

Negative concord and nominal licensing in Xhosa and Zulu*

Vicki Carstens & Loyiso Mletshe

Southern Illinois University & University of the Western Cape

Xhosa and Zulu nominals have restricted distributions when lacking an outer class prefix known as the *augment*. We argue that in negative contexts augmentless ([-A]) nominals bear negative concord features, *uNeg*, which must Agree with a negative licenser *iNeg* (Zeijlstra 2004). This accounts for a clausemate requirement [_S...Neg...[-A]...], which speakers of both languages in our study consistently report for all but subjunctive and (occasionally) neg-raising environments. We demonstrate that further distributional constraints attributed by Halpert 2012, 2015 to special Case-licensing needs of Zulu [-A] nominals are shared by [+A] DPs modified by *kuphela* - ‘only,’ and [+/-A] wh-phrases are subject to near-identical restrictions. This is a state of affairs that Halpert’s approach would not predict and cannot explain. We build on Sabel & Zeller 2006, Zeller 2008 in attributing the pattern to incompatibility between [+focus] features characteristic of negative concord items, ‘only’-modified DPs, and wh-phrases and [-focus] features of certain Zulu and Xhosa clausal positions. Thus all aspects of [-A] nominal distribution reduce to independently motivated features of the class of expressions to which they belong.

1. Introduction

1.1 Augmented and augmentless nominals

Xhosa nouns typically have two class prefixes (see (1)a).¹ Without the outer prefix a.k.a.

augment, their distribution and interpretation are restricted in systematic ways. All

speakers accept augmentless nominals (henceforth [-A], and underlined) in negative

contexts like (1)b, and translate them with English *any* Ns. No speakers accept them in

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¹ Not every noun has a separable “inner” prefix, however. We gloss prefixes for class and, if there is only one prefix, the noun root. Abbreviations: SA=subject agreement; OM=object marker; Arabic numbers = noun classes (number + gender) unless followed by s or pl in which case they are person features. NEG = negative; PST = past; SUBJ = subjunctive; CAUS = causative; APPL = applicative; REL = agreement with the head of a relative clause (usually coalesced with SA), FV = final vowel: -i in present negative and -a as default. SA with class 1 (3s) is usually *u-*, but *a-* in subjunctives and *ka-* in negatives. CONJ1-2 are tense morphemes on verbs non-final in their domains. The conjoint past tense ending CONJ1 differs from the subjunctive ending only in bearing a high tone. While we lack sufficient insight to mark tone consistently, we tone-mark this past tense ending -é to help the reader distinguish it. DISJ1-2 are tense morphemes that are final in their domains.

positive assertions with simple past tense (see (2), and Giannakidou 2011 on this restriction for negative polarity items, henceforth NPIs).

- (1) a. A-ndi-bon-anga a-ba-ntwana. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SSA-see-NEG.PST 2-2-child
 'I didn't see (the) children.'
- b. A-ndi-bon-anga ba-ntwana.
 NEG-1SSA-see- NEG.PST 2-child
 'I didn't see any children.'
- (2) *Ndi-bon-é ba-ntwana.
 1SSA-see-CONJ1 2-children
 [Intended: I saw children.]

Two out of six Xhosa speakers that we consulted accept both [+A] and [-A] forms in conditionals and questions like (3)-(5) with meaning differences indicated in our glosses.

- (3) a. Ukuba u-bon-a u-m-ntu, u-ndi-xelel-e. [Xhosa]
 COMP 2SSA-see-FV 1-1-person 2SSA-10M-tell-SUBJ
 'If you see a/the person, tell me.'
- b. Ukuba u-bon-a m-ntu, u-ndi-xelel-e.
 COMP 2SSA-see-FV 1-person 2SSA-10M-tell-SUBJ
 'If you see anybody, tell me.'
- (4) a. Ingaba u-John u-fund-é i-ncwadi kule mpela veki? [Xhosa]
 Q 1-1John 1SA-read-CONJ1 9-9book this end week
 'Did John read a/the book this weekend?'
- b. Ingaba u-John u-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 Q 1-1John 1SA-read-CONJ1 9book this end week
 'Did John read any book this weekend?'
- (5) a. Ng-u-bani o-fund- é i-ncwadi kule mpela veki? [Xhosa]
 COP-1-1who REL-read-CONJ1 9-9book this end week
 'Who read a/the book this weekend?'
- b. Ng-u-bani o-fund- é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 COP-1-1who REL-read-CONJ1 9book this end week
 'Who read any book this weekend?'

Based on a pattern much like that in (1)-(5), Progovac 1993 argues that [-A] forms in Kinande are negative polarity items (henceforth NPIs), an approach that seems consistent with this set of facts: in the terminology of Giannakidou (1997, 2011), Xhosa [-A] nominals

in these examples would appear to be ‘broad’ NPIs like English ‘any’ forms, licit in what she defines as non-veridical contexts. In the grammars of Xhosa speakers who accept [-A] nominals only in negative contexts, a natural hypothesis is that they are ‘strict’ NPIs, accepting only true negative (antimorphic) licensors.²

This paper describes and analyzes aspects of [-A] nominal distribution in Xhosa and closely related Zulu that are unexpected under such an approach. The first of these is that, just in case the licenser of a [-A] nominal is negation, there is a clause-mate requirement (see the Xhosa (6)a versus (6)b). In both languages, subjunctives are a systematic exception to this clausal opacity effect (see (6)c, and also §2.6 on complements to neg-raising verbs).³

- (6) a. *U-Simiso a-k-az-i okokuba u-Bonke u-ty-é ku-tya.
 1-1Simiso NEG-1SA-know-FV that 1-1Bonke 1SA-eat-CONJ1 15-food
 ‘Simiso doesn’t know that Bonke ate any food.’
- b. ✓U-Simiso a-k-az-i okokuba u-Bonke u-ty-é u-ku-tya.
 1-1Simiso NEG-1SA-know-FV that 1-1Bonke 1SA-eat-CONJ1 15-15-food
 ‘Simiso doesn’t know that Bonke ate (the) food.’
- c. ✓A-ndi-fun-i okokuba u-Sabelo a-ty-e ku-tya.
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-1Sabelo 1SA-eat-SUBJ 15-food
 ‘I don’t want Sabelo to eat any food.’

Recall that some Xhosa speakers accept [-A] forms in conditionals and questions (the Zulu speakers in our study do not). (7)-(9) show that the clause-mate requirement is completely absent in these contexts. ‘If’ or the interrogation can be matrix-clause level while the [-A] nominal is embedded:

² The expression of ‘without’ involves a negated clause. Like Halpert 2015: 71 we found that ‘few’ does not license [-A] NPIs. Halpert reports that Zulu speakers accept licensing by ‘before’ (Halpert 2015: 70) though this was not true of the speakers in our study. Our results thus argue that the characterizations anti-veridical or anti-additive would be too broad to fit the licensors of [-A] nominals in the grammars of speakers in our study who do not permit [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions; anti-morphic is the accurate term.

³ Halpert 2012, 2015 reports an indicative clause-mate requirement for only 12 of 30 Zulu speakers she interviewed. In our study we encountered a few inconsistencies in judgments, especially for the so-called neg-raising verbs ‘think’ and ‘believe,’ but across a range of clausal embedding verbs and different [-A] nominals all of our 10 Zulu and 7 Xhosa speakers strongly rejected cross-clausal licensing by negation in an overwhelming majority of cases. We discuss subjunctives and neg-raising and present a proposal regarding the grammars of any speakers who accept cross-clausal licensing into indicatives in §2.6.

(7) (Ingaba) u-Sindiswa u-tshilo (ukuba) ndi-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 (Q) 1-1Sindiswa 1SA-say (that) 1SSA-read-CONJ1 9book this end week
 ‘Did Sindiswa say I read any book this weekend?’

(8) Ng-u-bani o-th-é ndi-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 COP-1-1who REL-say-CONJ1 1SSA-read-PST 9book this end week
 ‘Who said I read any book this weekend?’

(9) Ukuba u-vil-e u-Mary u-thi (ukuba) u-John w-a-bon-a m-ntu,
 COMP 1SA-hear-SUBJ 1-1Mary 1SA-say (that) 1-1John 1SA-see-FV 1-person
 u-ndi-xelel-e.
 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ

‘If you hear Mary say that John sees anybody, tell me.’

Our paper proposes that [-A] nominals of Xhosa and Zulu always and only bear negative concord features in negative contexts.⁴ Following Zeijlstra 2004, 2008, these are uninterpretable negative features *uNeg* which require a local Agree relation with interpretable negation *iNeg*; hence clause-boundedness is typical of negative concord cross-linguistically. For most Xhosa speakers and all Zulu speakers, this is the sole grammar of clause-level [-A] licensing. We assume that those Xhosa speakers who accept [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions have access to both the agreeing types and ‘broad’ NPIs, which lack such features.⁵

Important evidence for the negative concord approach comes from the ability of some Zulu [-A] nominals to appear in fragment answers, and from the fact that they can be modified by *cishe* – ‘almost’ (see (10)).⁶ These are among the defining properties of negative concord items, also known as *n*-words, and points of contrast with other kinds of NPIs including the broad NPIs of English (see among others Giannakidou 2006).

⁴ Xhosa thus resembles Slavic languages, which have both existential NPIs and *n*-words with complementary distribution (the “bagel problem;” see Progovac 1994, Blaszczac 1999 among others).

⁵ Some non-negative uses of [-A] forms reported in the Nguni syntax literature are rejected by our speakers (see §2.7). We briefly address vocative and post-demonstrative uses in §1.2. On [+/-A] wh-words see §4.3.

⁶ Details and an account of why not all [-A] NPIs can be fragments appear in §2.3.2 and §2.4 respectively.

- (10) Q: U-bon-é bani?
 2SSA-see-CONJ1 1who
 'Who did you see?'
 A: (Cishe) mu-ntu! [Zulu]
 almost 1-person
 '(Almost) nobody!'

Besides the clause-mate requirement in negative contexts, there are 4 further restrictions on [-A] nominals that we will explore. They cannot occupy preverbal subject position, even in a subjunctive clause with c-commanding negation (see (11)). In transitive expletive constructions (TECs, see (12)a) they can appear in post-verbal subject position, but not as applied objects or as direct objects of mono-transitive verbs (see (12)b,c,d; upper case indicates that TEC subjects are [+focus]). Lastly, they cannot be clitic-dislocated (see (13)). We summarize these restrictions in (14).

- (11) A-ndi-fun-i okokuba *m-ntu /✓u-m-ntu a-bon-e u-Sabelo. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-person/ 1-1-person 1SA-see-SUBJ 1-1Sabelo
 'I don't want anybody to see Sabelo'/I don't want a/the person to see Sabelo.'

- (12) a. Ku-phek-é u-Sabelo a-ma-qanda. [Xhosa]
 17SA-cook-CONJ1 1-1Sabelo 6-6-eggs
 ‘SABELO cooked eggs.’

- b. A-ku-phek-anga m-ntu a-ma-qanda!
NEG-17SA-cook-NEG.PST 1-person 6-6-eggs
'NOBODY cooked eggs!'
- c. *A-ku-phek-el-anga u-Sabelo ba-ntwana a-ma-qanda.
NEG-17SA-cook-APPL-NEG.PST 1-1Sabelo 2-children 6-6-eggs
[Intended: SABELO didn't cook any children eggs!]
- d. *A-ku-phek-anga u-Sabelo nto.
NEG-17SA-cook-NEG.PST 1-1Sabelo 9thing
[Intended: SABELO didn't cook anything!]

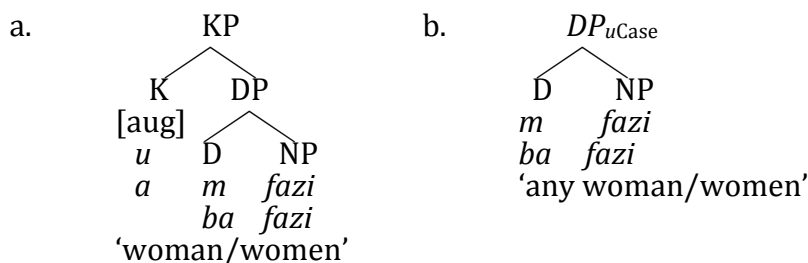
- (13) A-ngi-**m**-bon-i]_{VP} *mu-ntu /u-mu-ntu. [Zulu]
NEG-1sSA-3sOM-see-FV 1-person/1-1-person
'I don't see anybody.'

- (14) *4 taboo locations for [-A] nominals*
 $\mathbf{X}_{[-A]}$ as preverbal subject: $\underline{\mathbf{S}}$ in an \mathbf{SVO} clause
 $\mathbf{X}_{[-A]}$ as $\underline{\mathbf{O}}$ in a mono-transitive $\mathbf{VS}\underline{\mathbf{O}}$ construction
 $\mathbf{X}_{[-A]}$ as $\underline{\mathbf{O}}_1$ in a distransitive $\mathbf{VS}\underline{\mathbf{O}}_1\underline{\mathbf{O}}_2$ construction
 $\mathbf{X}_{[-A]}$ clitic left- or right-dislocated: $*\text{cl}_{i\dots}[-A]_i$

The pattern of facts in (11) - (13) was first described in Halpert 2012, 2015 for Zulu.

Halpert argues that its origins are Case-theoretic: Zulu augments provide intrinsic Case for their bearers (see (15)a) in the absence of which Case-licensing is needed (see (15)b). For Halpert, the more restricted distribution of [-A] nominals is a diagnostic for positions in which structural Case is unavailable in Zulu (see (16)), and these include preverbal subject position (Spec, TP) and all but a single vP-internal position, unless applied or causative morphology provides a second Case for a vP-internal nominal.

(15) Halpert 2012, 2015: a Zulu nominal without the augment is a DP and needs structural Case-licensing. Augmented nominals are intrinsically Cased KPs.



(16) Halpert 2012, 2015: only [-A] nominals require Case-licensing, absent or limited for:

- a. Occupants of Spec, TP
- b. Dislocated positions
- c. Direct object of a mono-transitive verb
- d. Indirect/applied object or causee

We will show that [+A] DPs modified by *kuphela* – ‘only’ are barred from exactly the same positions as [-A] nominals in both Xhosa and Zulu. Furthermore in Zulu, where both [+A] and [-A] wh-phrases are permitted in situ, both varieties exhibit very similar restrictions. Building on Sabel & Zeller 2006, Zeller 2008, and Carstens & Mletshe 2015 (henceforth C&M), we argue that the illicit positions are anti-focus positions, incompatible with [+focus] features of [-A] nominals, *kuphela* – ‘only’, and wh-phrases. This analysis is compatible with evidence in C&M that [+A] nominals in fact require Case-licensing.

It has been observed before in the literature on negative concord items that they bear focus morphology, in languages that have it (Watanabe 2004 on Japanese and Hungarian, Sells 2006, Giannakidou & Yoon to appear on Korean). Given the evidence we will present that [-A] nominals participate in negative concord, our approach has the advantage of reducing their distributional properties to the [+focus] and *uNeg* features that are independently motivated for the entire class of expressions to which they belong.

1.2 Background, scope, and what this paper will not do

There are other differences in the distribution of the two types of nominals that have been documented in previous linguistic literature including Doke 1927/1997, Du Plessis & Visser 1992, Visser 2006, 2008, Buell 2009, Mzolo 1968, von Staden 1973 among others. Our paper will not be able to do justice to the contributions of these prior treatments or to explore all patterns of distribution distinguishing the two types. Here we mention a couple of representative issues and analytical directions that seem promising to us.

First, as a number of these authors have noted, the augment is generally omitted in Zulu and Xhosa when a demonstrative precedes a noun ((17)a from Halpert 2015:220). Neither Case nor NPI licensing seems relevant here. But the pattern makes sense if Zulu augments are not Ks as in Halpert's analysis but rather determiners as proposed in de Dreu 2008 (see also Visser 2008, Taraldsen 2010, Gambarage 2012, 2013 among many others). Following de Dreu we interpret (17)a,b to mean that the prenominal demonstrative and the augment potentially occupy the same D position as shown in (17)c.⁷

⁷ Augments are required on nouns preceding the demonstrative, perhaps because pre- and post-nominal demonstratives involve different structures as argued in de Dreu 2008. See Visser 2008 for discussion of some meaning differences supporting this conclusion. Though (17)c depicts [-A] nominals (= complements of D) as NPs they are likely bigger than that in our view, including functional heads that are the locus of person and number features.

(17) a. **Lo** (*u-) m-ntwana u-ya-gang-a. [Zulu]
 DEM 1- 1-child 1SA-DISJ2-misbehave-FV
 'This child is misbehaving.'

b. **Lezi** (*i-) zi-pho zi-nhle [Zulu]
 8DEM 8- gifts 8-good
 'These gifts are good.'



Halpert 2015:220-221 suggests that Zulu pronominal demonstratives contain augments and thus bear the Case that would otherwise be realized in the K node; hence the form *lo* in (17)a is composed of underlying demonstrative *la* plus the incorporated Class 1 augment *u* (*la+u = lo*). This seems to locate Zulu augments in D at least some of the time consistently with De Dreu's and our own approaches, though Halpert does not present a syntactic account of how this comes about and hence how the proposal meshes with her broader claims. There is some evidence against the incorporated augment idea in that the class morphology on the demonstrative includes a copy of the noun's inner prefix in cases like (17)b, and this seems more amenable to an agreement analysis, as Halpert proposes for post-nominal demonstratives (which bear morphology identical to their pronominal counterparts). We leave these details for future research to resolve.

De Dreu 2008 proposes that Zulu [-A] nominals are bare NPs, which must have a c-commanding licenser. When a D is present, it licenses the NP. When D is absent, some other licenser is required, and a common one is negation.⁸ This seems a promising approach,

⁸ Halpert 2012, 2015 shows that oblique morphemes *kwa* and *ku* are augment-replacing and argues on this basis that they provide Case. Alternatively, like demonstratives they might fill the D slot, or perhaps they are Ps which cannot value *uCase*, forcing the use of [-A] forms (see C&M on *uCase* as a property of the augment layer). We leave further consideration to future research.

though we will argue for two special features (*u*Neg and +focus) on [-A] nominals in negative contexts, and we do not rule out the possibility that [-A] forms have null, deficient Ds (see Déprez 2000 for this approach to *n*-words, and parallels to bare nominals in other languages, and note 7 on the size of [-A] nominals).

The analysis of augments as a variety of D makes sense of the fact that they are impossible in vocatives (see (18)a versus (18)b).

- (18) a. Ngi-bon-a *(u)- Sabelo. b. Ngi-ya-ku-bona, (*u-) Sabelo. [Zulu]
 1sgSA-see-FV 1 1Sabelo 1sgSA- DISJ2-2sOM-see 1- 1-Sabelo
 ‘I see Sabelo.’ ‘I see you, Sabelo.’

It is common cross-linguistically to omit the overt article from vocatives in languages where articles are otherwise obligatory, such as Italian (Longobardi 1994:612). Some varieties of Spanish show a similar pattern to Xhosa and Zulu in that articles precede even proper names, but not in vocatives. A user of *SpanishDict Answers*⁹ explains, “This [use of an article] is not uncommon in Mexico, but by talking **about** someone – not addressing them directly,” and provides the example below (glosses added).

- (19) Di-le a la Bethany que ya nos vamos. [Spanish]
 Tell-3Scl PREPDET that already we go.1PL
 ‘Tell Bethany that we are going now.’

De Dreu proposes that vocatives involve a null D (and see Longobardi 1991 for proposal of a null D for proper names in Italian). Alternatively, vocatives might have no D at all.

In Zulu, both [+A] and [-A] wh-phrases are acceptable in situ. The [+A] varieties have a more specific, d-linked interpretation (see also Sabel & Zeller 2006):

- (20) a. U-bon-é bani? [Zulu]
 2sSA-see-PST 1who
 ‘Who did you see?’

⁹ <http://www.spanishdict.com/answers/199039/using-la-or-el-for-proper-nouns>

b. U-bon-é u-bani?
 2sSA-see-PST 1-1who
 ‘Who exactly did you see?’

This is puzzling under the view of augments as instantiations of Case. It seems to point towards a determiner-like role for the augment as a component of *wh*-words along the lines of English *which*, though there is much to be worked out.

Some uses of [-A] nominals described in prior linguistic literature on Zulu and Xhosa were not accepted by the speakers in our study, such as in future and potential clauses (du Plessis & Visser 1992, Visser 2006, 2008); we provide a brief discussion of this in §2.7.

Our paper henceforth focuses mainly on licensing in the NPI-like usage of Zulu and Xhosa [-A] nominals, with some coverage of their distribution as *wh*-words in §4.3 and §5.

1.3 Structure of the paper

This paper is structured as follows. §1.4 summarizes our theoretical assumptions. §2 presents and analyzes the locality conditions relevant to [-A] nominals in different contexts. §3 describes in more detail the ban on [-A] nominals in the 4 taboo locations of (14), that is, preverbal subject position, dislocated positions and, in TECs, as applied objects, causees, or direct objects of mono-transitive verbs. §3 also reviews Halpert’s 2012, 2015 analysis in terms of Case needs of [-A] nominals. §4 demonstrates that [+A] DPs containing *kuphela* – ‘only’ share the same constraints, and the distribution of [+/-A] *wh*-phrases is near identical. §5 proposes an analysis of these facts in terms of [+/-focus] features and independently motivated cartographies of focus developed in Zeller 2008, Sabel & Zeller 2006, and C&M for Zulu and Xhosa. §6 presents some remaining puzzles associated with destressed [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions. §7 concludes.

Before proceeding we offer a word of explanation about our decision to include both Xhosa and Zulu data. Much about [-A] nominal distribution is consistent across the two languages. We therefore wish to provide an account that is not trivially falsifiable by either one. Consideration of their similarities and differences contributes towards this goal.

1.4 Theoretical assumptions

Our paper is written within the Minimalist theoretical framework of Chomsky (2000; 2001). We assume that syntactic structures are constructed bottom-to-top and that there is cyclic Transfer to the PF and LF interfaces triggered by phase heads v^* and C. Following Chomsky, we assume unvalued features seek valuation through Agree relations in the syntax, though we will also assume, following C&M, that in Xhosa VSO clauses, subject agreement has purely default features.

2. Locality and licensing of augmentless nominals

2.1 The clause-mate restriction on [-A] in negative contexts

The Xhosa and Zulu speakers that we consulted in this study overwhelmingly judged augmentless nominals to be unacceptable in negative contexts when separated from negation by an indicative clause boundary (see (21)a,b and (22)a). As noted in the introduction, subjunctive complements are not opaque in the same way (21)c and (22)b).

- (21) a. *A-ndi-qond-i okokuba u-Sabelo u-bon-é m-ntu. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1sSA-think-FV that 1-1Sabelo 1SA-see-CONJ1 1-person
 'I don't think Sabelo saw anybody.'
- b. *A-ka-tshongo okokuba u-Mandisa u-fund-is-é ba-ntwana. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SA-say that 1-1Mandisa 1SA-read-CAUS-CONJ1 2-children
 'He didn't say that Mandisa taught any children.'
- c. ✓A-ndi-fun-i (okokuba) u-Sabelo a-ty-e ku-tya. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1sSA-want-FV that 1-1Sabelo 1SA-eat-SUBJ 15-food
 'I don't want Sabelo to eat any food.'
- (22) a. *uSimiso a-ka-tshongo ukuthi u-Nothando u-theng-é mi-funo. [Zulu]
 1-1Simiso NEG-1SA-say that 1-1Nothando 1SA-buy-CONJ1 4-vegetables
 'Simiso didn't say that Nothando bought any vegetables.'

- b. ✓A-ngi-fun-i (ukuthi) u-bon-e muntu. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-want-NEG that 2SSA-see-SUBJ that
 ‘I don’t want you to see anybody.’

These examples show that there is a more local dependency between negation and the [-A] NPIs of Zulu and Xhosa than holds between English NPIs and negation.

2.2 A clause-mate requirement for *n*-words and *in years* NPIs

There are two classes of expressions for which a clause-mate requirement with negation is well established in the syntactic literature. The first is negative concord items, also known as *n*-words. Giannakidou & Zeilstra 2014: 27 write, “Cross-linguistically, *n*-words, as opposed to existential NPIs such as *any* [...] are generally not licensed long-distance” (see (23)a vs. (23)b from Haegeman & Zanuttini 1991). Cross-linguistically, subjunctives are a systematic exception (see §2.6).

- (23) a. da Valère **an niemand** **niets** ge-zeid (en-) eet. [West Flemish]
 that Valère to no one nothing EN-said has
 ‘that Valère has said nothing to anyone.’
 b. *K'**en**-peinzen-k ik da Valère **niets** keut.
 I *en*-think-1s I that Valère nothing knows
 [Intended: I don’t think that Valère knows anything.]

Works documenting the locality of negative concord include Zanuttini 1991, Longobardi 1991, Progovac 1994, Giannakidou 1997, 2000, Brown 1997, Herberger 2001, Haegeman & Zanuttini 1996, Zeijlstra 2004, Watanabe 2004, on such diverse languages as Italian, West Flemish, French, Japanese, Korean, Greek, Serbian/Croatian, and Polish.

A second class of expressions with this restriction includes the English phrase *in years* and idiomatic expressions like *breathe a word*, *a living soul*, and *a damn/fucking thing* (see Collins & Postal 2014 for recent discussion). We will refer to these as *in years* NPIs.

- (24) a. She hasn’t worked in years.
 b. *They didn’t say [she had worked in years].
 c. I won’t breathe a word.
 d. *Don’t tell Mary [I will breathe a word].

Though both negative concord items and *in years* NPIs are ‘strict’ in requiring a local negative licenser, there are a few diagnostic properties that set them apart from each other. In the next section we present these diagnostics and try them on [-A] nominals in Zulu and Xhosa. They provide evidence that [-A] nominals are not a uniform class.

2.3 N-words and Zulu *lutho*, *ndawo*, and *muntu*

2.3.1 Special properties of negative concord items

Negative concord items or *n*-words have some distinctive properties that hold commonly across languages, listed in (25) (adapted from Vallduví 1994 and Giannakidou 2006). Of these, Giannakidou 2006 proposes that (25)a and (25)b are definitional for *n*-words.

(25) *Common properties of n-words*

- a. Can occur in isolation, as sentence-fragment answers
- b. Co-occur with other negative elements, yielding single negation interpretation
- c. Can be modified by ‘almost’ and ‘exactly’
- d. Licensing by negation is clause-bound
- e. Can appear in preverbal subject position with apparent negative force

As will be demonstrated in §3.2 and §6, (25)e is not a fruitful diagnostic because, for independent reasons, no Zulu or Xhosa [-A] nominal can appear in preverbal subject position, even in embedded subjunctives with c-commanding negation, or in a conditional or question. (25)d has already been established. We therefore restrict discussion to properties (25)a-c. These diagnostics argue that while a few [-A] nominals are *n*-words, others pattern with *in years* NPIs, which do not exhibit either property (25)a or (25)c.

2.3.2 Sentence-fragment answers

The ability to serve as sentence-fragment answers with negative force is a point of marked contrast between *n*-words and broad NPIs like English *any* forms (see (26), (27) and (28)).

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------|
| (26) Q: Chi ha telefonato?
who has called
‘Who called?’ | A: Nesunno!
N-body
‘Nobody’ | [Italian] |
|---|--|-----------|

(27) Q. Qui a téléphoné? A. **Personne!** [French]
 Who has called n-body
 'What do you have?' 'Nobody'

(28) Q: Who called? A: *Anybody! [English]

In Zulu, the speakers we consulted accept fragment answers involving 3 [-A] nominals with the meanings 'nothing', 'nobody,' and 'nowhere' ((29) from Zeller 2009: 2-3, gloss adapted).

(29) Q: Y'ini o-nga-ngi-tshela yona ng'oJohn? [Zulu]
 COP'9what REL+2sSA-CAN-1sSA-tell 9IndPron COP'1John
 'What can you tell me about John?'

A: Lu-tho. Kodwa u-Bill i-ntombazana i-m-qabul-ile.
11-thing. But 1-1Bill 9-9girl 9SA-3SOM-kiss- DISJ1
 'Nothing. But Bill, the girl kissed (him).'

(30) Q: U-bon-é bani? A: Mu-ntu! [Zulu]
 2sSA-see-CONJ1 1who 1-person
 'Who did you see?' 'Nobody!'

(31) Q: U-y-é ku-phi? A: Ndawo! [Zulu]
 2sSA-go-CONJ1 17-which 9place
 'Where did you go?' 'Nowhere!'

For other [-A] nominals in Zulu, however, fragment answers are judged impossible.

(32) Q: U-dl-é a-ma-qanda ma-ngaki? A: *Ma-qanda! [Zulu]
 2sSA-eat- CONJ1 6-6-eggs 6-how.many 6-eggs
 'How many eggs did you eat?' [Intended: No eggs!]

(33) Q: U-thand-a u-m-fazi u-phi? A: *M-fazi!
 1SA-like-FV 1-1-woman 1-which 1-woman
 'Which woman does he like?' [Intended: No woman!]

And in Xhosa, no [-A] nominals can be used as sentence-fragment answers (see (34) and (35)). In this they pattern with English NPIs, not with *n*-words or with Zulu *lutho*, *ndawo*, and *muntu*.

(34) Q: Ng'u-bani o-be-fowun-ile? A: *M-ntu! [Xhosa]
 COP'1-1who whAGR-AUX-call-DISJ1 1-person
 'Who called?' [Intended: Nobody!]

Q: U-funa-ni? A: *Nto!
 2sSA-want-what 9thing
 'What do you want?' [Intended: Nothing!]

- (35) Q: U-y-é ku-phi? A: *Ndawo! [Xhosa]
 2SSA-go-CONJ1 17-which 9place
 'Where did you go?' 'No place!'

2.3.3 Multiple negative elements, single negation readings

The central puzzle of negative concord is that *n*-words like Italian *nessuno* and French *personne* appear to have independent negative force in such circumstances as fragment answers like (26) and (27), but combine with each other and with sentential negation to yield a reading equivalent to one logical negation (see (36) and (37) from Haegeman 1995: 78 and 89 respectively). The statement of this puzzle in (38) is taken from Giannakidou & Zeijlstra 2014.

- (36) **Personne** ne disait **rien**. [French]
 N-body NE said n-thing
 'No one said anything.'

- (37) **Non** ho **mai** detto **niente** a **nessuno**. [Italian]
 NEG have never said n-thing to n-body
 'I never said anything to anyone.'

- (38) The *compositionality* question of negative concord
 If two elements are independently able to induce a semantic negation, how is it possible that jointly they yield only one semantic negation?

Since most [-A] nominals of Zulu and Xhosa cannot serve as fragment answers, the compositionality question does not arise for them. But Zulu *lutho*, *muntu*, and *ndawo* pattern with *n*-words in this respect: despite appearing to be intrinsically negative in fragment answers like (29) - (31), they combine with sentence negation and with each other to yield a single logical negation (see (39), and (40) taken from Halpert 2015:149). In fact, (41) shows that they require the presence of an overt negator when they are used in sentences, as is commonly the case for vP-internal *n*-words.

- (39) **A-ngi-yi** ndawo. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-go 9place
 'I'm not going anywhere.'

(40) U-Sipho a-ka-fund-is-**anga** mu-ntu lu-tho. [Zulu]
 1-1Sipho NEG-1SA-learn-CAUS-NEG.PST 1-person 11-thing
 ‘Sipho didn’t teach anyone anything.’

(41) *U-Sipho u-fund-is-a mu-ntu/lu-tho. [Zulu]
 1-1Sipho 1SA-learn-CAUS-FV 1-person/11-thing
 [Intended: Sipho teaches nobody/nothing.]

2.3.4 Modification with ‘almost’

It has often been noted that *n*-words can be modified by ‘almost’ and ‘exactly’ or ‘absolutely’ (see (42) from Depréz 2000, and (43) from Valduví 1994:9):

(42) Jean n’a invité presque personne. [French]
 John NE have invited almost n-body
 ‘John has invited almost no one.’

(43) On en venen, de faves? Absolutament enlloc. [Catalan]
 Where prtve 3SSA.sell broad-beans absolutely nowhere
 ‘Where are broad beans sold? Absolutely nowhere.’

Zulu has an adnominal *cishe* - ‘almost’ (see (44)) which can modify *lutho* and *muntu*, though it does not felicitously combine with *ndawo* (see (46) - (47)).

(44) Yena u-thand-a cishe wonke u-mu-ntu. [Zulu]
 3IndPron 1SA-like-FV almost all 1-1-person
 ‘S/he likes almost everybody.’

(45) Q: U-thand-a bani? A: Cishe mu-ntu. [Zulu]
 1SA-like-FV 1who almost 1-person
 ‘Who does s/he like?’ ‘Almost nobody.’

(46) Q: U-dl-eni? A: Cishe lu-tho. [Zulu]
 1SA-eat almost 11-thing
 ‘What did he eat?’ ‘Almost nothing.’

(47) Q: U-ye-phi nge-sikathi ngi-nge-kho? A: *Cishe ndawo. [Zulu]
 2sSA-go-where at-time 1SSA-NEG-be almost 9place
 ‘Where did you go while I was away?’ ‘Almost nowhere.’

It is probably not surprising that, since the remaining [-A] nominals in Zulu cannot convey negative meanings in isolation, neither can they be modified by *cishe*:

- (48) Q: Ba-fund-é i-zi-ncwadi e-zi-ningi? A: *(Ba-fund-é) cishe zi-ncwadi.
 2SA-read-CONJ1 10-books 10-10-many 2SA-read almost 10-books
 ‘Did they read a lot of books?’ [(They read) almost no books.]

Not even *munthu* and *lutho* can be modified by Zulu *ncamashi* – ‘exactly.’ We assume that an exploration of its lexical semantics would shed light on this, but it lies outside our paper’s scope.

2.4 Analysis

We have shown that two particular Zulu [-A] nominals, *lutho* – ‘nothing’ and *muntu* ‘nobody,’ exhibit several of the hallmark properties of negative concord items listed in (25): in addition to requiring a clause-mate negative licenser, they can appear as sentence-fragment answers, they combine with sentence negation and other negative expressions to yield a single logical negation, and they can be modified by ‘almost.’ Though *ndawo* – ‘nowhere’ cannot be modified by ‘almost’, it patterns with *n*-words on criteria (25)a and (25)b. As previously noted, these two criteria are argued by Giannakidou 2006 to be definitional for *n*-words.

All other Zulu [-A] nominals differ markedly, as do Xhosa [-A] nominals: while they exhibit the clause-mate requirement and combine with sentential negation to yield a single logical negation, they cannot be fragment answers or be modified by *cishe* – ‘almost.’

As noted in §2.2, there is a second relevant class of negative dependent expressions: *in years* NPIs have a constellation of properties very similar to those of [-A] nominals in Xhosa and to the majority in Zulu. We have already shown that they have the clause-mate requirement (see (24), repeated below). But *in years* NPIs differ from *n*-words in being unacceptable as sentence-fragment answers (see (49)). They are also infelicitous in combination with *almost*.

- (24) a. She hasn't worked in years.
 b. *They didn't say [she had worked in years].
 c. I won't breathe a word.
 d. *Don't tell Mary [I will breathe a word].
- (49) a. Q: Does she still work? A: *(Not) in years.
 b. Q: What did you get done? A: *(Not) a damn thing.
 c. She hasn't worked (*almost) in years.

Table 1 provides a summary of the tests we have applied, showing how the various Xhosa and Zulu expressions align with negative dependent expressions in other languages.

Table 1

<i>Items</i>	<i>Clausemate requirement</i>	<i>Fragment answers</i>	<i>Compositionality issue</i>	<i>Modification by 'almost'</i>
<i>n</i> -words	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lutho	✓	✓	✓	✓
Muntu	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ndawo	✓	✓	✓	✗
All other [-A]	✓	✗	N/A	✗
<i>in years</i> NPIs	✓	✗	N/A	✗

With the exception of Zulu *lutho*, *muntu*, and *ndawo*, which we have analyzed as *n*-words, we assimilate Xhosa and Zulu [-A] nominals in negative contexts to the class of *in years* NPIs with which they pattern on the properties summarized in Table 1.

By way of analysis, we adopt and build on Zeijlstra's 2004, 2008 proposal that the clause-mate relation between negation and *n*-words exists because negative concord is an agreement relation (see (50)). Just as agreeing categories bear uninterpretable phi-features (*uPhi*) valued by their interpretable counterparts, so *n*-words bear uninterpretable negation features (*uNeg*), which must be locally licensed by interpretable negation (*iNeg*).

(50) Negative concord is an Agree relation between a single feature [*iNeg*] and one or more features [*uNeg*]. (Zeijlstra 2008: 20)

Our proposal is that expressions like *in years* and [-A] nominals have *uNeg* features also, so the clause-mate requirements have a unitary syntactic source.

A potential obstacle for this unified account lies in the divergent behavior of *n*-words and *in years* NPIs with respect to sentence-fragment answers. But Zeijlstra's approach paves the way for a simple explanation of this difference. Zeijlstra (2004, 2008) argues that *n*-words in fragment answers only seem, misleadingly, to contribute negative meanings, because they induce the presence of a silent negative operator with interpretable (*iNeg*) features (see (51) and also Giannakidou 1997, 2000, 2006, Blaszczak 2005 among others for a slightly different proposal, in which negation is elided). In Zeijlstra's account, *iNeg* is *always* silent in so-called 'strict' negative concord languages, where he analyzes the overt marker of negation as a bearer of *uNeg* as well. When the sole *n*-word in a sentence is vP-internal, an overt marker is always needed higher in the clause to mark scope (see Zeijlstra 2008:22-28 for details).

(51) *Zeijlstra 2004, 2008: A null iNeg licenses n-words in fragment answers, and systematically in 'strict' negative concord languages.*

[OP_{*iNeg*}....nessuno_{*uNeg*}]

If *n*-words in fragment answers Agree with a null or elided negation, the inability of [-A] nominals and *in years* NPIs to function as fragments simply indicates that their *uNeg* features are not compatible with this possibility. Analogously, *uPhi* features vary across languages and even within a given language as to whether they are compatible with pro-drop; there are pro-drop, non-pro-drop and partial pro-drop languages. It seems entirely reasonable, if negative concord is a kind of agreement, for variation to exist in whether items bearing *uNeg* features are compatible with the total absence of overt negative material. We suggest that expressions may bear *uNeg* features that are too weak to induce the presence of a covert *iNeg* operator. In this case, some overt *iNeg* expression must

appear, or alternatively there must be a bearer of stronger *uNeg* features present which can induce the silent *iNeg*.¹⁰

Thus *lutho*, *muntu*, and *ndawo*, are like T(ense) in a pro-drop language. The remaining [-A] nominals of Zulu and Xhosa are instead like T in English: they agree, but do not license the negative counterpart to pro-drop.

Summing up, [-A] nominals, *n*-words, and *in years*-type NPIs, have in common the fact that they bear *uNeg* features which must be licensed through local Agree with *iNeg*. This accounts for their clause-bound relation with negation. Those with ‘strong’ agreement features suffice to induce silent *iNeg* in fragment answers, and this group includes Zulu *lutho*, *muntu*, and *ndawo*. Those with weaker agreement features are dependent on the presence of overt negation, or a co-occurring item bearing stronger *uNeg* features.

2.5 Non-negative uses and absence of locality

Xhosa (7) - (9) (repeated below) make it clear that, for those speakers who accept [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions, they do not have to be clause-mates with the interrogative element or the conditional complementizer. Thus in the grammars of these speakers, the clause-mate requirement is specific to the relationship between [-A] nominals and negation.

(7) (Ingaba) u-Sindiswa u-tshilo (ukuba) ndi-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 (Q) 1-1Sindiswa 1SA-say (that) 1SSA-read-CONJ1 9book this end week
 ‘Did Sindiswa say I read any book this weekend?’

(8) Ng-u-bani o-th-é ndi-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?
 COP-1-1who REL-say-CONJ1 1SSA-read-PST 9book this end week
 ‘Who said I read any book this weekend?’

¹⁰ The fact that *lutho*, *muntu*, and *ndawo* cannot appear in preverbal subject position complicates the analysis of whether Zulu’s overt negative marker is *iNeg* or *uNeg*, by making it hard to know whether Zulu is a ‘strict’ or non-strict negative concord language (see Zeijlstra 2008 on the significance of this diagnostic). In Xhosa where there are no true *n*-words this is also a complex question. We leave it to future research.

- (9) Ukuba u-vil-e u-Mary u-thi (ukuba) u-John w-a-bon-a m-ntu,
 COMP 1SA-hear-SUBJ 1-1Mary 1SA-say (that) 1-1John 1SA-see-FV 1-person
 u-ndi-xelex-e.
 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ

‘If you hear Mary say that John sees anybody, tell me.’

The combination of (i) non-negative uses with (ii) the lifting of locality suggests that speakers who accept [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions have access to versions without *uNeg* features. The resulting forms are comparable to indefinite NPIs, like *any* Ns.¹¹

N-words and plain NPIs coexist in other languages including Greek and some Slavic languages, so our proposal is not without precedents. In Greek, the forms of the two differ only in that the *n*-words are emphatically stressed (Veloudis 1982, Tsimpli & Roussou 1996, Giannakidou 1997, 1999, 2000). These emphatic versions are ruled out in non-negative contexts where the plain (non-emphatics) can appear (see (52) from Giannakidou 2000, (53) and (54) from Giannakidou & Zeijlstra 2014).¹²

- (52) I Theodora *(dhen) enekrine {kanena/KANENA} sxedhio. [Greek]
 the Theodora not approved.3sg n- plan
 ‘Theodora didn’t approve any plan.’

¹¹ There is evidence that augmentless *wh*-words also lack *uNeg* features. Like [-A] NPIs in conditionals and questions, they can appear in embedded clauses (see (i)a). Following Cole & Hermon 1998, Abels 2012 among others, we assume a syntactic dependency exists between in situ *wh*- and an operator in the left periphery of its scope clause (see (i)b). The facts thus provide another indication that the relationship between negation and a [-A] NPI is subject to special locality not shared by [-A] forms in other contexts.

- (i) a. U-Sabelo u-th-é okokuba ndi-theng-é ntoni? [Xhosa]
 1-1Sabelo 1SA-say-CONJ1 that 1sSA-buy-CONJ1 9what
 ‘What did Sabelo say that I bought?’

- b. [_{CP} OP C [_{TP} Sabelo said [_{CP} that [_{TP} I bought what?]]]]

¹² A question arises as to why Xhosa speakers with access to *uNeg*-less versions of [-A] nominals cannot use them in negative contexts, thus evading the clause-mate requirement. This has cross-linguistic precedents: as mentioned in note 4, in Slavic languages which have both *n*-words and regular NPIs, they are in complementary distribution; the latter are disallowed in negative contexts. See Blaszczak to appear, Progovac 1994 among others for approaches to this so-called “bagel problem.”

(53) Píjes {poté/*POTE} sto Parísí?
 went.2sg n-ever in-the Paris
 'Did you ever go to Paris?'

(54) An dhis tin Eléna {poté/*PUTHENA}, na tis milísis.
 If you see Eléna anywhere talk to her
 'If you see Elena anywhere, talk to her.'

In a striking parallel with Greek, our investigation revealed a significant stress difference between Xhosa [-A] forms in negative versus non-negative contexts. A [-A] form like *nto* '9thing' or *mntu* – '1person' in a negative sentence has emphatic stress, including a stress on its syllabic initial nasal. In interrogatives and conditionals, the same forms are almost monosyllabic, destressed and reduced to an extent that recalls the pronunciation of an English function word such as a determiner or auxiliary.

Summing up, Xhosa has stressed [-A] nominals with *uNeg* features and destressed versions without them. We will see evidence in §6 that the stress difference has a syntactic consequence in barring the *uNeg*-less [-A] nominals from positions associated with focus or any emphasis at all. Before we turn to this, the next few sections concentrate on the stressed versions and their negative concord properties.

2.6 Cross-clausal licensing: subjunctives, neg-raising, and hyper-raising

In well-studied negative concord languages, the most common exception to a clause-mate condition is that some languages allow *n*-words to appear in subjunctive complements embedded under negation. The Spanish (55) illustrates with a verb that can take either a subjunctive or an indicative complement. Only the subjunctive is licit where an *n*-word appears in the embedded clause (Penka 2011:66 cites Bosque 1980 for (55)). As noted in the introduction, all speakers of Zulu and Xhosa that we interviewed exhibited this pattern, accepting cross-clausal licensing into a subjunctive complement (see (56)). That Xhosa and

Zulu pattern with negative concord languages in this regard provides additional evidence that our analysis in terms of *uNeg* features is on the right track. We follow Zeijlstra 2008 in assuming that where subjunctives are permeable, it is because they lack the ForceP layer (on which see Rizzi 1997), making their contents more local to negation than the contents of indicative clauses (see (57)).

- (55) **No** dije/noté que Pepe {supiera /*sabia} **nada** [Spanish]
 NEG said/noticed that know.3sg.PST.SUBJ/* know.3sg.PST.IND nothing
 del asunto.
 of.the matter
 ‘I didn’t say/notice that Pepe knew anything about the matter’

- (56) ✓A-ndi-fun-i okokuba u-Sabelo a-bon-e mu-ntu. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-1Sabelo 1SA-eat-SUBJ 1-person
 ‘I don’t want Sabelo to see anybody.’

- (57) a. *...Neg V [_{ForceP} Force ... [_{FinP} Fin [_{TP} ...*uNeg*...]]] *Indicative*
 b. ...Neg V [_{FinP} Fin [_{TP} ...*uNeg*...]] *Subjunctive*

Halpert 2012, 2015 reports that many Zulu speakers in her study accepted sentences in which an indicative boundary intervenes between a [-A] nominal and NEG ((58) from Halpert 2015: 71).

- (58) ✓A-ngi-cabang-i [_{CP} ukuthi u-Sipho u-bon-é muntu/lutho].
 NEG-1SSA-think-FV that 1-1Sipho 1SA-see-CONJ1 1person
 ‘I don’t think that Sipho saw anyone/anything.’

This too is not without precedent for *n*-words and *in years* NPIs. Giannakidou (2000) observes that the clause-mate requirement for licensing of emphatic *n*-words in Greek is occasionally violated when *n*-words appear in the indicative complements of classical neg-raising verbs like ‘think’ and ‘believe.’ This class of verbs has the interesting property that negation of the matrix clause has a reading semantically equivalent to negation of the lower clause (compare (59)a and b). A tradition of syntactic analyses attributes this equivalence to raising of negation out of the embedded clause. Like Greek *n*-words, *in years* NPIs also

these speakers, embedded indicatives are islands for some but not all syntactic relations: perhaps just some that involve A'-elements, under the common assumptions that negation is an operator, and that topicalization is a kind of A'-movement.

2.7 Summary

We have shown in this section that for the speakers in our study, [-A] nominals in negative contexts exhibit a clause-mate locality requirement. They share this aspect of their syntax with negative concord items a.k.a. *n*-words and with strict *in years* type NPIs. Only three [-A] nominals, Zulu *lutho* – ‘nothing’, *ndawo* – ‘no place’, and *muntu* – ‘nobody’, can function as fragment answers the way *n*-words typically can in other languages. For this reason we have proposed that while these three are *n*-words, other [-A] nominals and *in years* NPIs are a class which have *uNeg* features too weak to be the sole overt counterparts to silent negation. In this their *uNeg* features are like non-pro-drop ϕ -agreement.

For the minority of Xhosa speakers who accept [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions, there is no clause-mate restriction. We have proposed that such speakers have access to unstressed, ‘broad’ versions of these NPIs which lack *uNeg* features.

These two non-negative uses of Zulu and Xhosa [-A] nominals are regularly reported in prior literature on the topic such as von Staden 1973 for Zulu, Du Plessis & Visser 1992, Visser 2006, 2008 for Xhosa. As noted in the introduction, several additional uses they describe, such as in future or potential clauses, were not accepted by any of the speakers we consulted. This divergence from our findings might be attributable purely to regional or social variation, but an attractive alternative hypothesis is that change is taking place in the grammar of these expressions. Variation is often a precursor to change, so both might be true. Given that non-negative uses are described in earlier literature and are absent or

restricted in the current study, we can speculate that perhaps at one time [-A] nominals were simply plain, ‘broad’ NPIs, and are becoming progressively more strict. In Xhosa, plain varieties and the stricter *in years* type of [-A] NPIs coexist for some speakers whereas in Zulu, plain [-A] NPIs seem to be gone entirely, at least for our speakers. The three most generic (therefore perhaps the most commonly used) [-A] nominals have completed the process of change by becoming *n*-words. If a linguist checks in 50 years from now, will all [-A] nominals be *n*-words in Xhosa and Zulu? We leave this question to future research.

We turn next to a different set of distributional constraints – ones that we will ultimately argue are not connected with negation but rather with focus features of *n*-words.

3. Four positional constraints and their implications

3.1 Introduction

Both [+A] and [-A] nominals are licit as direct or indirect objects in SVO(O) clauses, as shown in the Xhosa (62) and Zulu (63) ((63) adapted from Halpert 2015:81). Halpert shows that any combination of [-A] and [+A] nominals is possible post-verbally in Zulu SVOO clauses, and we found the same to be true in Xhosa.¹³

(62) A-ndi-fund-is-i ✓ba-ntwana / ✓a-ba-ntwana ✓nto / ✓i-nto.
 NEG-1SSA-learn-CAUS-FV 2-children / 2-2-children 9thing/ 9-9thing
 ‘I don’t teach [any/the children] [anything/something].’

(63) U-Themba a-ka-phek-el-i ✓mu-ntu / ✓u-Sipho ✓nyama / ✓i-nyama.
 1-1Themba NEG-1SSA-cook-APPL-FV 1-person/ 1-1Sipho 9meat/ 9-9meat
 ‘Themba didn’t cook [anybody/Sipho] [any meat/the meat].’

But in several other positions and contexts, [+A] and [-A] forms contrast sharply in their distribution. This section explores four syntactic positions from which [-A] nominals are

¹³ An anonymous reviewer points out that *[Neg...[+A] [-A]] is ruled out for double object constructions in Luganda (Hyman & Katamba 1993). This argues that intervention effects can obstruct licensing in Luganda, in contrast to what we see in Zulu or Xhosa DOCs. It is interesting to note in this connection that in Zulu tri-transitive [S Neg+VOOO] constructions, the middle object MUST be [+A] (Halpert 2015: 85). We leave these intriguing matters to future research.

barred in negative clauses: (i) preverbal subject position, (ii) applied object or causee of a transitive expletive construction (TEC), (iii) direct object position in a mono-transitive TEC, and (iv) right-dislocated position. These are summarized in (14), repeated below.

- (14) *4 taboo locations for [-A] nominals*
 \times [-A] as preverbal subject: \bar{S} in an SVO clause
 \times [-A] as \bar{O} in a mono-transitive VSO construction
 \times [-A] as \bar{O}_1 in a ditransitive VSO₁O₂ construction
 \times [-A] clitic left- or right-dislocated: *cl_i...[-A]_i

Because the facts are quite different for distressed [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions, we defer discussion of these until §6.

3.2 Preverbal subject position

Halpert 2012, 2015 demonstrates that only [+A] nominals can occupy preverbal subject position of Zulu tensed clauses, and this is also true in Xhosa. A lack of c-commanding negation can account for this restriction in simplex clauses like (64) and (65) -- a problem avoided by the low, post-verbal subjects in the expletive constructions (ECs) of (66)a,b and the negative existential strategy in (67).

- (64) * Mu-ntu a-ka-fik-ile. [Zulu]
 1-person NEG-1SA-arrive-DISJ1
 [Intended: Nobody arrived.]
- (65) * Ba-ntwana a-ba-fund-i i-si-Xhosa. [Xhosa]
 2-children NEG-2SA-study-FV 7-7-Xhosa
 [Intended: No children study Xhosa.]
- (66) a. A-ku-fik-anga m-ntu. [Xhosa]
 NEG-17SA-arrive-NEG.PST 1-person
 'Nobody arrived.'
- b. A-ku-fund-anga ba-ntwana. [Zulu]
 NEG-17SA-study-NEG.PST 2-children
 'No children studied.'
- (67) A-ku-kho m-ntu o-fik-ile-yo. [Xhosa]
 NEG-17SA-be-NEG 1-person REL-arrive-DISJ1-REL
 'Nobody arrived' [Lit: there isn't anybody who arrived.]

But Zulu (68) and Xhosa (69) show that the prohibition holds even of embedded subjects of subjunctives. Compare these examples with well-formed (70) and (71), which demonstrate that [-A] direct objects within subjunctive complements are successfully licensed by c-commanding matrix clause negation. The [-A] embedded subjects in (68) and (69) must therefore be ill-formed for some reason not related to negation licensing.

(68) *A-*ngi-fun-i* ukuthi *mu-ntu* a-phek-e i-qanda. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-want.NEG.PST that 1-person 1SA-cook-SUBJ 5-egg
 'I don't want anyone to cook an/the egg.'

(69) A-*ndi-fun-i* okokuba **m-ntu* /✓*u-m-ntu* a-bon-e u-Sabelo. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-person/ 1-1-person 1SA-see-SUBJ 1-1Sabelo
 'I don't want anybody to see Sabelo./I don't want a/the person to see Sabelo.'

(70) A-*ndi-fun-i* okokuba u-Sabelo a-bon-e ✓*m-ntu* /✓*u-m-ntu*. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-1Sabelo 1SA-see-SUBJ 1-person/ 1-1-person
 'I don't want Sabelo to see anybody./I don't want Sabelo to see a/the person.'

(71) A-*ngi-fun-i* ukuthi u-Sipho a-phek-e ✓*qanda*/✓*i-qanda*. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-want-FV that 1-Sipho 1SA-cook-SUBJ 5egg/5-5egg
 'I don't want Sipho to cook any egg./I don't want Sabelo to cook a/the egg.'

English NPIs provide a helpful point of comparison. (72)a versus (72)b show that, like their Xhosa and Zulu counterparts, they require c-commanding negation. But so long as that condition is met they can occupy either subject or object position (see (73)). Thus Xhosa and Zulu [-A] NPIs are subject to a distributional constraint absent for English NPIs.

(72) a. I didn't see anybody.
 b. *Anybody didn't see me.

(73) a. I don't think [she saw anybody].
 b. I don't think [anybody saw her].

3.3 Direct object in a mono-transitive TEC

As previously demonstrated, Xhosa and Zulu allow VS constructions in which SA has default, Class 17 (historically locative) features (see among others Halpert 2012, 2015, and C&M). The constructions are referred to in the literature as expletive constructions (ECs), a

Some speakers accept not just intransitive but also transitive expletive constructions (henceforth TECs) such as the example in (74).

As (74) illustrates, [+A] nominals are licit as the post-verbal subject or object in a mono-transitive TEC, for speakers who accept the construction. (75)a shows that, for these speakers, [-A] nominals are also acceptable as post-verbal subjects. But a [-A] direct object in a mono-transitive TEC is ill-formed (see (75)b). The facts are the same in Xhosa.¹⁵

A-ku-phek-anga mu-ntu i-qanda!
NEG-17SA- cook-NEG.PAST 1-person 5-5egg
'Nobody cooked the/an/any egg!'

*A-ku-phek-anga u-mu-ntu qanda.
NEG-17SA-cook-NEG.PAST 1-1person 5egg
[Intended: Nobody cooked any egg!]

¹⁴ In Xhosa TECs this generalization is very robust. Halpert 2015 argues that vP-internal subjects in Zulu can but need not have focus interpretations, but cannot be topics. There is not much relevant data provided specifically for TECs, so we leave details to future research.

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SVOO clauses allow [-A] direct objects to combine with [+A] indirect objects, and vice versa: the direct and/or indirect object of an SVOO clause can be augmented or augmentless, a point illustrated again in (76)a-c. While these examples are from Xhosa, Halpert’s work illustrates the same patterns for Zulu. Many studies have shown that O₁ of a Bantu double object construction c-commands O₂ (see Marantz 1993, and see Adams 2010 for evidence that this holds in Zulu). Under the hypothesis that the [+A] subject in a case like (75)b somehow rules out a [-A] direct object by intervention, the same would be expected in double object constructions like (76)a where O₁ is [+A] and O₂ is [-A].

- (76) a. U-Sabelo a-ka-nik-é a-ba-ntwana nto. [Xhosa]
 1-1Sabelo NEG-1SA-give-CONJ1 2-2-children 9thing
 ‘Sabelo didn’t give the children anything.’
- b. U-Sabelo a-ka-nik-é ba-ntwana a-ma-qanda.
 1-1Sabelo NEG-1SA-give-CONJ1 2-children 6-6-eggs
 ‘Sabelo didn’t give any children (the) eggs.’
- c. U-Sabelo a-ka-nik-é ba-ntwana nto.
 1-1Sabelo NEG-1SA-give-CONJ1 2-children 9thing
 ‘Sabelo didn’t give any children anything.’

There is further evidence: in a TEC, Halpert 2012, 2015 shows that the addition of an applied object or causee has the surprising effect of making a [-A] direct object possible.

The added argument must be [+A], as we will see in §3.4.

- (77) a. *A-ku-thum-anga u-mama lu-tho! [Zulu]
 NEG-17SA- send-NEG.PAST 1-1mother 11-thing
 [Intended: Mother didn’t send anything!]
- b. A-ku-thum-el-anga u-mama i-zi-ngane lu-tho!
 NEG-17SA- send-APPL-NEG.PAST 1-1mother 10-10-child 11-thing
 ‘Mother didn’t send the children anything!’

We provide an account for this pattern in §5.4. For now, we conclude that the ill-formedness of a [-A] direct object in a mono-transitive TEC does not reduce to any general “connectedness” or concord requirement holding between the post-verbal [-A] arguments.

3.4 [-A] applied or causee object in a TEC

§3.3 showed that applied objects and causees are possible in TECs, though having more than 2 post-verbal arguments degrades the outcome, in some speakers' judgments. There is a sharp contrast however depending on the [+/-A] status of the nominals. In particular, a [-A] nominal can never be the applied object or causee in a TEC in either Zulu or Xhosa. The contrasts in Zulu (78) and (79) illustrate this. The Xhosa pattern is identical.

- (78) a. A-ku-fund-is-anga u-Sipho a-ma-ntombazane! [Zulu]
 NEG-17SA-learn- CAUS-NEG.PAST 1-1Sabelo 6-6-girl
 'Sipho didn't teach (the) girls!'
- b. *A-ku-fund-is-anga u-Sipho ma-ntombazane!
 NEG-17SA-learn- CAUS-NEG.PAST 1-1Sabelo 6-girl
 [Intended: Sipho didn't teach any girls!]
- (79) a. A-ku-thum-el-anga u-mama i-zi-ngane i-mali! [Zulu]
 NEG-17SA- send-APPL- NEG.PAST 1-1mother 10-10-child 9-9money
 'Mother didn't send (the) children (the) money!'
- b. *A-ku-thum-el-anga (u-)mama zi-ngane (i-)mali!
 NEG-17SA- send-APPL- NEG.PAST (1-)1mother 10-child 9-9money
 [Intended: Mother didn't send any children (any) money!]

3.5 A dislocation asymmetry

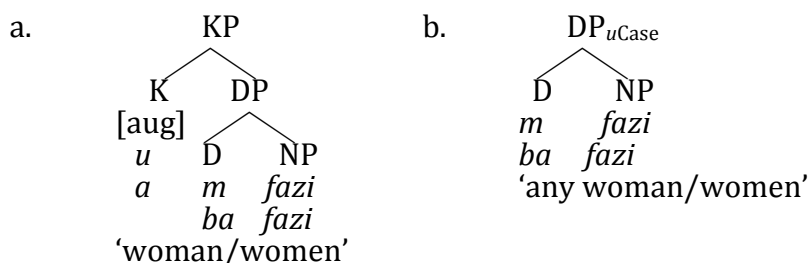
Adams 2010 and Halpert 2012, 2015 point out that only [+A] nominals can clitic right-dislocate in Zulu (see (80) from Halpert 2015:75). This is true also in Xhosa: [-A] nominals cannot undergo clitic dislocation in either direction (see (81) and (82)).

- (80) A-ngi-m-bon-i]_{VP} *mu-ntu /u-mu-ntu. [Zulu]
 NEG-1SSA-3SOM-see-FV 1-person/1-1-person
 'I don't see anybody.'
- (81) A-ndi-m-bon-i]_{VP} *m-ntu /u-m-ntu. [Xhosa]
 NEG-1SSA-3SOM-see-FV 1-person/1-1-person
 'I don't see anybody.'
- (82) *M-ntu, a-ndi-(m)-bon-i. [Xhosa]
 1-person NEG-1SSA-(3SOM)-see-FV
 [Intended: Anybody/nobody, I didn't see (him).]

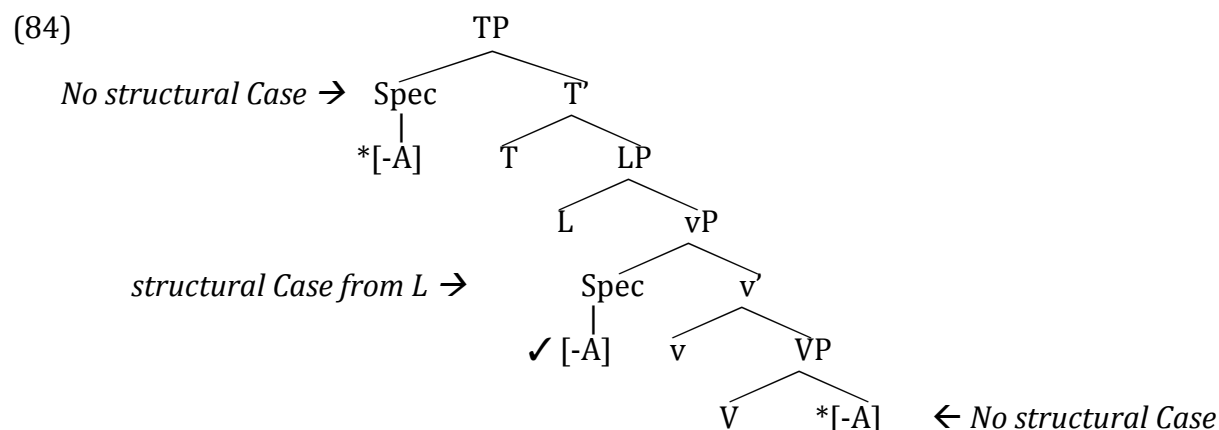
3.6 Interim summary and sketch of Halpert's approach

This section has demonstrated that some restrictions on the distribution of [-A] NPIs in Xhosa and Zulu distinguish them from their [+A] counterparts, as well as from English NPIs. We noted in the introduction that to account for this pattern, Halpert 2012, 2015 proposes that [-A] nominals differ from their [+A] counterparts in that they require Case licensing. In Halpert's view, the augment is an intrinsic Case-licenser. Nominals that lack it are restricted to positions where they can obtain structural Case values (see (15), repeated below as (83)).

(83) Halpert 2012, 2015: a Zulu nominal without the augment is a DP and needs structural Case-licensing. Augmented nominals are intrinsically Cased KPs.



The distribution of available structural Cases in Zulu under Halpert's analysis is unusual from a cross-linguistic standpoint: there is never Case-valuation associated with Spec, TP, that is, no Case from T, and v^* does not value Case either. On the other hand, a mid-level licenser L can value the Case of the highest DP that surfaces internal to vP :



Because Case is unavailable for occupants of Spec, TP, only [+A] nominals can ever appear there. Similarly for direct object position, unless the external argument raises out of the way in an SVO clause, permitting the object to be licensed by L. And because Case is licensed late, after movement, dislocated elements cannot “take it with them” and hence have to bear augments, since dislocated positions do not have Case licensors.

There are two major reasons why we will seek an alternative to Halpert’s account. First, [+A] DPs containing the modifier *kuphela* – ‘only’ exhibit a pattern of distribution exactly like that of [-A] nominals, and wh-phrases, both [+A] and [-A] have a near-identical pattern. Since Halpert’s approach is designed to apply to all and only [-A] nominals it cannot account for this.

Second, C&M argue from facts of experiencer verbs in ECs that [+/-A] nominals in Xhosa have Case properties that are the inverse of those proposed in Halpert’s analysis: [+A] nominals are full DPs with *uCase* features requiring values, in Carstens & Mletshe’s view, while [-A] nominals can appear in certain Caseless positions (as Baker 2003 proposes for Kinande).

While these findings are inconsistent with Halpert’s Case-theoretic account of the 4 taboo locations for [-A] nominals in the two languages, there is a feature that emerges to fit the bill: focus. In C&M, [+/-focus] is associated with certain structural positions, much like the morpho-syntactic feature of abstract Case. Zeller 2008 argues that both wh-phrases and DPs containing *kuphela* – ‘only’ cannot occupy preverbal subject position and clitic-dislocated positions because these positions are anti-focus. And within TECs, we will see that the positions that [-A] nominals, wh-words and *kuphela*-DPs cannot occupy are ones

analyzed by C&M as marked with a [-focus] feature. In §5 we accordingly propose a unified account in terms of the topographies of focus developed in Zeller 2008 and C&M.

4 [+A] expressions sharing distributional constraints with [-A] nominals

4.1 Overview of *kuphela* – ‘only’

Zulu and Xhosa have an adnominal modifier *kuphela* – ‘only’ whose distribution has been explored in previous Zulu syntax literature including Buell 2008 and Zeller 2008. In both languages adnominal *kuphela* can modify direct objects ((85)a), applied objects ((85)b), causees ((85)c), and clefted expressions ((85)d) in SVO(O) clauses. These examples show that *kuphela* follows the noun and any other modifiers within a DP. Following Tancredi 1990, Erlewine 2014 and many others, we assume that ‘only’ (and its counterparts in other languages) must c-command in surface syntax the expression that it is semantically associated with. As illustrated in (86), we analyze *kuphela* as DP-adjoined, thus scoping over all contents of the DP and nothing else.

- (85) a. U-Sindiswa u-phek-é [i-mi-funo **kuphela**]. [Xhosa & Zulu]
 1-1Sindiswa 1SA-cooked-CONJ1 4-4-vegetables **only**
 ‘Sindiswa cooked only vegetables.’
- b. U-Sindiswa u-phek-el-é [u-Sabelo **kuphela**] i-mi-funo.
 1-1Sindiswa 1SA-cooked-APPL-CONJ1 1-1Sabelo **only** 4-4-vegetables
 ‘Sindiswa cooked vegetables only for Sabelo.’
- c. U-Sindiswa u-fund-is-é [a-ba-ntwana **kuphela**] i-si-Xhosa.
 1-1Sindiswa 1SA-study-CAUS-CONJ1 2-2-children **only** 7-7-Xhosa
 ‘Sindiswa taught only the children Xhosa.’
- d. Y- [i-ndoda e-nde **kuphela**] e-phek-é i-mi-funo.
 COP-9-9man 9-tall **only** REL-cook- CONJ1 4-4-vegetables
 ‘It was only the tall man who cooked vegetables.’

- (86)
- ```

graph TD
 DP1[DP] --- DP2[DP]
 DP1 --- kuphela[kuphela]
 DP2 --- uSabelo[u-Sabelo]

```

only
- adnominal *kuphela*

## 4.2 Restrictions on the location of *kuphela*: the same 4 taboo locations

It is well-established that a DP containing *kuphela* – ‘only’ cannot occupy preverbal subject position in Zulu (see (87) from Zeller 2008; see also Buell 2008). If such a DP is the logical subject of a clause it must be clefted or appear post-verbally in an EC. (88) shows the identical pattern for Xhosa.

- (87) a. \*[U-John **kuphela**] u-fik-ile. [Zulu]  
           1-1John only       1SA-arrive-DISJ1  
           [Intended: Only John arrived.]
- b. ✓Ku-fik-é [u-John **kuphela**].  
           17SA-arrive-CONJ1   1-1John only  
           ‘Only John arrived.’
- c. ✓Ng-[u-John **kuphela**] o-fik-ile.  
           COP-1-1John only       REL-arrive-DISJ1  
           ‘It’s only John who arrived.’
- (88) a. \*[U-Sindiswa **kuphela**] u-cul-a a-ma-culo. [Xhosa]  
           1-1Sindiswa only       1SA-sing-FV   6-6-songs  
           [Intended: Only Sindiswa sang songs.]
- b. ✓Ku-cul-a [u-Sindiswa **kuphela**] a-ma-culo.  
           17SA-sing-FV   1-1Sindiswa only       6-6-songs  
           ‘Only Sindiswa sings songs.’
- c. ✓Ng- [u-Sindiswa **kuphela**] o-cul-a a-ma-culo.  
           COP-1-1Sindiswa only       REL-sing-FV   6-6-songs  
           ‘It is only Sindiswa who sings songs.’

In this the distribution of *kuphela*-DPs perfectly matches that of [-A] nominals. And as is true of [-A] nominals, the ban on *kuphela*-modified DP subjects holds in embedded clauses:

- (89) \*U-Loyiso u-th-é (okokuba) [u-Sabelo **kuphela**] u-fik-ile. [Xhosa]  
           1-1Loyiso 1SA-say-CONJ1 (that)   1-1Sabelo only       1SA-arrive-DISJ1  
           [Intended: Loyiso said that only Sabelo arrived.]

We found that DPs containing *kuphela* share all the other distributional constraints that characterize [-A] nominals as well. (90) (from Buell 2008:41) shows that they cannot be right-dislocated.

- (90) \*Ngi-m-bon-ile]<sub>VP</sub> [u-Sipho **kuphela**]. [Zulu]  
 1sSA-3sOM-see-DISJ 1-1Sipho only  
 [Intended: I saw only Sipho.]

DPs containing *kuphela* cannot appear as applied objects or causees within TECs.

- (91) \*Ku-fund-is-a u-Sipho [a-ma-ntombazane **ku-phela**] i-si-Xhosa. [Xhosa]  
 17SA-learn-CAUS-FV 1-1Sipho 6-6-girl only 7-7-Xhosa  
 [Intended: SIPHO teaches only the girls Xhosa.]

- (92) \*Ku-thum-el-é u-mama [i-zi-ngane **kuphela**] i-mali.  
 17SA- send-APPL-CONJ1 1-1mother 10-10-child only 9-9money  
 [Intended: MOTHER sent only the children money.]

And (93) shows that a *kuphela*-DP cannot be direct object in a monotransitive TEC in Zulu:

- (93) \*Ku-theng-é u-Sindiswa [a-ma-qanda **kuphela**]. [Zulu]  
 17SA-buy- CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6-6-eggs only  
 [Intended: Sindiswa bought only eggs.]

Some Xhosa speakers accept right-edge *kuphela* with semantic association to the preceding direct object, but there is reason to believe that this is a construal available for an adverbial *kuphela* in Xhosa, adjoined to TP or vP as in (95): it is one among a family of available readings (the semantic associate of ‘only’ is italicized).<sup>16</sup>

- (94) Ku-theng-é u-Sindiswa a-ma-qanda **kuphela**. [Xhosa]  
 17SA-buy- CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6-6-eggs only  
 a. ‘All that happened was *SINDISWA* *bought eggs*.’  
 b. ‘Only *SINDISWA* bought eggs.’  
 c. ‘*SINDISWA* bought only *eggs*.’  
 d. ‘*SINDISWA* only *bought eggs*.’ (she didn’t cook them)  
 e. ‘*SINDISWA* only *bought eggs*.’ (she didn’t get anything else done)

- (95) [TP [T<sup>+</sup> buy+PST ... [vP Sindiswa <v> [vP <V> eggs ]] **kuphela** ]]

<sup>16</sup> Xhosa speakers also accept left-edge *kuphela* with comparable scope ambiguities, and clause-medial *kuphela* with scope over VP and its contents. Anticipating §5, the object construal for *kuphela* in (94) suggests that the expression with which adverbial *kuphela* is semantically associated need not have a [+focus] feature of its own, unlike in many languages (see among other Erlewine 2014 on focus and ‘only’). We leave exploration of this interesting phenomenon and adverbial *kuphela* more generally to future research.

(96) provides confirmation: an adjunct can separate *kuphela* from the direct object, and the construal is still available, as are all the other readings that might be expected for an adverbial ‘only’ adjoined at a high level in the clause.

- (96) [TP Ku-theng-é u-Sindiswa a-ma-qanda izolo ] **kuphela**. [Xhosa]  
 17SA-buy- CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6-6-eggs yesterday only
- a. ‘All that happened was *SINDISWA* bought eggs yesterday.’  
 b. ‘Only *SINDISWA* bought eggs yesterday.’  
 c. ‘*SINDISWA* bought only eggs yesterday.’  
 d. ‘*SINDISWA* only bought eggs yesterday.’ (she didn’t cook them)  
 e. ‘*SINDISWA* only bought eggs.’ (she didn’t get anything else done)  
 f. ‘*SINDISWA* bought eggs only yesterday.’ (not any other day)

Summing up, [+A] nominals containing the adnominal modifier *kuphela* – ‘only’ are unacceptable in the same positions where [-A] nominals are unacceptable. An apparent exception for direct objects in Xhosa TECs actually involves not adnominal *kuphela* but a right-edge adverbial *kuphela*.

### 4.3 Wh-phrases and the 4 taboo locations

Sabel & Zeller 2006, Zeller 2008 show that wh-phrases cannot appear in Zulu preverbal subject position whether or not they bear an augment (see (97)). Xhosa wh-phrases are barred from this position as well.

- (97) \***U-bani/bani** u-fik-ile? [Zulu]  
 1-1who/1who 1SA-arrive-DIJS1  
 [Intended: ‘Who arrived?’]

Our investigation revealed that a wh-word as applied or causee argument in a TEC is quite unacceptable in both languages as well (see the Xhosa (98)a,b).

- (98) a. \*Ku-thum-el-é u-Sindiswa **bani** i-i-ncwadi? [Xhosa]  
 17SA-send-APPL-CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 1who 10-10-books  
 [Intended: Who did SINDISWA send books to?]
- b. \*Ku-fund-is-é u-Loyiso **bani** i-si-Xhosa?  
 17SA-study-CAUS-CONJ1 1-1Loyiso 1who 7-7-Xhosa  
 [Intended: Who did LOYISO teach Xhosa to?]

Xhosa does not allow [+A] wh-phrases outside of clefts so we cannot directly compare their distribution to that of [-A] wh-phrases in many cases. But in Zulu, [+A] wh-phrases can appear wherever [-A] wh-phrases can, though they have a specific, d-linked kind of reading as we mentioned in §1.2. Just like their [-A] counterparts in both Zulu and Xhosa, these wh-phrases are unacceptable as applied objects or causees in TECs (see (99)).

- (99) a. \*Ku-thum-el-é                      u-Sindiswa    **(u-)bani** i-zi-ncwadi?                      [Zulu]  
           17SA-send-APPL-CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa (1-)1who 10-10-books  
           [Intended: Who did Sindiswa send books to?]
- b. \*Ku-fund-is-é                      u-Loyiso    **(u-)bani** i-si-Xhosa?  
           17SA-study-CAUS-CONJ1 1-1Loyiso (1-)1who 7-7-Xhosa  
           [Intended: Who did Loyiso teach Xhosa to?]

Neither a [-A] nor a [+A] wh-phrase can be clitic-dislocated in either language:

- (100) \*U-**m-bon-ile**]<sub>VP</sub>                      **(u-)bani**?                      [Zulu]  
           2sSA-3sOM-see-DISJ (1-)who  
           ‘Who did you see?’

Thus far, the distribution of [-A] nominals, DPs containing *kuphela* – ‘only’ and wh-phrases are exactly alike with respect to the four taboo locations. But a difference emerges: speakers of both languages are divided on the status of wh-words as direct objects in monotransitive TECs. Some reject them completely, while others find them acceptable though report them to be rather emphatic and echo-like.

- (101) a. ??Ku-phek-é                      u-Sindiswa    **ntoni**?                      [Xhosa]  
           17SA-cook- CONJ1    1-1Sindiswa 9what  
           ‘WHAT did Sindiswa cook?’
- b. ??Ku-phek-é    u-Sindiswa    **i-ni**?                      [Zulu]  
           17SA-sing-FV 1-1Sindiswa    9-9what  
           ‘WHAT EXACTLY did Sindiswa cook?’
- c. ??Ku-qabul-a    u-Simiso    **bani /u-bani**?                      [Zulu]  
           17SA-kiss-FV 1-1Simiso 1who/1-1who  
           ‘WHO is Simiso kissing?’

An anonymous reviewer suggests that echo questions might not have focus features. S/he points out that echo questions have properties distinct from true questions, among them an

absence of superiority effects such that *What did WHO buy?* is acceptable. If we relate the acceptability of direct object *wh*- in TECs like (101) to special properties of echo questions, the analytical burden shifts to explaining why echo question interpretations are not possible for *wh*-questions in preverbal subject, applied object, or causee positions. Lacking any insight on these points, we leave them to future research.

#### 4.4 Summary

We have shown that there is near-perfect alignment in the distribution of augmentless nominals, *wh*-phrases, and DPs containing *kuphela* – ‘only’. Table 2 summarizes the results.

**Table 2:** *Summary of results on the 4 taboo locations*

| <i>Expression type</i>        | <i>Spec, TP</i> | <i>Clitic-dislocated</i> | <i>IO in ditrans TEC</i> | <i>DO in TEC</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <i>[-A]</i> NPI               | ✗               | ✗                        | ✗                        | ✗                |
| <i>[+A]</i> ‘only’ DP         | ✗               | ✗                        | ✗                        | ✗                |
| <i>[+/-A]</i> <i>wh</i> -word | ✗               | ✗                        | ✗                        | ??               |

Despite some puzzling inconsistency in judgments on direct object *wh*- in TECs, these results seem to us highly significant.

There is one systematic difference between *[+A]* and *[-A]* nominals that we have not yet explicitly addressed: only *[+A]* nominals are cleftable, and this includes *[+A]* *wh*-phrases (Sabel & Zeller 2006), and those containing *kuphela* (see (87)c). While Halpert argues that *[-A]* nominals are barred from clefts because of a lack of Case-licensing there, we assume instead that bare NPs in general cannot be clefted.<sup>17</sup>

We conclude that a unified account of the facts in Table 2 is highly desirable. Since DPs containing *kuphela* - ‘only’ have augments, and *wh*-phrases with and without augments pattern alike, a successful unified account cannot be augment-related.

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<sup>17</sup> Stated more neutrally, nominal expressions below a certain size < DP resist clefting; see note 7.

## 5. Analysis: focus and anti-focus

### 5.1 Introduction

In this section we argue that stressed [-A] nominals, wh-phrases, and DPs containing *kuphela* have [+focus] features.<sup>18</sup> No expression can bear conflicting focus values:

(102) \*XP[+focus][ -focus]

Cross-linguistically, it is well-established that negative concord items, wh-phrases, and expressions associated with ‘only’ bear focus. Our account therefore builds on independently motivated properties of the three classes of expressions. We will provide independent evidence that the positions they cannot occupy in Zulu and Xhosa are [-focus].

### 5.2 Preverbal subject position

As we have already noted, it is well-established that preverbal subject position is not a licit site for a wh-phrase in many Bantu languages (see Sabel & Zeller 2006, Zeller 2008, Zerbian 2006 among many others) (see (103)a). Instead, wh-subjects can be clefted or appear vP-internally in an EC ((103)b,c).

- (103) a. \*U-bani/bani u-fik-ile? [Zulu]  
1-1who/1who 1SA-arrive-DISJ1  
[Intended: ‘Who arrived?’]
- b. Ku-fik-é (u-)bani?  
17SA-arrive-CONJ1 1-1who  
‘Who arrived?’
- c. Ng’u-bani o-fik-ile?  
COP-1-1who REL-arrive-DISJ1  
‘Who arrived?’

Sabel & Zeller argue that Zulu wh-phrases are disallowed in Spec, TP due to a general constraint “that bans focused constituents (i.e. those with a [+focus] feature) from appearing in [preverbal] subject position.”

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<sup>18</sup> See also Adams 2010 for an independent proposal that [-A] NPIs in Zulu parallel wh-phrases in having [+focus] features. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.



Zeller 2008 proposes that this is also the reason why DPs containing adnominal *kuphela* – ‘only’ cannot appear in preverbal subject position in Zulu either: *kuphela* makes them [+focus] and hence such DPs are barred from a [-focus] position.

It has been noted in the literature on *n*-words that they often bear focus particles, such as *mo* in Japanese and *to* on Korean *n*-words (see (104) from Watanabe 2004 and Shimoyama 2011 on Japanese, Sells 2006, Giannakidou & Yoon to appear on Korean, and Giannakidou & Zeijlstra 2014 for discussion).

- |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>(104) John-wa nani-<b>mo</b> tabe-nak-atta.<br/>             John-TOP what-<b>MO</b> eat-NEG-PAST<br/>             ‘John didn’t eat anything.’</p> | <p>[Japanese; Watanabe 2004]<br/> <i>N-word is wh+focus particle</i></p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Given this, the assumption that Spec, TP cannot host focal material in Xhosa and Zulu can account for the fact all three of these classes of expressions – [-A] nominals, wh-phrases, and *kuphela*-DPs – share an important constraint on their distribution.

By way of explanation for the restrictions on Spec, TP, Sabel & Zeller (2006) propose that Zulu preverbal wh-phrases must surface in Spec of a FocusP between vP and TP (the copula of (103)c is in T, and the apparent relative morphology better viewed as extraction morphology). In a reanalysis, Zeller 2008 proposes that subject agreement morphology is clitic doubling, which cross-linguistically is restricted to topic material (see below).

It is outside the scope of this paper to determine the best analysis of why Spec, TP in Xhosa and Zulu should be anti-focus. Any workable approach to the phenomenon can be extended to stressed [-A] NPIs.

### 5.3 Clitic-doubling and anti-focus

Zeller 2008 draws a parallel between the restriction on preverbal subject position in Bantu languages and clitic-doubling in Albanian and Greek as analyzed in Kallulli 2000. Kallulli

shows that a clitic-doubled object must be [-focus], ruling out clitic-doubling of contrasted material and wh-objects (Albanian (105) and (106) from Kallulli 2000: 220 & 222).

(105) Pap-a (\*e) vizitoi madje Tiranë-n (jo vetëm Shkodrën). [Albanian]  
 pope-the CL visited even Tirana-the not only Shkodra  
 'The pope visited even Tirana (not only Shkodra).'

(106) Kë/çfarë (\*e) pe?  
 who/what.ACC CL saw.you  
 'Who/what did you see?'

Assuming *kuphela*-DPs, wh-phrases, and [-A] nominals are [+focus] in Zulu and Xhosa, it follows automatically that they cannot be clitic-right-dislocated as we saw in §3.5.

#### 5.4 Focus in TECs

The focus-based account of these properties meshes strikingly with an analysis of nominal licensing in Xhosa ECs developed in C&M. Adopting their proposals will permit us to explain the remaining asymmetries in the distribution of [-A] NPIs, wh-phrases and *kuphela*-DPs.

We have noted that subjects of ECs can have focus readings in Xhosa and Zulu, and that word order in ECs is rigidly VS(O), indicating a low subject position in ECs (see (107)).

(107) Ku-lil-é u-m-ntwana. [Xhosa]  
 17SA-cry-CONJ1 1-1-child  
 R#1: 'The child cried.'  
 R#2: 'It was the child who cried.'

Cheng & Downing 2012 propose an in situ analysis for post-verbal focus in [SV...] clauses that can extend easily to simple VS intransitives like (107). In their account, a single expression in an otherwise empty vP can be given a focus interpretation. Evidence that non-focused material is vP-external includes word order, clitic doubling, and phonological phrasing (prosodic breaks indicated by right parentheses). The representation for the wh-

question (Q) in (108) is shown in (109). (110) shows that Xhosa exhibits a suggestively similar pattern of post-verbal focus in [SV...] clauses.

(108) *Focused or questioned non-subjects are immediately post-verbal; all else is vP-external (right-dislocated internal arguments are doubled by object markers on the verb)*

Q: (u-**wa**-thwéle ngâ:n') a-má-tha:nga)? [Zulu: Cheng & Downing 2012]  
 2sSA-6OM-carry how 6-6-pumpkin  
 'How are you carrying the pumpkins?'

A: (Si-**wa**-thwéle ngó-bhasikí:d') a-má-tha:nga).  
 1plsA-6OM-carry with-1a-basket 6-6-pumpkin  
 'We are carrying the pumpkins in a basket.'

(109) *Immediately post-verbal wh- in a Zulu [SV...] clause: other contents of vP removed*

[<sub>TP</sub> SU **cl**+v+V+T ... [<sub>vP</sub> [<sub>vP</sub> <v>...<V>...<pumpkins>... *how* ] **pumpkins** ]]

(110) U-Sipho u-**yi**-phek-é nini i-nkuku e-m-zinini w-akho? [Xhosa]  
 1-1Sipho 1SA-9OM-cook-CONJ1 **when** 9-chicken LOC.3.house 3-your  
 'When did Sipho cook chicken at your house?'

While this approach works fine for subject focus in an intransitive VS construction like (107), it cannot handle focus in VSO TECs like (111) because objects cannot be clitic doubled in TECs, and hence appear to be obligatorily vP-internal (see (112)). An account is also needed for the fact that in Xhosa TECs like (111), the subject focus reading is obligatory.

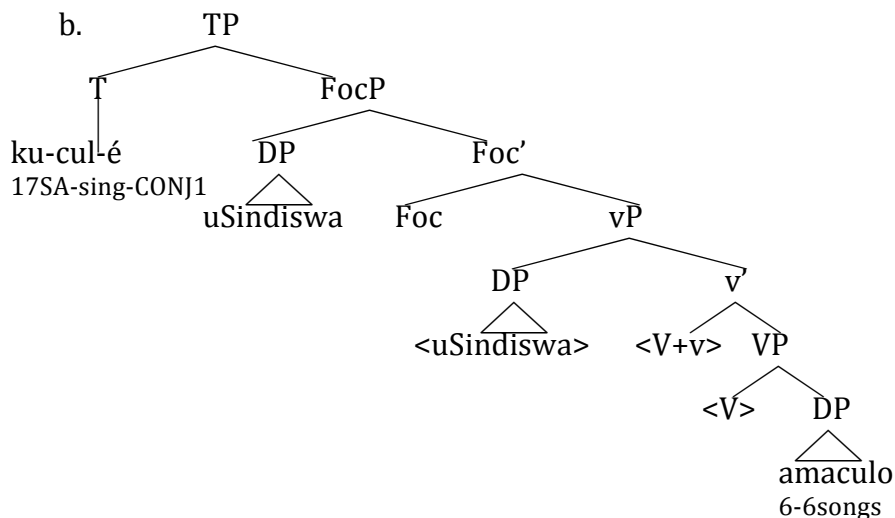
(111) Ku-cul-é u-Sindiswa a-ma-culo. [Xhosa]  
 17SA-sing-CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6-6-songs  
 'SINDISWA sang songs.' (Cannot answer, "What happened?")

(112) \*Ku-**wa**-cul-a (a-ma-culo) u-Sindiswa (a-ma-culo).  
 17SA-6OM-sing-FV (6-6-songs) 1-1Sindiswa (6-6-songs)  
 [Intended: Sindiswa sings them/Sindiswa sings songs.] (out on any construal)

C&M accordingly advocate a different approach to post-verbal focus in TECs. They propose that a FocusP can be generated between vP and TP in Xhosa. In line with common prohibitions on both subject and object remaining vP-internal (see Alexiadou &

Anagnostopoulou 2001 among others) they argue that the subject focus reading in TECs is due to raising of the TEC subject to Spec, FocusP:<sup>19</sup>

- (113) a. Ku-cul-é                      u-Sindiswa                      a-ma-culo.                      [Xhosa]  
                  17SA-sing-CONJ1   1-1Sindiswa                      6-6-songs  
                  ‘SINDISWA sang songs.’                      (Cannot answer, “What happened?”)



C&M discuss a number of potential motivations for this forced raising in Xhosa including linearization issues (Richards 2010), labeling (Chomsky 2013), and Case-theoretic problems (Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2001). What matters for present purposes is their proposal that in a TEC, when the subject raises to Spec, Focus and acquires a [+focus] value, the argument below it becomes [-focus]. C&M attribute this to Agree relations between the Focus head and the two post-verbal arguments ((114)= C&M's (10)):<sup>20</sup>

(114) *The Focus head probes subject and object, conferring [+/-focus] features:*

- a. [FocP SU<sub>[+Foc]</sub> [Foc' Foc [vP <SU> [v' v [VP V OB ]]]]]
- 
- A bracket connects the 'Foc' head in the Foc' projection to the 'SU' (subject) in the Spec of FocP, indicating an Agree relation.

<sup>19</sup> To unify the two approaches C&M suggest that in [SV...] clauses with post-verbal focus, the focus head is involved but has no edge feature and assigns [+Focus] to the vP which percolates to its single occupant. If Foc had an edge feature in an [SV...] clause, the subject would have to pass through its Spec en route to Spec, TP.

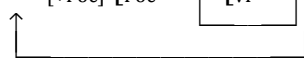
<sup>20</sup> C&M's Agree approach is connected with their account of Case in TECs and experiencer verbs. Apart from a short summary of the facts in §5.5, this lies outside our paper's scope.

- b.  $[_{FocP} SU_{[+Foc]} [_{Foc'} Foc [_{VP} <SU> [_{v'} v [_{VP} V OB_{[-Foc]} ]]]]]]$

An alternative might be to suppose that material following a [+focus] constituent has to be destressed and this gives rise to the [-focus] interpretation (thanks to Julie Anne Legate for this suggestion). In either case, the outcome is that if a [+focus] expression appears in the direct object position of a mono-transitive TEC, a feature-clash arises, violating (102). This accounts for the impossibility of *wh*-phrases, [-A] nominals, and DPs containing *kuphela* in this position.

In a TEC containing an applied object or causee, we propose that this argument, being directly below the external argument, is the one that receives the [-focus] interpretation. It follows that [-A] nominals, *wh*-phrases, and *kuphela*-DPs cannot occupy this location in a TEC (we illustrate with a *kuphela*-DP in (115)a, and with a schematic representation of C&M's approach in (115)b,c). On the other hand, the direct object is not [-focus]-marked by the Focus head in this case. As a result, it can licitly be one of the [+focus] expressions (see (115)d,e):

- (115) a. \*Ku-thum-el-é                      u-mama    [i-zi-ngane    **kuphela**] i-mali.                      [Zulu]  
           17SA- send-APPL-CONJ1    1-1mother 10-10-child    only            9-9money  
           [Intended: MOTHER sent only the children money.]

- b.  $[_{FocP} SU_{[+Foc]} [_{Foc'} Foc [_{VP} <SU> [_{v'} v [_{AppIP} IO [_{Appl} [V OB]]]]]]]]]$
- 

- c.  $[_{FocP} SU_{[+Foc]} [_{Foc'} Foc [_{VP} <SU> [_{v'} v [_{AppIP} IO_{[-Foc]} [_{Appl} [V OB]]]]]]]]]$

- d. ✓A-ku-thum-el-anga                      u-mama    i-zi-ngane    [ i-mali            **kuphela**]  
           NEG-17SA- send-APPL-NEG.PST 1-1mother 10-10-child    9-9money    only  
           'MOTHER didn't send the children only money!'

- e. ✓A-ku-thum-el-anga                      u-mama    i-zi-ngane    lu-tho!  
           NEG-17SA- send-APPL- NEG.PST 1-1mother 10-10-child    11-thing  
           'MOTHER didn't send the children anything!'

## 5.5 Summary and a note on Case

We have adopted independently motivated proposals that focused material cannot appear in preverbal subject position, clitic-dislocated positions, or as the highest internal argument in a Xhosa or Zulu TEC, because these positions have [-focus] features. It is also independently motivated that expressions modified by ‘only,’ negative concord items, and wh-phrases have [+focus] features. Together these factors yield a unified account of the distribution in Xhosa and Zulu of [-A] nominals, [+A] DPs modified by *kuphela*, and wh-phrases. The analysis requires no reference to Case.

It is not our intention to suggest that Case plays no role in the grammar of Xhosa or Zulu. C&M argue that a verb class asymmetry with respect to Xhosa ECs requires a Case-theoretic account. In particular, experiencer verbs are barred from participation in ECs if they have two nominal arguments (see (116)a,b,c versus (116)d,e,f).<sup>21, 22</sup> Of (116)a-c, only (116)a is predicted to be ill-formed by the proposals we have presented so far, since it contains a [-A] nominal in the [-focus] direct object position of a TEC. (116)b,c contrast strikingly with the facts of transitive and agentive verbs in TECs that we have considered in this paper. Our preliminary research suggests that Zulu experiencer verbs pattern much like their Xhosa counterparts in (116).

(116) *Experiencer verb in a TEC* [Xhosa]

- a. \*A-ku-bon-anga      u-Loyiso      n-to.  
      NEG-17SA-see-NEG.PST   1-1Loyiso   9-9bird  
      [Intended: LOYISO didn’t see anything]

<sup>21</sup> The Xhosa loophole mentioned in note 15 applies here too, in that for some speakers, if both arguments in a negative TEC are [-A] the result is well-formed. For space reasons we continue to leave this aside.

<sup>22</sup> Like other [+A] nominal expressions, arguments of experiencer verbs can be given focus by clefting:

- (i) Ng-u-m-fazi      o-w-a-bon-a      i-ntaka.      [Xhosa]  
      1COP-1-1-woman 1REL-1SA-PST-see-FV 9-9bird  
      ‘It was the woman who saw the bird.’

- b. \*Kw-a-bon-a                      u-m-fazi                      i-ntaka.  
17SA-CONJ2-see-FV      1-1-woman      9-9bird  
[Intended: THE WOMAN saw the bird]
- c. \*A-ku-bon-anga                      m-ntu                      i-ntaka.  
NEG-17SA-see-NEG.PST      1-person                      9-9bird  
[Intended: NOBODY saw the bird]
- d. Ku-bon-é                      u-gqirha      [<sub>CP</sub> ukuba u-m-ntwana      u-ya-gula].  
17SA-see-CONJ1      1-1doctor      that      1-1-child                      1SA-DISJ2-be.sick  
‘The doctor saw that the child was sick.’
- e. A-ku-bon-anga                      m-ntu      [<sub>CP</sub> ukuba u-m-ntwana      u-ya-gula].  
NEG-17SA-see- NEG.PST      1-1doctor      that      1-1-child                      1SA-DISJ2-be.sick  
‘Nobody saw that the child was sick.’
- f. A-ku-bon-w-anga                      ntaka/i-ntaka.  
NEG-17SA-see-PASS- NEG.PST      9bird/9-9bird  
‘A/the bird wasn’t seen.’

C&M relate this pattern to the fact that nominal arguments of experiencer verbs bear inherent Cases in many languages (see (117), from Bhatt 2003) and are, for Case-theoretic reasons, barred from TECs in Ukrainian as well (see (118)a vs. (118)b, from Lavine 2010). C&M argue that inherent Cases borne by nominal arguments of Xhosa experiencer verbs prohibit them from interacting with the Focus head because it confers Cases linked to the [+/-focus] values it assigns, and an expression can bear only one semantically linked Case. This precludes the appearance of experiencer verbs with two nominal arguments in TECs.

- (117) a. Ti-la rag ala. [Marathi] b. Hamraa ii naa miilal.[Bhojpuri]  
 she-Dat anger came I-Gen.Obl this not find  
 'She got angry' 'I didn't find it'
- (118) a.\*Ivana bulo zdyvovano blyskavkoju. b. Kulju rozirvano evjaxom.  
 Ivan.acc was surprised lightening.instr balloon.acc pierced nail.instr  
 'Ivan was surprised by lightening' 'The balloon was pierced by a nail'

But details and further consideration lie outside the scope of this paper. Having argued that [-A] nominals have no special Case-licensing needs, we wish mainly to avoid the impression that we reject a role for Case in Xhosa and Zulu grammar. Absent Case morphology and some familiar diagnostic properties that characterize Case in well-studied languages, Bantu

languages present Case-theoretic puzzles that cannot be resolved here. For varying opinions and approaches see among others C&M, Halpert 2012 and 2015, Harford Perez 1985, Diercks 2012, van der Wal to appear, and van der Wal & Sheehan 2015.

## 6. Destressed [-A] nominals in conditionals and questions

In the interests of full disclosure we end this article by describing the behavior of destressed [-A] nominals in TECs within conditionals and questions, which is a little different from the behavior of stressed [-A] forms in negative contexts.

Recall that some Xhosa speakers permit destressed [-A] nominals in non-negative conditionals and questions (see (3)b and (4)b, repeated below). The restriction on preverbal subject position holds in these environments, that is, no speakers accept destressed [-A] nominals in the preverbal subject position of a conditional or question. The contrasts between (119)a,b and (120)a,b illustrate this.

- (3) b. Ukuba u-bon-a m-ntu, u-ndi-xelexe. [Xhosa]  
 COMP 2sSA-see-FV 1-person 2sSA-1OM-tell-SUBJ  
 'If you see anybody, tell me.'
- (4) b. Ingaba u-John u-fund-é ncwadi kule mpela veki?  
 Q 1-1John 1SA-read-CONJ1 9book this end week  
 'Did John read any book this weekend?'
- (119) a. Ukuba u-John u-fik-a, u-ndi-xelexe. [Xhosa]  
 COMP 1-1John 1SA-arrive-FV 2sSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
 'If John arrives, tell me.'
- b. \*Ukuba m-ntu u-fik-a, u-ndi-xelexe.  
 COMP 1-person 1SA-arrive-FV 2sSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
 [Intended: If anybody arrives, tell me]
- (120) a. Ng-u-bani o-th-é u-John u-fik-ile. [Xhosa]  
 COP-1-who REL-say-CONJ1 1-1John 1SA-arrive-DISJ1  
 'Who said John arrived?'
- b. \*Ng-u-bani o-th-é m-ntu u-fik-ile.  
 COP-1-who REL-say-CONJ1 1-person 1SA-arrive-DISJ1  
 [Intended: Who said anyone arrived?]



Turning to ECs, (121) and (122) show that, like [+A] nominals and stressed [-A] nominals in negative clauses, a destressed [-A] nominal can appear as the sole argument of an intransitive verb in an EC within a conditional or question.

- (121) a. Ukuba ku-cula u-Nomsa, u-ndi-xelex-e. [Xhosa]  
 COMP 17SA-sing 1-1Nomsa, 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
 'If Nomsa sings, tell me.'
- b. Ukuba ku-cula mntu, u-ndi-xelex-e.  
 COMP 17SA-sing 1person 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
 'If anybody sings, tell me.'
- (122) a. Ingaba kucul-é u-Nomsa? [Xhosa]  
 Q 17SA-sing-CONJ1 1-1Nomsa  
 'Did Nomsa sing?'
- b. Ingaba kucul-é mntu?  
 Q 17SA-sing-CONJ1 1person  
 'Did anybody sing?'

While TECs are also possible in Xhosa within conditionals and questions with [+A] arguments (see (123) and (124)), [-A] nominals are completely ruled out in all positions of affirmative TECs within conditionals and questions (see (125) and (126)). Since the subject position in a TEC is always [+focus], the fact that destressed nominals cannot appear there in (125)a,c and (126)a,c is not surprising. But the examples in (125)b and (126)b show that a destressed [-A] nominal is also impossible in the [-focus] object position of a TEC. This is mysterious: destressed and unfocused seem otherwise compatible features (see §5.4).<sup>23</sup>

- (123) Ukuba ku-cul-a u-Sindiswa i-culo e-li-mnandi, u-ndi-xelex-e.  
 COMP 17SA -sing-FV 1-1Sindiswa 5-song 5-5-nice 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
 'If SINDISWA sings a pretty song, tell me.'
- (124) Ingaba ku-cul-é u-Sindiswa a-ma-culo a-ma-hle?  
 Q 17SA-sing-CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6-6-songs 6-6-nice  
 'Did SINDISWA sing nice songs?'

<sup>23</sup> The loophole described in notes 15 and 21 does not exist for the destressed [-A] nominals -- no improvement results if both subject and object are [-A] in a TEC within an affirmative conditional or question.

- (125) a. \*Ukuba ku-cul-a        mntu        i-culo    e-li-mnandi, u-ndi-xelel-e.  
           COMP    17SA-sing-FV 1person    5-song 5-5-nice    2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
           [Intended: If ANYBODY sings a pretty song, tell me.]
- b. \*Ukuba ku-cul-a        u-Sindiswa    ma-culo, u-ndi-xelel-e.  
           COMP    17-sing-FV 1-1Sindiswa 6-songs 2SSA-1SOM-tell-SUBJ  
           [Intended: If SINDISWA sings any songs, tell me.]
- (126) a. \*Ingaba ku-cul-é        m-ntu        a-ma-culo        a-ma-hle?  
           Q        17SA-sing-CONJ1 1person 6-6-songs        6-6-nice  
           [Intended: Did ANYBODY sing nice songs?]
- b. \*Ingaba ku-cul-é        u-Sindiswa    ma-culo?  
           Q        17SA-sing-CONJ1 1-1Sindiswa 6songs  
           [Intended: Did SINDISWA sing any songs?]

(127)a,b show that if negation is added to a conditional or question, [-A] nominals become possible in Xhosa (though not in direct object position of a TEC, for familiar reasons). Thus it is only the destressed, *uNeg*-less varieties that are ruled out across the board.

- (127) a. Ukuba a-ku-cul-anga        m-ntu        a-ma-culo, u-ndi-xelel-e.  
           COMP    NEG-17SA-sing-NEG.PST 1-1person 6-6-songs    2SSA-1SOM-tell- SUBJ  
           ‘If NOBODY sings (the) songs, tell me.’
- b. Ingaba a-ku-cul-anga        m-ntu        a-ma-culo?  
           Q        NEG-17SA-sing-NEG.PST 1-person 6-6-songs  
           ‘Didn’t ANYBODY sing (the) songs?’

Summing up, the illicit positions for the destressed versions include both [-focus] positions (preverbal subject and direct object in a mono-clausal TEC) and the [+focus] post-verbal position for TEC subjects. Clearly then reference to focus features will not provide a satisfactory account.

By way of explanation for these facts we suggest that, as the topic or theme of the clause, a lexical subject in preverbal position always bears some stress, incompatible with these non-emphatic [-A] nominals.<sup>24</sup> The overall emphatic interpretation of TECs makes

<sup>24</sup> Another line of approach to the ban on all [-A] nominals in preverbal subject position would be to assume, following Déprez’s (2000) approach to bare nominals, that they do not have the features to satisfy the EPP. This seems plausible but makes the resemblance to [+A] wh-phrases and DPs containing *kuphela* coincidental in this regard, so we leave it aside.

them an inhospitable environment for the distressed varieties in any positions. We leave more detailed consideration to future research.

## 7. Conclusions

In this paper we have demonstrated that three Zulu [-A] nominals, *lutho* – ‘nothing’, *muntu* – ‘nobody,’ and *ndawo* – ‘nowhere,’ are negative concord items (*n*-words). All other Zulu and Xhosa [-A] nominals in negative uses pattern like ‘strict’ NPIs in that they require a clause-mate negation. We have argued that both of these groups of [-A] nominals have uninterpretable negative features (*uNeg*). Following Zeijlstra 2004, 2008, the clause-mate restrictions follow from a local licensing Agree relation (Agree (*iNeg*...*uNeg*)).

While Halpert 2012, 2015 attributed four positional restrictions on Zulu [-A] nominals to Case needs particular to [-A] forms, we have shown that these restrictions, which exist in Xhosa as well, are shared by [+A] nominals modified by adnominal *kuphela* – ‘only’ and, with one mysterious inconsistency in the pattern, by *wh*-phrases – even those which bear augments in Zulu. We have accordingly related the distributional restrictions to the topography of focus in Xhosa and Zulu clauses, interacting with [+focus] features borne by [-A] nominals in negative clauses, *kuphela*, and *wh*-words. Thus while we concur with Halpert that a morpho-syntactic feature is responsible for constraints on [-A] nominals, we identify a different feature as the responsible party.

We have also shown that [-A] nominals are accepted in Xhosa conditionals and questions, but their grammar differs markedly. In this context [-A] nominals need not be clause-mates with the licensing ‘if’ or the interrogative. We have proposed that they lack *uNeg* features and thus are rather like the plain or ‘broad’ NPIs of English. Their distribution is also constrained by resistance to stress.

While much work remains to be done on augments and the distribution of [+/-A] nominals, we hope to have contributed a significant piece towards the mapping out of this intriguing phenomenon.

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