LESSON 34

THE PARTICIPIAL MOOD

34.1. Not all scholars regard the participial mood as a mood. We retain
the term however. Except for the long present tense this mood has the same
tense forms as the indicative mood. Superficially there is little difference between
the positive forms in these two moods. In actual speech there is a considerable
difference, viz.

(a) All subject concords of the participial mood have a high tone, including
those of the first and second persons,
ngibona, participial mood, but ngibona, indicative, cf. 4.6.
(b) The subject concord of the singular umu- (person) class is e- instead of
u-; for plural aba- class the concord is he- instead of ba-; for class ama-
it is -e instead of a-, in the participial mood, e.g.
unfana ebene but indicative unfana ubona;
abefana bebona but indicative abefana babona;
anahole edla but indicative anahole adla.
(c) The negative of the participial mood is formed by means of the negative
formative nga- which immediately follows the subject concord; the verb stem
ends in -i in the present tense, e.g.
bengahambi.

34.2. The participial mood is used
(a) to express a simultaneous action, consequently it is a dependent form
in the sense that it must be used with another predicate. The English rendering
is usually by means of the present participle although conjunctions like “while”
may also be employed, e.g.
Sibabone behamba (We saw them travelling) negative Sibabone bengahambi.
Itizengolu zambulala cebhane endlini (The criminals killed him while he hid
in the house).
Anathole awalaleleka sawafumana edla esimimini (We found the calves
which had got lost eating in the fields).
(b) to express “after” in the perfect of the participial mood [see 35.1(b)], e.g.
Usibingelele engene endlini (He greeted us after having entered the house).
(c) after certain conjunctions (see lesson 42), e.g.
Uma ehihuluma siyazalela (When he speaks we listen).
This is a formal use of the participial mood and the meaning is not necessarily
that mentioned in (a) above.
(d) after certain auxiliaries which are dealt with in lesson 50.
(e) to express “without” in the negative, e.g.
Ukhala engasitsheli ukuthi wani (He is crying without telling us what
the matter is).
Wangena endlini engasibingeleli (He entered the house without greeting us).

LESSON 35

THE PARTICIPIAL MOOD (continued 1)

Further tenses

35.1. The tense dealt with in the previous lesson was the present tense of
course. Further tenses and their negatives are as follows:
(a) Progressive present:
Sibafumane besakuluma (We found them while still talking), negative
Sibafumane bengasakuluma (We found them no longer speaking).
(b) The perfect, long and short:
Sibafumane bedile (We found them after they had eaten) negative Sibafumane
bengadilanga.
Uma bekambe izolo kasiyi kubobona namuhla (If they left yesterday we
won’t see them today).
(c) Theative:
Sibafumane belele (We found them asleep), negative Sibafumane bengalele.
(d) The progressiveative:
Sibafumane besalele (We found them still asleep), negative Sibafumane
bengasalele.
(e) The future tense:
Sibafumane beza kuhamba (We found them about to go), negative Sibafumane
bengazukuhamba.
(f) The progressive future:
Sibafumane besaza kuhamba (We found them still about to go), negative
Sibafumane bengazuza kuhamba.
(g) The narrative tense:
This tense of the participial mood is found mainly after auxiliary predicates.
See lesson 50.

With vowel verbs

35.2. Before vowel verbs the vowel of the subject concord is omitted in the
positive, e.g.
Sibone umfana akha (< *e|akha) indlu (We saw a boy building a house).
Uma sonile (< *s|onile) siya kuthethiswa (If we do wrong we shall be
scolded),
except when the concord is u- or lu- or ku-, then u > w, e.g.
Uma uphakha lwakhiwe (< *u|akhiwe) siya kujabula (When the roof has
been put up we shall be pleased);
and the concord t- which becomes y-, e.g.
Uma inyama yosiwe (< *y|osiwe) imndani (If the meat is roasted it is nice).
Note however that concords lu- and ku- are usually t- and k- respectively
before e:
Uma ubambo lerive (<*lu-aziwe) lumwandi (If the rib has been roasted it is nice).

35.3. Negative nga- [see 34.1(c)] always follows immediately on the concord and its vowel is discarded when it precedes a vowel verb, e.g. singakhi < *si/nga/akhi (while we are not building);
   bengosi injuna < *be/nga/oisi (while they don’t roast meat).

The relative as participial form

35.4. The relative as well as the adjective form are based on the participial mood, hence the negative which is that of a negative participial mood formed by means of- nga- which follows the relative or adjectival concord, e.g. chambayo (he who walks) negative ongahambindy;
   abahambileyo (those who have travelled) negative abangahambanga.
With adjective and non-verb relatives the negative formative is -nge- instead of -nga-, e.g.
   olula (a light one) negative ongelula;
   oluunjengo (which is like it) negative oluunjengenso.
With adjectives -nge- follows the adjective concord but is again followed by the descriptive copulative form of the adjective (see 30.3.), e.g.
   izinje ezingezinkulu (dogs which are not big), cf. the positive izinje ezinkulu;
   abangebade (ones who are not long), cf. abade (long ones).

LESSON 36

THE PARTICIPIAL MOOD (conclusion)

Participial descriptive copulative

36.1. The descriptive copulative (12.7) may also appear in the participial mood. Instead of the indicative subject concord the participial subject concord is used, e.g.
   uma singabantu (if we are people);
   uma eqoito (if he is honest);
   uma benjengami (if they are like me).
   uma esendlini (if he is in the house);
   uma eyedwa (if he is alone) (cf. 26.3.).

36.2. In the negative -nge- (instead of -nga-) follows the subject concord, e.g.
   uma singenjabantu (we are not children);
   uma engeqoito (if he is not honest);
   uma engesendlini (if he is not in the house).

36.3. In the progressive form progressive -se- (instead of -sa-) is placed immediately after the subject concord in the positive and after -nga- (which follows the subject concord) in the negative, e.g.
   uma esengunsumana (if he is still a boy);
   uma engasegsumfana (if he is no longer a boy);
   Uba ba uyifumane isesebayeni inkomo (Father found the cow still being in the kraal).

The participial adjective

36.4. The descriptive adjective also has a participial form: the participial subject concord is placed before the descriptive copulative of the adjective (see 30.3.) in the positive, e.g.
   uma enkkulu (if he is big).
   Sibuzamane bebebele ngemini (We found them being many in the village).

36.5. In the negative -nge- (instead of -nga-) follows the participial concord, e.g.
   uma bengebalingi (if they are not many).
   Uma zingezi mbili angizijini (Unless they are two I do not want them).

36.6. The progressive form has -se- (instead of -sa-) which follows the participial concord in the positive, and follows -nga- (which follows the participial concord) in the negative, e.g.
   uma besebele (if they are still many).
   Uma bangasebele (if they are no longer many).
   Sizithenge zizezincane (We bought them while they were still small).

THE POTENTIAL FORM

36.7. The potential form may also be regarded as a mood. The potential expresses an action which is possible, hence its translation with “can” or “may”.

36.8. The positive is formed by means of a subject concord plus potential formative -nga- followed by the verb stem with or without an object concord. The subject concord is similar to that of the indicative mood but all concords have a low tone and class uma- (singular person class) has the concord a-, e.g.
   Ngingabona (I may/can see).
   Ngingabona (I may/can see them).
   Unfana angabinya uma efuna (The boy may return if he wishes).
   Ungangena endini (You may go into the house).

36.9. The negative of the potential is formed by means of the negative potential formative -nge- (instead of the positive -nga-) and a verb stem that ends in -e, e.g.
   Ngingebone (I cannot see).
   Ngingebone (I cannot see them).
   Unfana angebuye uma engafeni (The boy cannot, i.e. need not, return if he does not want to).
   Ungengene endini (You cannot enter the house).