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Pronunciation

1.1 Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>oh/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 2

Pluralisation

2.1 People

Here follows a general rule to which there are inevitable exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>obaba</td>
<td>fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>umfana</td>
<td>a boy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Things

Here follows a general rule to which there are inevitable exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>ama</td>
<td>amabhiza</td>
<td>horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ibhokisi</td>
<td>a box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 Personal Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ndebele</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mina</td>
<td>me/I</td>
<td>Mina ngithanda ukubala</td>
<td>I love to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wena</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>Udlani wena?</td>
<td>What are you eating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bona</td>
<td>them/they</td>
<td>Bahambe ngaphi bona?</td>
<td>Where did they do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lina</td>
<td>yous/you lot</td>
<td>Lifunani lina?</td>
<td>What do you lot want?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** When talking to a group (lina) the prefix of the adjective (funani) is changed from the singular (u) to the plural (li). So lifunani verus ufunani.

3.2 Possessive Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ndebele</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lami</td>
<td>mine</td>
<td>Ibhuku lami</td>
<td>My book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lakho</td>
<td>yours</td>
<td>Iphepha lakho</td>
<td>Your paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yami</td>
<td>mine</td>
<td>Inja yami</td>
<td>My dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yakhoo</td>
<td>yours</td>
<td>Indlu yakhoo</td>
<td>Your house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lawe</td>
<td>with you</td>
<td>Ngihambe lawe</td>
<td>I am going with you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wami</td>
<td>mine</td>
<td>Umama wami</td>
<td>My mother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warning:** Not sure of the definitive rule here on which to pick. For example when do you know to use lami over yami?
4.1 General

yebo  yes
hatshi  no
hayi  no (colloquial)

4.2 Greetings

sakubona  hello
unjani?  how are you?

Sakubona Wendy, unjani?  Hello Wendy, how are you?

Some suitable responses:
Ngiyaphila  I’m fine
Ngidanile  I’m sad
Ngithabile  I’m happy

Ibizo lami nguSimon  My name is Simon

4.3 Thanks

Ngiyabonga  Thank you
Siyabonga  We thank you
Sibongile  We are thankful
CHAPTER 5

Vocabulary: Actions

buya come
hamba go
woza come
6.1 General

inyamazana animal

6.2 Domestic

inja dog
ibhiza horse
7.1 General

inyama  meat

7.2 Staples

umumbhu  maize
Vocabulary: Misc

ibhokisi  box
Vocabulary: People

9.1 General

indoda man
inkazana girl
umfazi woman
umtwana child
umuntu person

9.2 Family

ubaba father
umama mother

9.3 Body Parts

ikhanda head

9.4 Names

ibizo name
igama name
isibongo surname

9.5 Misc

Ubuhle beauty
Umuhle You’re beautiful
Muhle  S/he is beautiful
Indices and tables

- genindex
- modindex
- search