

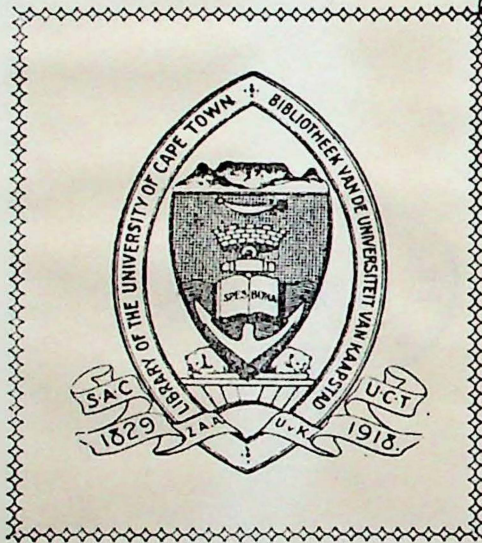
THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF XHCSA

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NATIVE EDUCATION : THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF XHOSA.

An announcement in regard to the adoption of a revised orthography of Xosa was published in the GAZETTE of the 23rd November, 1933. The following details of the changes which will be effected are published for general information.

(1) The letter "h" will replace the diacritic at present used to express aspiration, or the voicing of nasalised clicks.

Examples : tétá, ipépá, ikála, Xósa ; inéá, inqáyi (a water pot), inxówa,

will become thetha, iphepha, ikhala, Xhosa ; incha, inqhayi, inxhowa.

(2) A new symbol "j" will be substituted for "sh" as found in the present orthography. Thus, shushu and shukuma will become fufu and fukuma.

It is to be noted that "tsh" aspirated will be written "tʃh", and unaspirated, "tʃ". Thus umtsháyelo, omtshá will become umtʃhayelo, omtʃha ; but entsha becomes entʃa.

It will be found that "tʃ" is almost always aspirated, except after "n" ; after this letter it is never aspirated in Xhosa.

(3) The letter "b" is at present used to represent two sounds, an implosive sound, e.g., betá, and (with a diacritic) an explosive sound, e.g., ibúnga. The explosive sound will now be represented by "b" without the diacritic. Thus ibúnga, isibánxa will be written ibunga, isibanxa. For the implosive sound, a new symbol "ɓ" will be used. Thus betá, basa (to light a fire) will be written betha and ɓasa.

(4) The letter "r" as at present used stands for a variety of sounds, viz. :

- (a) the English rolled "r", e.g., uMaria, irayirayi ;
- (b) a guttural sound as found in Afrikaans words such as "gee", e.g., iramba, ukurala ;
- (c) an ejective guttural sound, e.g., irele, ureɓe ;
- (d) the voiced guttural. This is represented by "rh", e.g., ukurhenya and irhonya.

The letter "r" will now be used for the first of these sounds only : and the others will be expressed by "ɾ", "kɾ" and "gɾ". Examples : uMaria, irayirayi ; iramba, ukurɾala ; ikɾele, ukɾeɓe ; igɾonya, ukugɾonya.

(5) When necessary for clearness and to prevent ambiguity, long vowel sounds are to be shown by doubling the vowel. The following will be the chief types of words where the double vowel will be necessary :—

- (a) Where in the plural of nouns of the third class "z" has been dropped. Thus the plural will be clearly distinguished from the singular, e.g., intáa (singular) iintáa (plural), ngendlela (singular) ngeendlela (plural).

Further, as the abbreviated prefix "in" ("im", "i") for "izin" ("izim", "izi") is also found in nouns of the fifth class, such nouns will also show the double vowel, e.g., iimbambo (ribs) and iindonga (walls).

- (b) In the plurals of nouns of class (1) (a), when these are used with the possessive or a preposition, e.g., izindlu zonyana and izindlu zonyana, sihlangene nobawo and sihlangene noobawo.

Plurals of nouns of this sub-class should therefore regularly be written with a double "o".

- (c) The following demonstratives:—

(i) The present "lo" when meaning "that" will always be written "loo"; the present "la" when meaning "that yonder" will always be written "laa". The forms which will require the double vowel are forms used with nouns of classes (1), (3), (6) singular, and (2) and (6) plural; e.g., loo mntu, loo ndlu, loo mti, loo mahashe, loo miti (the demonstrative in each of these cases meaning "that" or "those"); laa mntu, laa ndlu, laa mti, laa mahashe, laa miti. (The demonstrative in each of these cases means "that yonder" or "those yonder".)

(ii) The three demonstratives for the first class plural meaning "these", "those", "those yonder" will be written "aaba", "aabo" and "aaba" (or aabaya), e.g. :—

aaba bantu (these people);
aabo bantu (those people);
aaba bantu (those people yonder).

(iii) The demonstrative copulas (McLaren's adverbial demonstratives) will have all forms singular and plural [except "nanku", class (1) singular and "nantsi", class (3) singular] written with a double "a", e.g., naasi isitya; naabo uboya; naabaya abahambi.

- (d) In certain stems of nouns and verbs where ambiguity arises, e.g., compare:—

umphunga (steam) and umphuunga (lung);
uku6a (to be) and ukuu6a (to steal).

(6) Tone will be marked only when this is necessary to avoid ambiguity. For example, the word itanga may mean a pumpkin, a thigh or mountain veld. The first two of these can be distinguished only by means of tone marks, and will, therefore, be written ithang_a (a pumpkin), the downward stroke before the "a" of the last syllable indicating a relatively low tone; and ithang'_a (thigh), the upward stroke before the "a" of the last syllable indicating relatively high tone. Similarly, umz_i (a kraal) and umz'_i (a rush).

(7) In regard to word division, the following will be the changes from the present usage:—

- (a) Demonstratives will always be separated from their nouns, e.g., lo mntu, aaba bantu, le nto;

- (b) "kwa" (meaning "also") will be a separate word, e.g. kwa yena, kwa nobawo;

(Note.—When it is embodied in a predicative form, it will not, however, be separated, e.g., ikwanguye, ukwalungile.)

- (c) "njenga" (like) and "nganga" (as great as) will be written "nje nga" and "nga nga", e.g., imali enga ngeponti; into enje ngemvula; kanga ngokuba; nga ngokude;

- (d) "nge" as an auxiliary verb will be written separately, e.g., nge nditshilo; nge ningahambanga.

(Note.—The verb nga meaning "to seem", "to wish", will continue to be written separately. The auxiliary particle nga meaning "can", "would", will as at present be joined to the main verb following, e.g.:

Wanga uyafa; ndinga ndingambona; ningahamba; ndingalitenga ukuba ndinemali.)

- (e) ukuba, ukuya and ukuza, whether used as auxiliary or as principal verbs are to be written separately, e.g.:

waba ngumntu; be ndilambile; ndize apha ukunibona; ze nihambe; le ndlu iza kuwa; siya evenkileni; uya hamba; ndaye ndimbonile.

In some cases fusion of vowels will make this impossible, e.g., ebefuna, ndiyeva.

- (f) The auxiliary verbs ma, sele (with its contractions sel' and se), and kha (khe) have hitherto been written with the principal verb. For greater clearness, they will now be separated; e.g., ma ndiye, ma kaye; isel' ifikile, base befikile (se befikile); ndikhe ndiye (khe ndiye); kha uye. The auxiliary verbs sele (se) and kha (khe) are to be distinguished from the auxiliary particles sa (se) meaning "still", and ka meaning "yet". These are mere insertions in a predicative form, and have no effect on construction; e.g., ndisaya; ndisekho; andikayi.

- (g) The interrogative particles "na" and "ni", the vocative particle "ndini" and the particle "ke" are to be written separately, e.g., Nguhani na lo? Uthi ni? Bathi ni na? Ke kaloku ke. Hambani ke. Mfo ndini. Mfazi ndini.

(Note.—"Ni" preceded by a preposition will not be separated, e.g., Ninani kodwa?

- (h) Proper nouns. The first letter of the root of such nouns will be a capital letter, and no hyphen will be used to join the article, the locative prefix or prepositions to these nouns, e.g., Akukho mXhosa apha. Andikayi eQonce. KweyeNkanga inyanga.

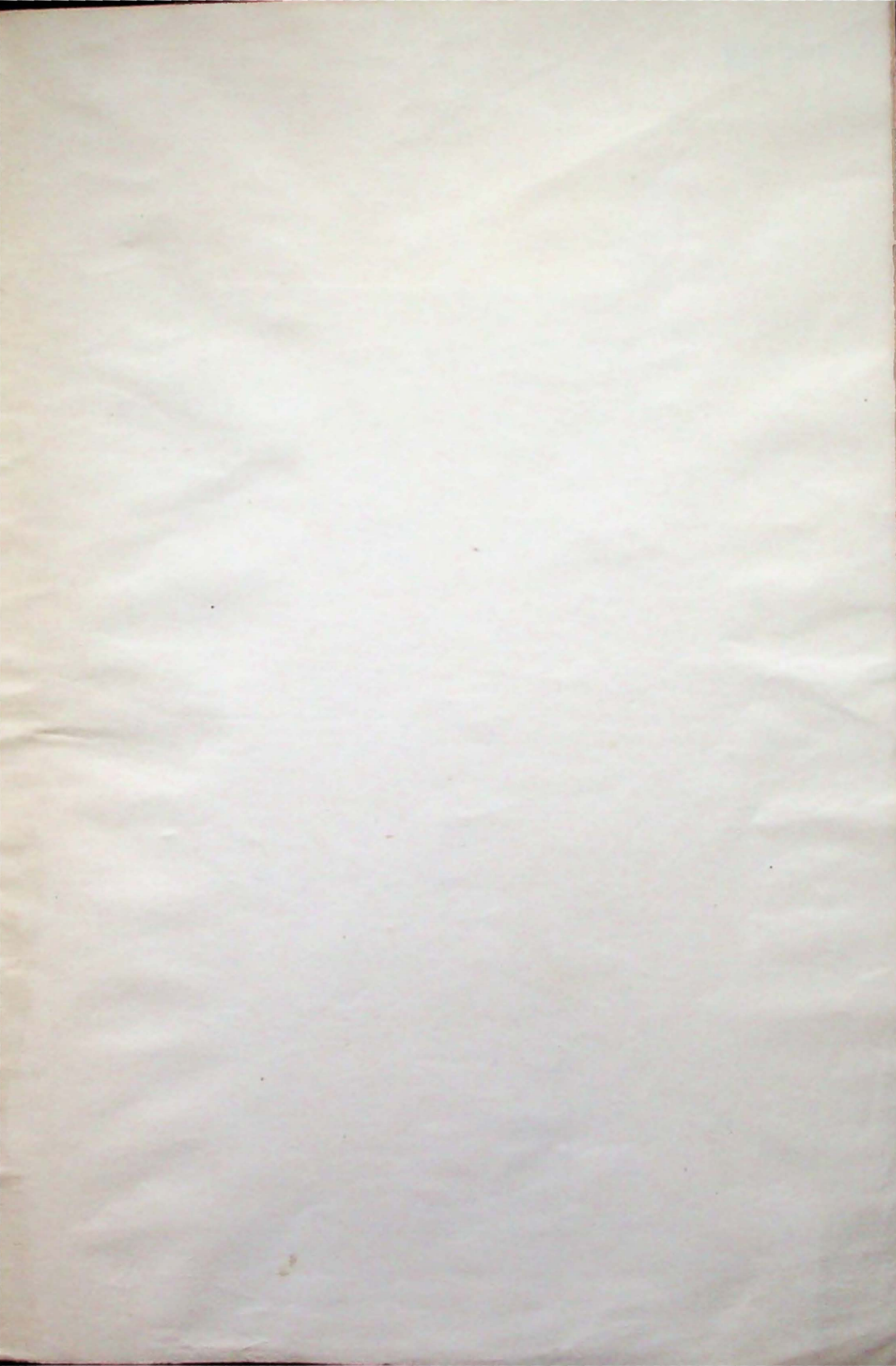
- (i) Words with reduplicated stems will have the elements separated by a hyphen, e.g., ukubetha-bethana, imicimbi-cimbi.

- (j) The elision of a vowel will be shown in the usual way by means of an apostrophe, e.g., usel' efikile; ufuman' ebuza; fanel' ukuba (fan' ukuba).

(8) The following are the forms which will be used for the new symbols :—

	In Print.	Cursive.
Present " sh "	\int (small)	<i>ſ</i> (small)
	Σ (capital)	<i>ſ</i> (capital)
Present " b "	6 (small)	<i>b</i> (small)
	B (capital)	<i>B</i> (capital)
Present " r "	γ (small)	<i>r</i> (small)
	Γ (capital)	<i>r</i> ^c (capital)





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