land
Muzwakhe	Muti	Wakhe	His homestead

The Siswati compound personal names presented in Table 3 are formed by

combining nouns with pronouns, specifically possessive pronouns.

Notably, several of these names reference God, such as *Musawenkhosi* (“God’s mercy”), *Siphosenkosi* (“God’s gift”), and *Hlelolwenkhosi* (“God’s plan”). This demonstrates that the Swati people recognize and honor God’s presence in their lives. The names in these tables also reflect the affection and values parents express when naming

their children. For example, *Guguletfu* (“Our treasure”), *Tsandvolwetfu* (“Our love”), and *Siphosetfu* (“Our gift”) convey love and emotional significance, while names like *Falakhe* (“His inheritance”) and *Muzwakhe* (“His homestead”) indicate the child’s inheritance or connection to the family.

Table 4: Personal names formed from verb plus verb

Personal Name	Verb	Verb	Meaning
Khalabemgeza	-khala	-geza	One who cries while being bath
Khetsakhula	-khetsa	-thula	One who chooses peace
Letsakuthula	-letsa	-thula	Bring peace
Thulebona	-thla	-bona	One who is quiet while being observant
Velabahleke	-vela	-hleka	One who appear and they lough
Velabekhala	-vela	-khala	One who appeared while they were crying

Table 3 shows compound Swati personal names composed of the verb plus a verb i.e. -kahala (a verb) + -geza (a verb), -khetsa (a verb) + -thula (a verb), -letsa (a verb) + -thula (a verb), -thula (a verb) + -bona (a verb), -vela (a verb) + -hleka (a verb), -vela (a verb) + -khala (a verb). These personal names are often associated with certain situations or events that happened during the child’s birth. They can be interpreted as a warning or a thank-you to the language interlocutors. African names are often

phrases, so these examples adopted a morphosyntactic system in their formation, while continuing to use the compounding system.

Discussion

The Zulu names cited in this article, as well as other names from the Nguni languages, reflect how each compounding strategy function uniquely in Swati society (Mpande and Moyo 2008). The analysed personal names reveal that the message infused or

imbued in the names is clearly expressed compounding strategy is used, e.g. *Hlelolwenkhosi* (God's plan). This personal name complete, it carries the full meaning of compound name. It is not merely a personal name that is designed to describe a person but the choice of grammatical elements and their combination to form the name, combining the two meanings of each word to convey the meaning and message of the personal name. The findings show that names that reflect God's praise and power are repeated far more often than names that reflect other aspects of society. In these ways, the person who names the child emphasizes God's role, such as that of bringing the child into the world. They believe that if God had not been involved, the child would not have been born.

In some cases, these names were given after difficulties in conceiving or after surviving a tragic event during pregnancy or birth period of the child. These finding reflects the belief of the Swati people in God (Nkhosi), as reflected in their names such as *Musawenkosi* (God's grace), *Velenkhosini* (One who came from God), *Nkosinathi* (God is with us), *Nkosingivile* (God heard me) *Ntandoyenkhozi* (God's will) and *Bonginkosi* (thanks to God). Similar findings were made by Mashiri et al. (2015) in their study of compound personal names in English given to children in Zimbabwe. Many Zimbabweans believe that children are

gifts from God. Compounding is a linguistic strategy that is used to create personal names. The strategy combines three different linguistic aspects, namely morphology, syntax and semantics in forming personal names.

The Siswati personal names are viewed based on these three factors. Another finding on Siswati personal names conveys the idea of courage, strength, and leadership. Compound personal names conveying courage, strength, and leadership are often given to boy in the Swati society. The findings reveal that among the Swati people, boys are considered the heirs of the family inheritance. Because they are the ones who marry and bring their wives into their homes, unlike a girl child who marry and then go off to have children to preserve the clan's name of someone else. Girls when they marry, they usually change their surname to that of their husband, although they will continue to have their maiden name, and their children will take their father's surname. This is the result of the patriarchal system. Personal names such as *Vusumuzi* ("Build the homestead"), *Muzwakhe* ("His homestead") and *Bhekumuzi* ("Look after the homestead"). These names make a boy child to see himself as the rightful leader and heir of the family inheritance after his father is dead. The study also found that Swati people reflect the importance and appreciation of having children through compound personal names they bestow to their kids.

However, it seems that parents are disappointed when they conceive many girls than boys. The family often expresses their dissatisfaction by giving the next female child a compound personal name such as *Ntfombitodvwa* (“Girls only”), *Ntfombitanele* (“Girls are enough”), and *Ntfombifutsi* (“Another girl's child”). This type of compound personal name is not given to the firstborn girl, but to the second, third or fourth child. Similarly, even if the family preferred a male child, the next male child will be bestowed a name such as *Mfanafutsi* (“another boy”) to reveal their dissatisfaction on having other boy instead of a girl. Remarkably, compound personal names of this nature are not many as those given to girls when it comes comparison between names bestowed to girls and to those of boys. The compound personal names in category can also express gratitude, for example, for the birth of a boy or girl in a family. Therefore, it is important to realize that the real motives for naming a child are influenced by family circumstances.

The findings about the preference for a male child over a female child fit well with what the Swati society considers to be the essence of their worldview, namely, patriarchal. Zungu (2019: 5) confirms this by stating that “from birth, a boy is treated more favourably than a girl because he grows up to be the head of the household, and perhaps the caregiver and breadwinner of the family.” Furthermore, Zungu (2019: 5) states that “preference for a boy child is

deeply rooted in traditional societies, as girls will eventually marry and move to adopt another family surname.” For example, personal compound names such as *Ntfombitodvwa*, *Ntfombitanele*, *Ntombifutsi*, to mention a handful, signifies that there are more girls than boys born in these families. In his study of KwaMambulu, KwaZulu-Natal, Zungu (2019: 6) confirms this point and reports that the KwaMambulu community believes that if a man dies without having a son, the family history will become extinct because a girl child will marry and leave their father's home and to adopt their surname of their in-laws. Having a son gives a man the opportunity to boast and brag in the society.

One finds examples of compound personal names bestow to boy child such as *Mfanafutsi* (“Another boy”), *Bukisive* (“Look after the nation”), *Vikelisive* (Protect the nation), and *Bonginkhosi* (“Thank God”). From this one can see that the Swati patriarchal system favours a boy child over a girl, as their compound personal name; protect the nation, as in the case of *Vikelisive*, to look after the nation in *Bukisive*, respectively. The data collected attest to this view. What is remarkable is its comparison with the findings of other scholars, such as Mandende et al. (2019), Mahwasane and Tshifaro (2019) and Mensah and Rowan (2019), to name a few, the studies confirmed that African personal names refer to conditions related to surrounding conception,

pregnancy and childbirth. Some of the names formed by compounding two or more parts of speech are usually in glorifying and honouring God, while others relate to the family history and social problems facing Swati communities in South Africa.

Thus, the analytic study of compounding and naming in the Swati society is effectively exploited in this regard. The combination of the two parts of speech in one personal name adds meaning to the bestow name as they convey a deeper message. For example, in *Velenkhosini*, the birth of a child is considered a great gift from the Lord to the family. As in *Musawenkhozi*, grace of the Lord. The message is clearly expressed, the child was not born by accident, but by divine power and the will of the Lord. The personal name bestower use their knowledge and linguistic understanding skills to communicate through naming practice, a method that Nguni speakers have successfully adopted. A person's name carries the power of identifying him/her with their society. With a person's name, whether it is a compound personal name or not, the person is identified, and at the same time, his or her culture is unknown, so we have used the concept of personality and social identity (ethnopragmatics theories) to explain the details of this article. It is clear from the findings that Siswati compound names identify individuals, considering their social and cultural norms and beliefs. Regarding the compound personal names of Siswati,

onomasiological theory has helped to reveal how Swati speakers used their language to form new nouns, i.e. compound personal names that emphasised the meaning of a name bestow to someone. This is how the analytic of compounding and naming is illustrated.

Conclusion

This article attempted to examine the relationship between Compounding and naming in Siswati personal names. In this study, morphology and compounding were defined as the process by which two or more words are combined to form a new word. Thus, the results of the study revealed that some of the compound personal names in Siswati are formed using the verb stem and a noun (V + N). As time went by, the meaning of these names often became associated with God, courage, peace, and blessing. This shows that Swati speaking people have faith in God and trust in him. The results also reflect the peace-loving nature of the Swati people, reflected in their compound personal names such as *Sentelumusa* and *Letsakuthula*. The results also show that different types of words combine to form compound personal names. Such words describe what is good, virtuous, or beautiful, such as *Mbalenhle*, *Mphilenhle*, *Guguletfu* and others. The article shows that Swati-speaking people in South Africa use a compounding strategy to express their wisdom, knowledge and skills acquired through life and involvement in various activities

and situations to their advantage in personal naming practice.

Reference

- Agyekum, K. 2011. *The Ethnopragmatics of the Akan Palace Language of Ghana*. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 67 (4): 573–593. <https://doi.org/10.3998/jar.0521004.0067.404>
- Coates, R. 1999. *Word Structure*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203255407>
- Coe, R. 2012. *The Nature of Educational Research – Exploring the Different Understandings of Educational Research*. In *Research Methods & Methodologies in Education*. Eds. Arthur, J., Waring, M., Coe, R., & Hedges. Sage publications Ltd.
- Creswell J.W. 1994. *Research Design: Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Dawaghreh, A. and T. M. Tengku-Sepora. 2020. *Ethnopragmatic analysis of selected Jordanian proverbs*. *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 28 (2): 281–296.
- Ekanjume-Ilongo, B., T. Adesanmi, and M. Kolobe. 2020. *Juxtaposition of speech acts and Basotho names in Lesotho*. *Nomina Africana* 34 (1): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.2989/NA.2020.34.1.1.1350>
- Etikan, I., S. A. Musa, and R. S. Alkassim. 2016. *Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling*. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics* 5 (1): 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Goddard, C. 2006. *Ethnopragmatics: A new paradigm*. In *Ethnopragmatics: Understanding discourse in cultural context*, edited by C. Goddard, 1–30. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110911114.1>
- Hans-Jörg, S. 2015. "Morphology". In: *Natalie Braber, Louise Cummings and Liz Morrish, eds., Exploring Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hogg, M. A. and D. J. Terry. 2000. ***Social identity and self-categorization process in organizational context.*** *Academy of Management Review* 25: 121–140. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259266>
- Jauro, L. B., J. Ngamsa, and J. P. Wappa. 2013. ***A morpho-semantic analysis of the Kamue personal names.*** *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research* 1 (2): 1–12.
- Kosch, I. M. 2018. ***Topics in morphology in the African Language Context.*** Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.
- Kura, S. Y. B. 2012. ***Qualitative and quantitative approaches to the study of poverty: Taming the tensions and appreciating the complementaries.*** *The Qualitative Report* 17 (34): 1–19.
- Lusekelo, M. and V. Mtenga. 2020. ***Historicity of personal names in Tanzania: the case of the names in the Rombo-Chagga community in Kilimanjaro.*** *International Journal of Modern Anthropology* 2 (13): 100–121. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ijma.v2i13.3>
- Machate ML et al. 2023. ***The Interface Between Compounding and Naming: A Case Study of Zulu Personal Names.*** *Nomina Africana*.<https://doi.org/10.2989/NA2023.32.1.1.1372>
- Mahwasane, M. M. and T. J. Tshifaro. 2019. ***“Newborn baby naming practices of the Vhavenda: A socio-linguistic analysis perspective.”*** *South African Journal of African Languages* 39(2): 175–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02572117.2019.1618016>
- Mandende, I. P., M. P. Cekiso, and C. Rwodzi. 2019. ***Personal names as communicative tools in Tshivenda: Culturalhistorical Perspectives.*** *Journal of Sociolinguistic Studies* 13 (2–4): 335–355. <https://doi.org/10.1558/sols.37867>
- Maree, K. and J. Pieterse. 2011. ***“Sampling.” In First Steps in Research (7th ed.), edited by K. Maree, 172–181.*** Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mashiri, P., E. Chabata, and L. Mukaro. 2015. ***Zimlish compound personal names: A morpho-syntactic study.*** *Namn Og Nemne* 32: 87–102.
- Mensah, E. and K. Rowan. 2019. ***African anthroponyms: Sociolinguistic currents and anthropological reflections.*** *Sociolinguistic Studies* 13(2–4):157-170.<https://doi.org/10.1558/sols.37819>

- Mensah, E. O., I. T. Inyabri, and B. O. Nyong. 2021. ***Names, naming and the cultural denial in contemporary Nigerian society.*** Journal of Black Studies 52 (3): 248–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934720980097>
- Mpande, L. and T. Moyo. 2008. ***Naming in Nguni languages: The case of Ngoni in northern Malawi.*** LWATI:Journal of Contemporary Research, 103–127.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. 2011. ***Qualitative Research Designs and Data Gathering Techniques. In First Steps in Research, edited by K. Maree, 70–97.*** Pretoria: van Schaik.
- Ningsih, A. W. and R. N. Rosa. 2013. ***Types and processes of compound words used in headline news columns in The Jakarta Post newspaper.*** English Language and Literature Online Journal 1 (2): 13-21.
- Nordquist, R. 2019. ***What is compounding in the English Language?"*** Thought Co. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-compounding-words-1689894>
- Olatunji, A., M. Issah, Y. Noah, and A. R. Sulaiman. 2015. ***Personal name as a reality of everyday life: naming dynamics in select African societies.*** The Journal of Pan African Studies 8 (3): 72–90.
- Pérez, L. M. T. 2018. ***The semantics of Spanish compounding: an analysis of NN compounds in the Parallel Architecture Luis Miguel Toquero.*** MA dissertation, Morgantown: West Virginia University.
- Ramaeba, G. N., B. Sebina, and W. Lopang. 2020. ***Speaking double: A socio, phonological and semantic analysis of naming twins in Botswana.*** Botswana Notes and Records, 52: 42–55.
- Sadow, L., B. Peeters, and K. Mullan. 2020. ***Studies in ethnopragmatics, cultural semantics, and intercultural communication.*** New York: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9979-5>.
- Scalise, S. and A. Bisetto. 2009. ***"The classification of compounds."*** In *The Oxford Handbook of Compounding, edited by R. Lieber and P. Štekauer, 34–53.* New York: Oxford University Press.
- Štekauer, P. 2006. ***Onomasiological Theory of Word Formation.*** Presovskel Univerzity: Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-044854-2/00122-X>
- Tahat, A. 2020. ***"Morphological patterns of personal naming practice: A case study of non-concatenative Arabic language."*** International Journal of Academic Research in

Business and Social Sciences 10 (6): 572–585. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i6/7333>

Thwala, J.J and Mayisela, J.J. 2020. ***An Explication of Personal Names in Siswati Society of Msholozhi Settlement: An Anthroponomastic Approach.*** International Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences Studies. Volume 5 Issue 11 | November 2020. ISSN: 2582-1601. www.ijahss.com

Udoeye, I. E. 2019. ***“Phonology of Igbo compound place names.”*** KIU: Journal of Social Humanities 4 (1): 25–28.

Yeboah, S., E. A. Ofori, and K. B. Abrefa. 2021. ***“A morphological analysis of Akan honorific and title names for God.”*** Theory and Practice in Language Studies 11 (1): 1371–1383. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1111.04>

Zungu, E. B. 2019. ***“Speaking the unspeakable! Zulu pentonyms as oral strategies to diffuse conflicts within a traditional polygamous community in kwaMambulu, Kranskop.”*** Southern African Journal of Folklore studies 29(1): 1–12.

Zwane, C. L. 2020. ***“The morphological analysis of Zulu clan names.”*** English Linguistics Research 9 (3): 36–49. <https://doi.org/10.5430/elr.v9n3p36>