A Concise Grammar of Ishiculu

A GRAMMAR CONSTRUCTED
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1
Demographics and ethnographics

ISHICULU IS A CREOLE LANGUAGE spoken by the Kuxutshwe, a community in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa of people of mixed Zulu and Chinese ancestry. The term "Kuxutshwe" means "mixed" in Zulu, and is the self-referent of the Kuxutshwe people.

Before the 2020s, there had been American scholars and organizations in eastern South Africa building health infrastructure. This trend motivated other organizations, mostly from the Greater China Region, to add to their presence in eastern South Africa. By the end of the 2020s, because of a strengthened South African government and a pivot of US international policies, most

Zulu	71.8%
English	15.2%
Xhosa	4.4%
Afrikaans	2.6%
Ishiculu	$< 0.01\%$

Table 1.0.1: Major languages spoken in KwaZulu-Natal (2105)

Americans set out to contribute to cross-nation collaborations had left. In 2034, a private corporation from Taiwan discovered an oil well just off Richards Bay, a town in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This incentivized more Chinese people to reside in eastern South Africa, and a community of Ishiculu speakers descended from a mixture of Zulu and Chinese people. By 2105, Ishiculu had about 1500 speakers in KwaZulu-Natal.

Ishiculu is now mostly spoken in KwaZulu-Natal near the east coast. In these communities where Ishiculu is spoken, Zulu and Chinese are usually also used. The Kuxutshwe people usually live and engage in social interactions with Zulu and Chinese people. Both Chinese and Ishiculu have seen a slight decrease in the number of speakers since the 2080s, a fact possibly attributed partially to their lack of legal status. There has been some but insufficient literature on marginalization of the Kuxutshwe people in both Zulu- and Chinese-speaking communities, but the existing research has indicated that the interactions between Ishiculu speakers and other peoples are mostly friendly and social, and that the marginalization stems from the way local educational and legal systems are set up. The major languages spoken in KwaZulu-Natal is listed in Table 1, and the racial makeup of Richards Bay is shown in Table 2.

Black African	43.0%
Coloured (Including Kuxutshwe)	4.2%
Indian/Asian	19.2%
White	33.1%
Other	0.4%

Table 1.0.2: Racial makeup of Richards Bay (2101)

**Figure 1.0.1:** Migration of Chinese people to South Africa in the 2030s

2
Phonology

2.1 PHONEME INVENTORY OF ISHICULU[1]

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[1] Pronounced [ìʃíⁿ|ǔːlù]

		Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar
Stop	voiced	b	d			g ⟨g⟩
	voiceless	p	t			k
	aspirated	pʰ ⟨ph⟩	tʰ ⟨th⟩			kʰ ⟨kh⟩
Nasal		m	n		ɲ ⟨gn⟩	ŋ ⟨ng⟩
Trill			r			
Fricative	voiced			ʒ ⟨zh⟩		ɣ ⟨gh⟩
	voiceless	f	s	ʃ ⟨sh⟩		x ⟨h⟩
Affricate	voiced		d͡z ⟨dz⟩	d͡ʒ ⟨j⟩		
	voiceless		t͡s ⟨ts⟩	t͡ʃ ⟨ch⟩		
Lateral fricative	voiced		ɮ			
	voiceless		ɬ			
Approximant		ʋ			j ⟨y⟩	w
Lateral approximant			l			
Click			ǃ ⟨c⟩			

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   \        \ ɤ
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   ɛ ⟨e⟩ —— ɔ ⟨o⟩
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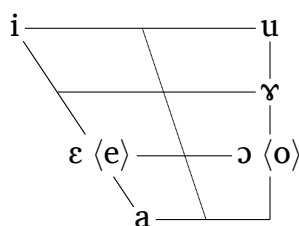
2.2 SYLLABLE STRUCTURE

Possible syllable structures in Ishiculu are (C)V and N_1C_1V, where N_1 is a nasal with the same place of articulation as C_1. For example:

Ishiculu   /i.ʃi.ǃu.lu/   V.CV.CV.CV

unjani   /u.ɲd͡ʒa.ni/   V.NCV.CV

2.3 Tones and stress

2.3.1 Tone categories

Ishiculu has four tones.

Description	low	high	rising	falling
IPA diacritic	à	á	ǎ	â
Tone contour	11	55	35	51

2.3.2 Interactions between voiced stops and tones

Voiced stops in Ishiculu (i.e. /b/, /d/, and /g/) add a low-tone onset to the normal tone.

Normal tone	à (low)	á (high)	ǎ (rising)	â (falling)
New tone	bà (low)	bǎ (rising)	bǎ (rising)	bǎ (rising-falling)

2.3.3 Stress

The stress of an Ishiculu word falls on the penultimate syllable and results in lengthening of the vowel. For example:

Ishiculu /i.ʃi.ⁿ|u.lu/ [iʃiⁿ|uːlu]
unjani /u.ɲd͡ʒa.ni/ [uɲd͡ʒaːni]