Introduction

This is the second volume, after Shinagawa & Abe (2019), published from ILCAA that compiles descriptive data materials collected through a set of 142 fine-grained parameters set up for microtypological investigation of morphosyntactic microvariation in Bantu languages (Guérois et al. 2017) and is part of research outcome of the data collection workshop held in March 2020, which was jointly organised by the JSPS funded inter-institutional program titled 'Establishment of a Research Network for Exploring the Linguistic Diversity and Dynamism in Africa' ('ReNeLDA' for short) and MER Mathivha Centre for African Languages, Arts and Culture (MCALAC), University of Venda.

1. Team organisation

The two-week workshop was organised as a joint research session for data collection from six languages, which are systematically studied and educated by independent departments at MCALAC, namely Venḓa, Tsonga, Swati, South Ndebele, Northern Sotho, and Southern Sotho. Especially by the enthusiastic support by Professor Crous Hlungwani, it was made possible to form a research team working on each target language consisting of 1) 'home' researchers affiliated in MCALAC, 2) master course students native to one of the target languages and playing a role of a native language consultant, and 3) 'guest' researchers from outside MCALAC. The following is the list of team members of each team.

Team Tsivenḓa

Researcher: Nthambeleni Netshisaulu (University of Venda)
Researcher: Seunghun J. Lee (International Christian U. & University of Venda)
Consultant: Salphina Mbedzi (University of Venda)

Team Xitsonga

Researcher: Crous Hlungwani (University of Venda)
Researcher: Seunghun J. Lee (International Christian U. & University of Venda)
Consultant: Vicent Maswanganyi (University of Venda)

Team Siswati

Researcher: Khulisile Judith Nkuna (University of Venda)
Researcher: Hannah Gibson (University of Essex)
Researcher: Kyoungwon Jeong (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)
Consultant: Bongane Nyambi (University of Venda)
Consultant: Sikhumbuzo Sibusiso Khoza (University of Venda)

Team South Ndebele

Researcher: Piet Masilela (University of Venda)

Researcher: Daisuke Shinagawa (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Consultant: Bafana Mathibela (University of Venda)

Team Northern Sotho

Researcher: Sannah L. Baker (University of Venda)

Researcher: Eleazar L. Mphasha (University of Venda)

Researcher: Yuko Abe (Lanzhou University)

Consultant: Leften M. Matheere (University of Venda)

Team Southern Sotho

Researcher: Kristina Riedel (University of the Free State)

Researcher: Makoto Furumoto (JSPS, University of Essex)

Consultant: 'Maseanakoena Mokoaleli (University of the Free State)

By the collaboration of each group, we successfully collected data through the above mentioned 142 parameters from all the six languages, which we believe a substantial contribution to the current research trend on cross-Bantu micro-typology. We hereby acknowledge especially Dr. Kristina Riedel and Dr. Hannah Gibson for their active commitment to the workshop through taking a lead and providing theoretical clarification of specific parameters at joint research sessions, which substantially helps to improve the quality of data collection and analysis.

2. Target languages

The following is a list of target languages with some basic information about speakers' population, genetic classification, and published bibliographical resources.

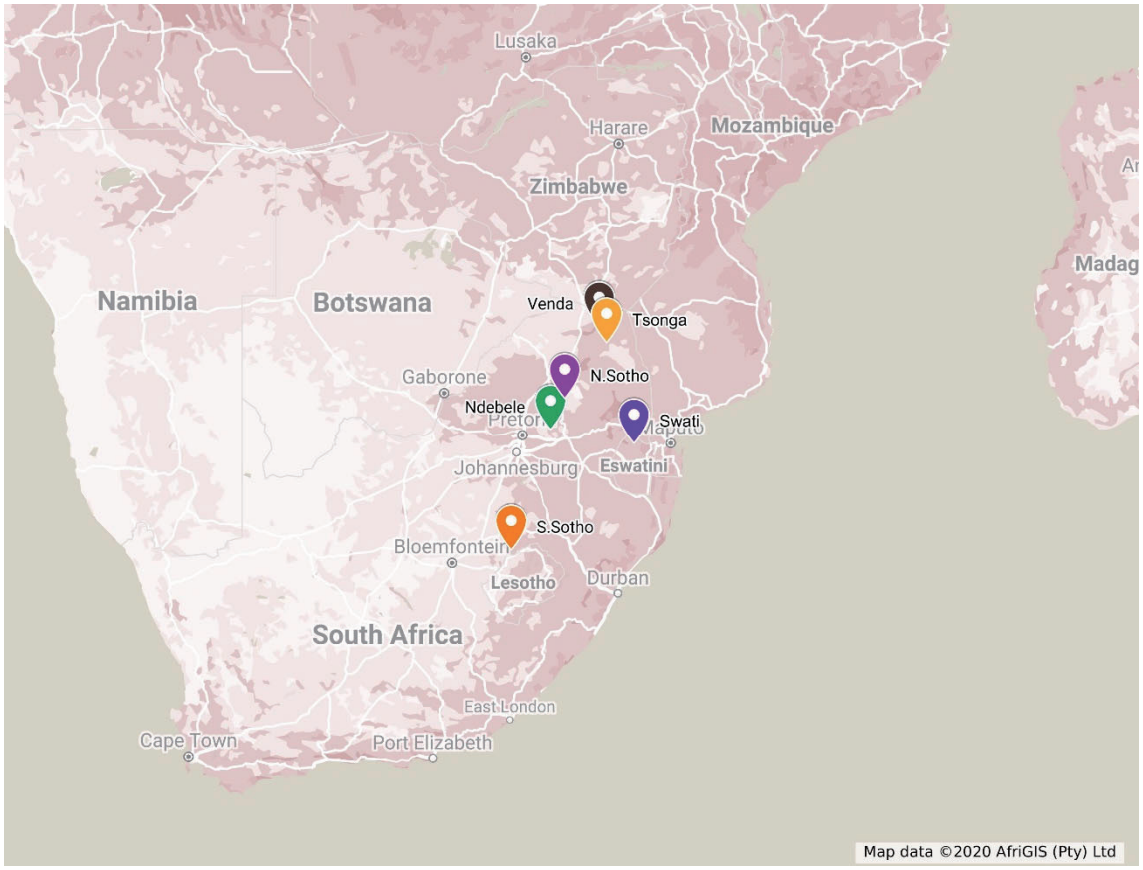
Table: A list of the six target languages with basic information

Name	Population	Classification	Bibliographical resources
Venḓa	1,209,388 (2.4%)	Venda, S21	Westphal (1946), Ziervogel et al. (1981/90), Poulos (1990), du Plessis et al. (1995)
Tsonga (Changana)	2,277,148 (4.5%)	Tswa-Rhonga, S53	Ribeiro (1965), Baumbach (1987), Ngunga & Simbine (2012)
Swati	1,297,046 (2.6%)	Nguni, S43	Ziervogel & Mabuza (1976), wa Ilunga (1995), Thwala (1996)
South Ndebele	1,090,223 (2.1%)	Nguni, S407	cf. Ziervogel (1967), van Warmelo (1930)

Name	Population	Classification	Bibliographical resources
Northern Sotho (Sepedi)	4,618,576 (9.1%)	Sotho-Tswana, S32	Ziervogel (1960), Zerbian (2007), Wyk (1986),
Southern Sotho (Sesotho)	3,849,563 (7.6%)	Sotho-Tswana, S33	Doke & Mofokeng (1957/74), Guma (1971), du Plessis (1995)

As for sociolinguistic aspects, all of the six languages have the status of official languages of South Africa. However, as shown in the population ratio, they are all 'minor' languages spoken by a relatively small number of people with less socio-political prestige and social recognition. It is also to be noted that most of the languages have only a few reliable linguistic descriptions, many of which were classic works published around the mid-19th century. While such studies are still valuable in the context of e.g., diachronic linguistics, in most cases these do not sufficiently provide direct information relevant to the interest of current linguistic typology. All of these facts thus constitute our motivation for data collection of these languages in a disciplined way of descriptive linguistics.

One more thing to be noted here is about their genetic classification. In the standard classificatory system of Bantu languages (so-called 'Guthrie code') the entire Bantu area is classified into 16 zones. While all the Bantu languages spoken in South Africa are classified into one single zone (Zone S), the six target languages are distributed over different subgroups, namely two of them are in the Sotho-Tswana group (S30), another two of them belong to the Nguni group (S40), and the remaining two are from different groups, i.e., Tsonga belongs to the Tswa-Rhonga group, while Venḓa constitutes itself as an independent subgroup (S10). This internal variety in terms of linguistic classification works ideally for the microvariation study as a framework focusing on inter-genetic diversity of structural types.



Map: Location of the six target languages

3. Data archiving

The data collected in the workshop are archive-oriented, i.e., all examples described in this volume are digitally recorded in order to make them publicly accessible online for the benefit of cross-Bantu or general typological studies. Those who like to access the data for academic purposes can visit https://renelda.aa-ken.jp/about.html for further information.

4. Acknowledgement

First of all, we are grateful for all the cooperative effort made by all participant researchers based in MCALAC and their students who provided their native knowledge of target languages throughout the workshop. We are especially indebted to Prof. Crous Hlungwani for his enthusiastic support. Without his commitment, the workshop would not be made possible. Our thanks also go to anonymous reviewers who kindly made a painstaking effort to read through each chapter and make productive comments, which improved the reliability and accuracy of the data. We hereby acknowledge Prof. Nhlanhla Thwala for his comments and suggestions for grammaticality judgement of the Swati examples. We also acknowledge JSPS for their financial support to the ReNeLDA project (Core-to-core program: B. Asia-Africa Science platforms). Publication of this volume is financially supported by 'LingDy3', the core research unit of linguistics at ILCAA, and is also part of the research outcome of ILCAA's joint research project 'Typological Study of Microvariation in Bantu (2)'. Last but not

least, we gratefully acknowledge Kyoung-won Jeong and Patricio Varela Almiron for their tireless effort made throughout the editing process.

March, 2021

The editors