

Lesson 10

Grammar: 'uma' and 'ngesikhathi'

In English 'if' and 'when' are two different words but in Zulu this is only the word 'uma'. There is also the word 'ngesikhathi', which can also be used for 'when' or 'at the time'.

The Situative expresses an action, taking place simultaneously with another action.
e.g. Ngifuna ukuthi uma esebenza kithi, angisize ukwenza lo msebenzi.

I want him when he works at us to help me to do this work.

When 'uma' or 'ngesikhathi' are used as conjunctives between two sentences, the '-ya-' can be used in the first sentence when nothing follows the verb.

e.g. Ngiyafunda uma umngane wami uya edolobheni.

I am studying when (while) my friend is going to town.

In classes 1 and 2, 1(a) and 2(a) and the 3rd person singular and plural the subject concord changes from 'u-' to 'e-' and from 'ba-' to 'be-'.

e.g. Ngizombona uma efika lapha. I will see him when he comes here.

Nifuna ukukhuluma nabo ngesikhathi bezonibona kusasa esikolweni.

You want to talk to them when (at the time) they will see you tomorrow at school.

In some cases the word 'uma / ngesikhathi' is not added to the sentence but when translated to English it appears in the translation.

e.g. Ngizombona ephuma kwadokotela.

I will see him / her when he / she comes out from the doctor.

The normal negative used for the different tenses is used with the situative.