

Toponymic lapses in Zulu place names

Abstract

Toponymic lapses are faults or mistakes in place names which are found in maps, records, telephone directories, signposts, etc. At face value they appear small, but on closer inspection, one realises that they are vitally important, because names should not fail to perform an unequivocal and unambiguous locational function. In KwaZulu-Natal, as in other countries, difficulty arises when place names have been wrongly spelt. Once incorrectly spelt, they fail to perform their locational function. Toponymic lapses are caused by a number of factors. One major reason for incorrect renderings in the spelling of names is the attempt to facilitate pronunciation by non-speakers of a particular language. Mispronunciation leads to strange and incorrect spellings, and once a place name is wrongly spelt or discarded, the cultural message also gets lost. Reasons for the incorrect spelling of place names may include ignorance or inadequate knowledge of the grammar or latest orthographic rules of the target language, marginalisation of the inhabitants of a particular area and hypercorrection. Toponymic lapses also occur when the language in question is underrated by cartographers, and names are corrupted in the drawing of maps, and later in the inscription of signposts. Once that happens, the locational function of a place name is compromised.

Richard, in a paper delivered at Quebec (1988:7), contends that 'names fill a double role, a cultural role in terms of the message they convey . . . and they also express the soul of the country in an exuberant and spontaneous manner. Names have a technical role in terms of their locational values'.

This article will first consider some grammatical rules of Zulu* to enable the reader to follow the study more easily. Zulu, like all Bantu languages, has nouns which are governed by a prefixal system. It will become clear, for instance, why is it wrong for a speaker to exclude the locative prefix of a place name, referring to

* Editor's note: Some writers (including Professor Zungu) now prefer to use the word isiZulu when referring to the language in English discourse. While accepting that isiZulu is the language's own name for itself, *Natalia* continues to use the accepted English lexical term Zulu, just as it would use the words French, German or Spanish to denote those languages, and not *Francais*, *Deutsch* or *Espanol*.

Thekwini, instead of EThekwini, Mgungundlovu instead of Emgungundlovu, etc. The treatment of nouns will be followed by a discussion of toponymic lapses caused by incorrect spelling. Parallel names of some places and institutions will be dealt with, as will a few place names which have been Africanised.

This is an ongoing study but it is hoped that this article will bring to light some of the mistakes of the past, such as the lack of aspiration in most place names with th, ph, kh (Pumula instead of Phumula, Isipingo instead of Isiphingo, etc.), but it will exclude orthography which changes from time to time. It is also hoped that it will be a contribution to the history of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and to the study of onomastics.

The prexifal System of Zulu nouns

Class	e.g.		
1	umu-, um-	umuntu	person
1	(a) u-	ugogo	granny
2	aba-, abe- ab-	abantu	people
2(a)	0-	ogogo	grannies
3	umu-, um-	umunga	mimosa tree
		umbango	contention over a claim
3(a)	u-	uswidi	sweet (a confectionery)
4	imi	iminga	mimosa trees
5	ili-, il-	itheku	male with one testicle
6	ama-, ame	amanzimtoti	sweet water
7	isi-, is-	isiphingo	thin plaited branch of a tree used for thatching a hut
9	iN-	imbokodo	round stone
10-8	iziN-	izimbokodo	smooth round stones
11	ulu-	ulwandle	ocean
12-13	(Not found in Zulu)		
14	ubu-	ubuhle	beauty
15	uku-	ukusa	dawn

The formation of place names from nouns

Place names are in effect locative adverbs because they give the location of an entity. A simple rule which converts nouns to locatives is to modify all the initial vowels of the nouns from class 3 onwards, into *e-* (except for class 11 where the *u-* becomes *o-*). Classes 1, 1a, 2, 2a and 3a prefix *k* and *ku-*. This process changes nouns into adverbs of place or time and is indicated by **to, in, at, from, by**.

Suffixation

Most Zulu nouns suffix *-ini* on conversion to the locative, but there are also exceptions. Classes 1, 1a, 2, and 2a hardly ever suffix *-ini*. Nouns of classes 3 to 15 usually suffix *-ini* to the final vowel. For instance, a noun ending with *-a+ini* becomes *-eni*.

-a+ini>-eni	-a:izingqola	ezinqoleni
-e+ini>-eni	-e:isikole	esikoleni
-i+ini>-ini	-i:umuziwezinto	emziniwezinto
-i+ini>	-i:ithusi	ethusini
-o+ini>-weni	-o:izimbokodo	ezimbokodweni
-u+ini>-wini	-u:itheku	ethekwini

When using place names derived from personal nouns, (viz. those in noun classes 1 and 1a) to indicate motion towards, the prefix **ku-** is used and this is followed by the locative formative **-a-**, e.g. u+a>wa

ku+a+Makhutha >	KwaMakhutha
ku+a+Mashu >	KwaMashu
ku+a+dokotela >	Kwadokotela

It must be emphasised that not all Zulu place names undergo suffixation, as is also the case with nouns. Some place names derive their existence from verbs, idiophones, etc., and they carry in them the history of the nation. In other words, there is more to a name than meets the eye.

- 3 **emngeni** < **emungeni** < **umunga** (at a place with mimosa trees)
- embangweni** < **umbango** (at a place of dispute)
- 3a **KwaSwidi** < **uswidi** (at a factory where sweets are manufactured)
- 4 **emngeni** < **iminga** (at a place with mimosa trees)
- 5 **eThekwini** < **itheku** (at a place shaped like a male organ with one testicle)
- 6 **eManzimtoti** < **amanzimtoti** (at a place with sweet water: Amanzimtoti)
- 7 **eSiphingo** < **isiphingo** (at Isiphingo) (Name of the Luthuli Chief)
- 9 **embokodweni** < **imbokodo** (a place with a smooth round stone)
- 8-10 **ezimbokodweni** < **izimbokodo** (a place with smooth round stones)
- 11 **othongathi** < **uthongathi** (ulu-) (at UThongathi)
- olwandle** < **ulwandle** (ulu-) (at the sea)
- 14 **ebusuku** < **ubusuku** (at night)
- ebusweni** (on the face)
- 15 **ekuseni** (in the morning)
- ekudleni** (in the food)

Orthographic rules (adapted from *IsiZulu Terminology and Orthography No.4* (1993))

Capitalization of place names

This should follow definite orthographic rules, adapted from *IsiZulu Terminology and Orthography No. 4* (1993). The locative prefix **kwa-** can indicate 'to, in, at, from' the property, residence, firm, store, homestead, surname etc. Place names beginning with the locative prefix **kwa-** or **ka-**:

KwaZulu	in Zululand
KwaMashu	at the place of Sir Marshall Campbell
KwaMakhutha	at Makhutha location.

KwaGqwathaza	at the place of Gqwathaza (this is Zulu name for Highflats).
KwaZungu	at the Zungu residence

In the case of all the other place names, the first letter after the initial vowel will be a capital. The first part suggests the noun whence the locative is derived and the second part is the locative indicating in, at to, from e.g.:

iTheku> eThekwini. iGoli> eGoli. uLundi> oNdini. uMlaza> eMlaza. uLwandle> oLwandle. uThongathi> oThongathi. iSikhala> eSikhaleni. uMthetho> eMthethweni. aManzimtoti> eManzimtoti. uMuziwezinto> eMziniwezinto. iZinqola> eZinqoleni. uMngeni> eMngeni. aMahlongwa> eMaHlongwa. iSandlwana> eSandlwana. iGoli> eGoli, etc. For example, a speaker might say: Ngihlala eThekwini (I live in Durban); Ngiya eMgungundlovu (I am going to Pietermaritzburg).

In the official names of schools, post offices, etc., the first letter of the word is also capitalised, e.g.: UMngeni, AManzimtoti, ITheku, EThekwini, UMLazi, ONdini, UThongathi, UMuziwezinto, EZinqoleni, AManzimtoti, ISiphingo, ONgoye, ULundi, UMLaza, UThongathi, UMKhomazi etc.

There are many examples where the etymology of the place name is obscure or totally lost. The following examples are cited.

Toponymic lapses caused by incorrect pronunciation

Ndwedwe instead of Sondoda

There is a high ridge in the MaQadini area near Inanda which is now known as Ndwedwe, where the present Ndwedwe police station is situated. The original name of this ridge was Sondoda (father of men), but because the foreigners could not pronounce Sondoda, they simply named the ridge Ndwedwe – not even keeping the vowel sounds of the original. This name soon appeared on signposts and in all government records and compelled the people to use the strange and meaningless word.

In former times, Africans were very ready to accept things which were non-African. They did not mind if a name had no significance for them as long as it was non-Zulu or non-African. Proof of this will be found in the names of elderly people today, which are mostly of European origin. Pupils used to report their schoolfellows for calling them by their home names (igama lasekhaya) on the school premises and the culprits were often punished. Consider the names of elderly African people throughout Africa which are of European origin. It is only now that people are realising the importance of their African names and taking pride in calling themselves by such names. Below is a discussion of a few examples of place names, most of which are found in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. They have been wrongly written, but for years people did not mind using them as they were. It did not matter to them because they were written by people whom they regarded as being more enlightened than they.

EZingolweni or Eziinqoleni

This place is inland from Port Shepstone, to the west. It was the home of the Cele clan and was originally known as KwaCele, a place belonging to Chief Cele or a place occupied by the Cele clan. Later, white people arrived in this area and constructed a railway station. It was a terminus, and many railway carriages and trucks coaches were parked there. When the Cele people saw these, they named the place Eziinqoleni – the place of many wagons or coaches. Because the cartographers, or white people generally, failed to pronounce the -nq- ‘click’ sound in Eziinqoleni, they adapted the place name to Ezingolweni, which has no significance or meaning to a Zulu speaker, whereas EZinqoleni records the history of the area.

MBogintwini or Ezimbokodweni

Ezimbokodweni is the name of a river, and a town on the upper South Coast. The place name UMBogintwini, is lexically meaningless to a Zulu-speaking person as compared to EZimbokodweni. Ezimbokodweni means a place where many small round stones used for grinding corn and mealies, are obtained. Even an uninformed person would locate the river because of the great number of smooth, round stones found in it.

The average non-mother-tongue speaker of Zulu could not easily pronounce the place name Ezimbokodweni: so the name UMBogintwini came into being. To such speakers the lenis voiced velar -k- in EZimbokodweni sounded very much like a -g-. UMBogintwini is easier to pronounce than EZimbokodweni. It must be noted that Zulu has four variants of the phoneme -k-.

- (i) [k'] e.g. EZimbokod**weni** [ezimbokod**weni**]
- (ii) [k] e.g. EZimbokod**weni** [ezimbokod**weni**]
- (ii) [kh] e.g. Ezimbokod**weni** [ezimbok**h**od**weni**]
- (iv) [g] e.g. EZimbogod**weni** [ezimbogod**weni**] and
- (v) [t'] instead of [d], hence EZimbokotwini or MBogintwini instead of EZimbokodweni

The Status of the /k/ in Ezimbokodweni:

The first [k'] is ejected and is the one which is incorporated in EZimbokodweni. The second one is a radical [k] where a speaker is influenced by a neighbouring language or dialect. For instance, the first [k'] features prominently in the speech of people living on the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal and in the Eastern Cape. The ejection becomes more prominent as one enters the Eastern Cape Province. For instance, President Mandela's [k'] is stronger than King Zwelithini's. The latter would pronounce Ezimbokodweni as Ezimbokhodweni. This is caused by linguistic proximity. Zululand is closer to Swaziland, where Ezimbokodweni might be pronounced as eZimbokhodweni. The third [kh] normally occurs in the speech of the SiSwati speaking community, where a [k'] which occurs in nasal compounds [nk'] is pronounced as [nkh].

To a non-Zulu speaker, all these variants of -k- are perceived as a voiced velar [g].

UMkomaas or Umkhomazi

UMkomaas should be written UMkhomazi. The name of this river and town originates from the cold sea breeze experienced by people living near the mouth of the UMkomazi river. The name refers to amakhaza, a cold breeze. There has also been the suggestion that there is an association with umkhomakazi, a whale cow. Whichever derivation is correct, the place should certainly not be called Umkomaas, which to a Zulu-speaking person is meaningless.

UMlaas River or Umlaza River

To a Zulu speaker, Umlaas, which is the name of a river near Lamontville township and the Durban International Airport, is regrettably meaningless. The correct name, on the other hand, contains some history of the Zulu nation. It is said that during King Shaka's military expeditions to the South coast of what is now KwaZulu-Natal, he felt thirsty and longed for a river where he could get water to quench his thirst. He then saw this river and hurried to it eagerly. On drinking the water, the king remarked 'Hhawu! kanti akumanzi namanzi yokhu, umlaza (umyaza) nje'. ('Ah! This is no water at all, it is as bad as whey'). From that day onwards, the river was known as UMLaza. Later on, people replaced the final -a of UMLaza with an -i, hence UMLazi. This was a linguistic problem caused by pronunciation. The last syllable of a Zulu word is always pronounced with low tone. Thus, to a non-Zulu speaker, the -za of UMLaza might sound like -zi. (The parenthesis in the words quoted above recognises the fact that King Shaka spoke a Yeyeza dialect where -l- is pronounced as -y-.)

Amanzimtoti or Amanzimtoti

The origin of this place name has been discussed in a number of documents, and so will not be included in this article. It is, however, recommended that the name should be written according to the most recent (1993) orthographic rules, with both A and M capitalised.

Umzinto or Umuziwezinto

During the post-Shakan period two clans who did not see eye to eye resided in the UMzini wezinto/UMzinto area. These clans were constantly fighting, and they were, unfortunately, also subordinates of one chief. They fought over a proposal that they should amalgamate and fall under one chieftainship. In the area was a prominent inyanga (traditional doctor) who used to strengthen the regiments with traditional medicines called 'izintelezi' before they went into battle. Both clans consulted the same man but they were not aware that they were treated by one and the same inyanga who was playing a double game.

Elderly people noticed what he was doing, and remarked that the homestead of this man was no good at all. It is said that his home was situated on a hilltop and was surrounded by a forest. They used to say that 'umqhathi omkhulu ile nyanga, iyishaya emuva iyishaye phambili'. ('The great cause of fighting is this inyanga. He runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.')

There was an old woman who used to warn people by saying 'Ubobheka umuzi osegqumeni, umuzi wezinto'. ('Look at that homestead on the hilltop. It's a homestead with weird things'). It is said that he used to make his izintelezi with the

male parts of young boys. Hence it was common for boys to vanish after being sent to this inyanga or when they had been herding cattle near his homestead. They were sometimes found dead, with their private parts removed. The inyanga's muthi was for strengthening the regiments, but the notoriety of this homestead spread like wildfire and people from far and near knew of 'Umuzi wezinto', hence, EMziniwezinto.

Through failure to pronounce this somewhat long name, to a non-Zulu cartographer the name ended up being UMzinto. There are however a few possibilities for this. Jenkins et al, (1996:29) advise that 'names should be user friendly. easily pronounced and remembered'. But there is also a sociolinguistic factor. Words are sometimes clipped when they happen to be long. The cartographers retained the first part umuzi- of the compound word umuziwezinto, and only included -nto from the second part.

Isipingo or ISiphingo or KwaSiphingo

It is said that during the Shakan period, the Luthuli people hid themselves in the forests where we now have Durban's Bluff area, also known as ISibubulungu. They were hiding away from King Shaka who suspected that there were amankengane (foreigners) who resided in this area. The Luthuli people lived on wild fruit and were afraid of giving themselves up to King Shaka who was then residing at KwaKhangela amankengane. The name of the Luthuli chief was Siphingo, hence the place name iSiphingo. Usually, when a place is named after a person, we prefix kwa-. hence KwaSiphingo. A neighbouring place occupied by the Cele clan is called KwaMakhutha, a name derived from the Cele leader. So, why not call the place KwaSiphingo in order to mark the history and existence of the Luthuli people in the Bluff area? It would be linguistically more correct and consistent.

Umtentweni or EMtetweni or Emthethweni

A Zulu word for law is umthetho. A place close to Port Shepstone is called Umtentweni. This place name is meaningless to a speaker whose home language is Zulu. The correct name means a place of the law or where laws are effected. To follow current orthographic rules, the spelling of this name should be Emthethweni, not EMtetweni. This is an old orthography where aspirated Zulu sounds did not exist in written script. Jenkins et al. (1996:42) confirm this statement when they write:

Orthographic reforms in the case of the Nguni languages mainly affected two aspects: the writing of aspiration and word division. In earlier publications on Xhosa and Zulu, aspiration of stops was not indicated and many constituent morphemes were written separately. The present orthographies recognise aspiration and prescribe conjunctive word division.

INqamana or Inkamana

Another strange place name, though outside the scope of this study, is Inqamana. There is a school in the Vryheid area known as INkamana High School. It is named after a neighbouring mountain shaped like an inqama (ram). The cartographers or non-Zulu-speakers who could not pronounce the click sound -q- came up with iNkamana which is meaningless to a Zulu person.

There are many other Zulu place names whose etymology is similarly obscured or totally lost. A few more examples, with the correct spelling and pronunciation in the first column, are:

uThongathi	Tongaat
uThukela	Tugela
Umkhuze	Mkuze
Embangweni	Empangeni

Oumeleng (1991:14-15) states that

Names belong to our cultural heritage and should be preserved along with other monuments and belong to the environment without which interaction would be much more difficult. . . . Names have a social value. If one removes the names or changes them for new ones, society loses its spatial frame of reference, and is affected.

Place names are mirrors of the society. Algeo (1988:173) expresses his disappointment with some Australian names which lack originality:

One of the regrettable features of Australian place names is the lack of originality and imagination. Many of these read like a catalogue of London suburbs, English provincial towns and U.S. cut-offs. They represent a source of dullness across the Australian maps.

The dullness condemned by Algeo was originally not a feature of Zulu place names although nowadays some of them have a dullness brought about by toponymical lapses. Many Zulu names which were not tampered with have meaning relating to features of places.

Jenkins et al.(1996:12) mention that:

All over the world, as one people or political hegemony supplants another, so old names are replaced by new ones. Place names are politically good indicators of the successive governments and ideologies of a country.

Successive place names have been rubbed out and replaced as indigenes, explorers, and settlers recorded their languages. Sometimes the Zulu version of a name was preserved by the white travellers and settlers, but in most cases they changed or ignored them in order to record their own existence.

Jenkins et al, justifiably endorse this practice by stating that:

It is only natural that when people come to power they should seek to right old wrongs by changing place names as has happened all over the world, not least in Europe after the collapse of communism.

This happened with a number of original Zulu place names, leading to parallel names which are sometimes caused by resistance to change. Jenkins et al (1996:17) mention that 'the natural conservatism of ordinary people merges imperceptibly with truculence. In the naming practices of people, we see how deeply names are embedded in their culture'.

Parallel names

According to South Africa's policy of multilingualism, people have a right to insist on the varieties they use in their daily conversations. Thus we find Zulu speakers maintaining their own Zulu place names, even though newer English or Afrikaans names have emerged. Below is a discussion of some parallel names in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly those around the greater Durban area and on the South Coast. The reason for focusing on the South Coast area is that place names from here have been sorely neglected in the history of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

EThekwini or Durban

The place name EThekwini originates from a Zulu word *itheku*, which means a man or beast with one testicle, or a lagoon, enclosed bay, harbour (refer to Doke & Vilakazi 1972:789). It is said that it was King Shaka who gave the name *itheku* to the Durban bay, being quick to observe that the bay was shaped like *itheku* of a man. Indeed, people looked at the shape of the lagoon or enclosed bay and saw that it resembled a single male testicle, and also called it *itheku*. When the English settled there, they first called it Port Natal and later named it after Sir Benjamin D'Urban.

KwaKhangela or Congella

The Zulu place name originates from KwaKhangela *amankengane* (view the foreigners in the sea), a name given by King Shaka. To 'khangela' means to look at, behold, view. (Doke & Vilakazi 1972:379). KwaKhangela applied to King Shaka's outpost on Durban Bay which is now known as 'Congella'. To a Zulu person Congella has no significance. King Edward Hospital is the closest place to King Shaka's kraal in this area and is also known as KwaKhangela by most Zulu speakers. KwaKhangela (Congella) is the place name, whereas King Edward is the name of an institution situated at or near the place. Many Zulu people refer to the hospital by the name of the place. E.g. *Umkami usebenza esibhedlela KwaKhangela* (My wife works at King Edward Hospital); *Ingane ilaliswe KwaKhangela* (The child was admitted to King Edward Hospital).

EThusini and the University of Natal

Further up hill from KwaKhangela was a trading centre where copper was bartered for local material. This place was known as EThusini - a place where *ithusi* (copper) and brass articles were sold. When the University of Natal was built in this area, new names emerged (Howard College, University of Natal, and the suburb Glenmore). The use of these newer names however, depended on the population group preponderating in the locality concerned. The University of Natal used to be a predominantly white university but this is changing. Some of its students and lecturers now tend to use both names interchangeably. It is not only the African people and students who strive to preserve the former name, but non-Zulu-speaking people are also interested in knowing and preserving the history of the area, and proud to say 'Ngifundisa eThusini' ('I lecture at eThusini/the University of Natal, Durban').

UMphongokazi River and Palmiet River

The University of Durban-Westville began on Salisbury Island, in Durban Bay. Its present hilly inland location is known to many Zulu-speakers as UMphongokazi, meaning a huge barrel. This name is derived from the river in this area. The cartographers gave this river a completely new name, the Palmiet. The name UMphongokazi was virtually erased because of the migration and labour laws. The inhabitants who occupied it before 1963 were transferred to new townships like KwaMashu and Umlazi. It was only this year when I gave a lift to an old lady, Mrs Ntimabane, and went via the University of Durban-Westville, that I learnt of UMphongokazi, although I have been at Durban-Westville for the past 16 years. As we crossed the Palmiet/Mphongokazi River she remarked that they used to do their washing at the UMphongokazi River, and even pointed out a place where her father used to work in the quarries. She also showed me the place where her home had been, saying 'Sasiwasha lapha eMphongokazi, ubaba esebenza kule nkwali. Ekhaya kwakuyilaphaya' ('We used to do the laundry here in the Umphongogazi, my father worked in that quarry. Our home used to be there').

Other parallel names found in KwaZulu-Natal are Umtshezi and Estcourt, Umnambithi and Ladysmith, Emangwaneni and Bergville, Entunjambili and Kranskop, Umsinga and Tugela Ferry, Income and Blood River, KwaDukuza and Stanger*, Kleden and Buxedeni. (*The town of Stanger, named after a colonial surveyor-general, has recently been officially renamed KwaDukuza – *Editor.*)

Africanisation

The Africanisation of foreign names is very common.

Esayidi, Port-Shepstone

When the South Coast railway was built, the English-speakers referred to the 'siding' which they would call Port Shepstone, after Sir Theophilus Shepstone. People Africanised this word siding into the place name ESayidi. Mr Nhlumayo, an inspector of schools who lives at Gamalakhe, a few kilometres south of this area, gave another version of the origin of this name. He says that although the English people referred to the place as a 'siding', the Afrikaans-speaking community referred to it as Suid Port, hence Esayidi.

Emvungeni or Uvongo

Mr Nhlumayo also supplied information about another obscure place name – the place between Port Shepstone and Margate known as Uvongo. He said Uvongo is meaningless to the inhabitants of the area. Its real name is Emvungeni, meaning at a place where there is buzzing or humming of bees. According to Doke and Vilakazi (1972:844), imvunge means 'a low murmuring sound, humming'. Mr Nhlumayo says the name comes from the large swarms of bees that were once found in the area.

Ebhambayi, Bombay, Phoenix Settlement

The Phoenix Settlement near Inanda is commonly known as EBhambayi by the African community. Originally this area was allocated to the Indian community and it is well known that M.K. Gandhi lived there. The name of the Indian city of

Bombay (itself an Anglicisation – it was officially changed to Mumbai in the early 1980s) became attached to the place, and was in turn Africanised to Ebhambayi. Zulu speakers found a Zulu word closest in pronunciation to Bombay – bhamba means to strike with a heavy object.

EYadini, Harding

The Southern Natal town, named after colonial Chief Justice Sir Walter Harding, is pronounced by most Zulu-Xhosa speakers as EYadini. It is very common for illiterate Zulu-Xhosa speakers to replace -h- or -hh- with -y- (Zungu, 1989:81) The phoneme -h- is replaced either by -rh-, -y- or -kh-. Refer, for example, to **amahewu** (a drink made of skinned maize porridge fermented), which is pronounced **amarhewu**, or **ihembe** (a shirt, from the Afrikaans 'hemp') which becomes **iyembe**, or **hamba** (walk) which is pronounced **khamba** by most Zulu-Xhosa speakers.

Conclusion

The Place Names Society is deeply concerned about incorrect renderings, misspelling or erroneous forms. A Place Names Conference held in Pretoria in 1994 agreed that each ethnic or language group should set up a committee which would look into its language problems, and affiliate under the Place Names Society, and the Society would try to see that all errors were rectified. It is hoped that a concerted effort will be made to remedy a number of these lapses in place names in KwaZulu-Natal. It is clear that very many Zulu place names are linked with the history, flora, fauna and occupations of the areas concerned, and thus reveal something of the culture of the people who speak Zulu.

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