1. General Information

Ikalanga is a Bantu language spoken in northern Botswana and in southern and southwestern parts of Zimbabwe. In Botswana, Ikalanga is spoken in the north eastern and central districts of the country. The dialect described here often referred to as Chililima, is spoken in the central district of Botswana. Ikalanga, which is closely related to Shona, is usually described as one of the dialects in the Shona cluster of languages. Shona is the major language group of Zimbabwe, one of Botswana’s neighbors. In Guthrie (1967, Vol 4) Ikalanga is classified as an S.16 language, an area that includes other southern Bantu languages such as Setswana, Sotho, Zulu, Xhosa, Venda and Tsonga.

2. Grammar
2.1 Phonology
2.1.1 Ikalanga Sound System

According to Mathangwane (1999) Ikalanga comprises of fifty nine consonant sounds (see consonant chart 1) and a simple vowel system with only five members. Secondary articulation plays a significant role in distinguishing phonemic sounds in Ikalanga. The secondary articulatory features that Ikalanga employs include aspiration, prenasalization, labialization, and the breathy voice feature.

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1 I am grateful to Joyce Mathangwane for reading this draft and giving me helpful comments.
(1) Consonants (adapted from Mathangwane, 1999: 45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>labial</th>
<th>Lab. dental</th>
<th>dental</th>
<th>alveolar</th>
<th>Palato alveolar</th>
<th>palatal</th>
<th>Labio velar</th>
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<td>j</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>&lt;w&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Vowels

i u

o

a
2.1.2 Tone

Tone is grammatical in Ikalanga: it brings about lexical as well as clausal distinctions. Ikalanga has two basic tones: Low (usually unmarked on syllables since it is regarded as the default tone) and High indicated as [’]. The following are examples which indicate lexical differences brought about by tone:

(4)

simba   wild cat
simba   strength
sina   to not have
sina   a building block
mbila   rock-rabbit
mbila   type of baby food

One of the most important grammatical distinctions that is brought about by tone in Ikalanga is distinguishing between subject relative clauses and declaratives. Like other
Bantu languages, Ikalanga does not have relative pronouns. Relativization is achieved through the use of morphemes (relative markers) that are morphologically identical to subject markers. The relative marker takes the same form as the subject marker because the choice of this morpheme is determined by the head noun that is being relativized just as the subject marker is determined by the head noun of the subject XP. Relative markers differ from subject markers in that they have low tones (example 5a) while subject markers have high tones (example 5b).

(5a) Nlíumé wa-ká-ízêla
    man₁ RM₁-past-sleep
    The man who is sleeping
(5b) Nlíumé và-ka-ízêla.
    Man₁ SA₁-past-sleep
    The man is sleeping.

2.1.3 Syllable structure

The syllable structure of Ikalanga is predominantly CV. Although the syllable structure of Ikalanga is predominantly CV, there are instances where just the syllable nucleus occurs by itself, that is, a V or a syllabic consonant. This occurs particularly word initially although there are some instances of medial V’s. Examples are given below illustrating both CV and V structures:

(6) n-nda     farm                   n - CV
    su-nda     push                   CV - CV
    vi-ka      avoid (e.g. a blow)   CV - CV
    thu-ma     sew                    CV - CV
    ze-u-la    tear at food          CV – V - CV
    i-ku-lu    ring worm             V – CV - CV

As evident from the consonant chart numbered (1), Ikalanga makes use of various secondary articulatory processes to come up with a rich inventory of phonemically distinctive consonant sounds. These processes include aspirating stops, making stops breathy, simultaneous aspiration and labialization of affricates, and labializing fricatives (see example 7). Ikalanga also has remnant consonant clusters. These include [pk], [bg] and [ps] and [bz]. Examples of words illustrating these are found in (8).
2.1.3 Vowel Harmony

Vowel harmony in Ikalanga occurs in both nouns and verbs. It is conditioned by the type of vowel in the verb and noun roots. Mathangwane (1999) divides Ikalanga vowels into two groups as follows: /i, u, a/ form a group she refers to as corner vowels; /e, o/ are mid vowels. Mathangwane (1999) further observes that for the most part, verb roots in Ikalanga do not allow mixed vowels from these two sets, for example, a verb root that has the vowel /u/ in the first syllable (and/or second syllable) is not likely at the same time to have /e/ or /o/ (see examples 9 & 10). However, there are exceptions to this rule as shown by the examples in (11).²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set 1 /i, u, a/</th>
<th>Set 2 [e, o] mid vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chuluk-a jump</td>
<td>monelek-a procrastinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landul-a report a death</td>
<td>vornek-a light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bingan-a visit one another</td>
<td>tendek-a point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milik-a stand up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pambuk-a go off course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palul-a tear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² It is possible that these words that are exceptions to the vowel harmony rule are borrowings from Setswana, the national language of Botswana.
medzek-a  implant
womelele-a  harden/become dry

(11)
phakel-a  get up early/do things early
pharel-a  plaster

When verbal extensions such as the applicative morpheme, passive and causatives attach to verbal roots, the form of these extensions is determined by the type of vowel in the root, that is, the vowel extension harmonizes with the verb root vowel. Notice that the pattern described by Mathangwane (1999) whereby corner vowels and mid-vowels do not occur in the same word plays out in the following examples.

(12) The applicative: -il- (for/to/at)
Verb root | Verb root + applicative extension –il/el
bik-a | bik-il-a | cook for
suk-a | suk-il-a | wash for
labuk-a | labuk-il-a | run for
pos-a | pos-el-a | throw for
sendedz-a | sendedz-el-a | kindle fire for
kokodz-a | kokodz-el-a | knock for

(13) Passive + applicative (i-gw/e-gw)
bik-a | bik-igw-a | be cooked for
sund-a | sund-igw-a | be pushed for
bat-a | bat-igw-a | be held for
leb-a | leb-egw-a | be talked
pomb-a | pomb-egw-a | be tied for

(14) The causative: -is- (cause to do)
kotama | kotam-is-a | cause to bend
deluk-a | deluk-is-a | cause to descend
pharel-a | pharel-es-a | cause to plaster
bik-a | bik-is-a | cause to cook
sund-a | sund-is-a | cause to push

The reciprocal morpheme –an- behaves differently from the other suffixes in that the vowel –a- does not harmonize to the vowel of the verb root.
(15) Corner vowels [i, u, a]
Verb root              reciprocal
ambul-a             ambul-an-a        undress each other
sumbik-a             sumbik-an-a       hide each other
milidz-a             milidz-an-a       lift each other
ambadz-a             ambadz-an-a       dress each other

(16) Mid vowels [e, o]
potelek-a             potelek-an-a      circle each other
pelek-a               pelek-an-a        accompany each other

2.2 Morphology
2.2.1 Affixation

Ikalanga, like other Bantu languages creates new words mainly from the process of derivational morphology. As such, the basic form of the Ikalanga word consists of prefix(-es), a root and some suffixes. The following patterns are observed for nouns and for verbs:

(17) Nouns
a. root       -teme     gourd
b. prefix + root    i-teme   gourd
c. prefix + root + suffix  i-te-nyan-a   small gourd
d. prefix + root    zwi-teme   gourds
e. prefix + root + suffix  zwi-te-nyan-a  small gourds

In nouns, usually the prefix signals the class the noun belongs to. A more detailed discussion of the noun class can be found in section 2.4.1.

Verbs
The Ikalanga verb is quite complex since it can accommodate up to four prefixes and three to four suffixes. The verb root takes prefixes which constitute of the subject agreement morpheme (SA), the tense marker, the negative marker (NEG) and the object marker (OM) if the lexical object NP is omitted. In imperatives, WH constructions and relatives, the negative marker, which is *si-* follows the SA while in declarative constructions the negative marker *a-* precedes the SA.

(18) U-si-n-sek-e.
SA-present-NEG.-OM-laugh-Subjunctive
Don’t laugh at him/her.

(19) BoNeo a-ba-зо-n-sek-a.
Neo2a NEG.-SA2a-pres.-OM-laugh-FV
Neo and others did not laugh at him/her.

As already pointed out in section (2.4.) the verb root also takes several affixes, some of which co-occur (see Mathangwane 2001 for the patterns of co-occurrence of these affixes). Verbal suffixes include applicatives, causatives, passives, reciprocals, and intensifiers.

(20) Applicative + reciprocal
bat-il-an-a
hold-APPL-RECIP.-FV
hold for each other

(21) Applicative + passive
bat-il-igw-a
hold-APPL-PASS.-FV
to be held for

(22) Causative + reciprocal
pharel-is-an-a
plaster-CAUSE-RECIP.-FV
cause one another to plaster

(23) Intensifier + reciprocal
lingis-is-an-a
look-INT.-RECIP.-FV
look at one another intensely

2.2.2 Reduplication

Reduplication in Ikalanga is used in adjectives to express degree or intensity and in verbs to indicate repetition of action. Only the roots are reduplicated.

(24) Adjectives
-lefu-lefu
Tall-tall
Very tall

-shaba-shaba
Red-red
Very red

(25) **Verbs**
linga-linga
look-look (look repeatedly)
nunga-nunga
pick up-pick up (pick up repeatedly)

2.3 **Basic word order**

Although Ikalanga allows some flexibility in argument placement, its basic word order is SVO. Like other Bantu languages, Ikalanga is a pro-drop language as illustrated by example (26d). The identity of the dropped subject NP is recoverable from the obligatory subject agreement marker.

(26a) Neo wa-ka-bona Nchidzi.
Neo1a SA1a-past-see Nchidzi1a
‘Neo saw Nchidzi.’

(26b) Neo wa-ka-m-bona.
Neo1a SA1-past-OM-see
Neo saw him/her.

(26c) Wa-ka-bona Nchidzi, Neo.
SA1-past-see Nchidzi1a Neo1a
She saw Nchidzi, Neo

(26d) Wa-ka-bona Nchidzi.
SA1-past-see Nchidzi1a
She saw Nchidzi.

(26e) *Neo -ka-bona Nchidzi.
Neo1a-past-see Nchidzi1a
‘Neo saw Nchidzi.’

(26e) is ungrammatical because the SA has been omitted. In Ikalanga, OMs are preferred in discourse over full pronouns. Unlike the SA, the OM is not obligatory when the lexical NP is present. However, when the identity of the lexical object NP has been established (example 26a), the OM can be used instead of the object NP as shown in example (26b).

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3 The only time when the SA may be phonologically omitted, is in word games such as in (i).

(i) Neo ka gala pasi. Nchidzi ka kama ngombe.
Neo1a past-sit down Nchidzi1a past-milk cows.

This is a special usage such as the use of the present tense to focus on the present existence of works created in the past describe in English, e.g. *Jane Austen uses a sharp satiric wit to expose follies, hypocrisies and false truths.* (cited in Huddleston, R. and Pullum, G.K. 2002. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
It is also possible for both the OM and the lexical object NP to co-occur as illustrated in (27).

(27) Neo wa-ka-\textit{m}- bona, Nchidzi.
    Neo_{1a} SA_{1a}-past-OM-see Nchidzi_{1a} SOV
    Neo saw him, Nchidzi.

This is used for emphatic meaning so that (27) means \textit{Neo saw Nchidzi,} and not someone else.

Ikalanga patterns with other Bantu languages such as Swahili (see Mohammed 2001) in that modifiers come after the head they modify. The Ikalanga example (28) and the Swahili example (29) illustrate.

(28) Koloi shaba ya tate bangu ya-ka-wa
    vehicle_{9} red of father mine SA_{9}-past-roll
    My father’s red car had an accident.

(29) kikapu kikubwa
    basket big

2.4 Parts of speech

Ikalanga has a richer inventory of nouns and verbs than it does categories such as adverbs, adjectives and prepositions.

2.4.1 Ikalanga Nouns

It is traditionally assumed that Bantu languages have 21 noun classes since Proto-Bantu had 21 noun classes (Doke 1954). Thus, Ikalanga supposedly has 21 noun classes too although classes 12, 13, and 19 are missing from the noun class system. Noun classes play an important role in the grammatical system of Ikalanga. Each noun class is associated with a set of prefixes that signal grammatical agreement between the noun and
its modifiers. In addition, the verbal morphology that indicates grammatical agreement between the verb and the subject NP is determined by the class that a noun belongs to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(30)</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nlume</td>
<td>‘man’</td>
<td>balume</td>
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<tr>
<td>mbaki</td>
<td>‘builder’</td>
<td>babaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndiyi</td>
<td>‘priest’</td>
<td>badiyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngwanana</td>
<td>‘girl’</td>
<td>banana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<td>mi-ti</td>
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<tr>
<td>n-siba</td>
<td>‘feather’</td>
<td>misiba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-tshiba</td>
<td>‘neck’</td>
<td>mi-tshiba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-sholo</td>
<td>‘head’</td>
<td>mi-sholo</td>
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<table>
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<td>zhani</td>
<td>‘leaf’</td>
<td>ma-zhani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gumbo</td>
<td>‘leg’</td>
<td>ma-kumbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jasi</td>
<td>‘coat’</td>
<td>ma-jasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gudo</td>
<td>‘baboon’</td>
<td>ma-kudo</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(33)</th>
<th>Class 7</th>
<th>Class 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chi-dwi</td>
<td>‘knee’</td>
<td>zwi-dwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chi-bululu</td>
<td>‘lizard’</td>
<td>zwi-bululu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chi-mata</td>
<td>‘fool’</td>
<td>zwi-mata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-kokola</td>
<td>‘elbow’</td>
<td>zwi-kokola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chi-dwi</td>
<td>i-chechi ‘this knee’</td>
<td>zwi-dwi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
chi-bululu i-chechi ‘this lizard’
chi-mata i-chechi ‘this fool’
i-kokola i-chechi ‘this elbow’

zwi-bululu i-zwezwi ‘these lizards’
zwi-mata i-zwezwi ‘these fools’
zi-kokola i-zwezwi ‘these elbows’

(34) Class 9
shumba ‘lion’
lori ‘car’
ngombe ‘cow’
nyoka ‘snake’

shumba i-yeyi ‘this lion’
lori i-yeyi ‘this car’
ngombe i-yeyi ‘this cow’
nyoka i-yeyi ‘this snake’

shumba i-dzedzi ‘these lions’
lori i-dzedzi ‘these cars’
ngombe i-dzedzi ‘these cows’
nyoka i-dzedzi ‘these snakes’

(35) Class 11
li-kuni ‘log’
li-kuta ‘fence’
li-boko ‘arm’
li-bante ‘belt’

li-kuni i-gogu ‘this log’
li-kuta i-gogu ‘this fence’
li-boko i-gogu ‘this arm’
li-bante i-gogu ‘this belt’

(36) Class 14
bushwa ‘grass’
busi ‘smoke’
bugwa ‘pass’
busimbe ‘laziness’

bushwa i-gogu ‘this grass’
busi i-gogu ‘this smoke’
bugwa i-gogu ‘this pass’
busimbe i-gogu ‘this laziness’

(37) Class 15
ku-izela ‘to sleep’
ku-ngwa ‘to suckle’
ku-poteleka ‘to circle’
ku-ma ‘to stand’

ku-izela i-koku ‘to sleep this way’
ku-ngwa i-koku ‘to suckle this way’
ku-poteleka i-koku ‘to circle this way’
ku-ma i-koku ‘to stand this way’

(38) Class 16
pa danga ‘by the kraal’
pa benkele ‘by the shop’
pa nti ‘by the tree’
pa guma ‘by the wall’

pa danga i-papa ‘right by the kraal’
pa benkele i-papa ‘right by the shop’
pa nti i-papa ‘right by the tree’
pa guma i-papa ‘right by the wall’

(39) Class 17
ku ngumba ‘at the house’
ku gwizi ‘at the river’
ku nzi ‘at home’
ku matombo ‘at the hills’

ku ngumba iko ‘there at the house’
ku gwizi i-ko ‘there at the river’
ku nzi i-ko ‘there at home’
ku matombo i-ko ‘there at the hills’
2.4.2 Ikalanga Pronominal forms

Ikalanga has three types of pronouns: full pronouns (i.e. independent ones), affixes (i.e. subject markers and object markers that cannot stand on their own and thus attach to the verb), and shortened pronouns, which attach to prepositions (e.g. ‘with’ or conjunctions such as ‘and’).

(43) Full pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imi</td>
<td>‘I/me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iswi</td>
<td>‘we/us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwe</td>
<td>‘you’ (sg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ingwi</td>
<td>‘you’ (pl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iye</td>
<td>‘he/she, him/her’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ibo</td>
<td>‘they/them’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(44) SA’s and OM’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nd-</td>
<td>ndi-</td>
<td>‘I/me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-</td>
<td>ti-</td>
<td>‘we/us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>‘you’ (sg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m-</td>
<td>mu-</td>
<td>‘you’ (pl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-</td>
<td>n/m-</td>
<td>‘he/she, him/her’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diminutive morpheme ku- is no longer productive.
SAs and OMs in use

(45) Nd-a-ka-bika.
SA₁-past-cook
‘I am cooking/ I cooked’.

SA₁-past-OM-cook-APPL-FV
He/she cooked for me.

(47) Wa-ká-bika.
SA₁-past-cook
‘You (sg.) are cooking/ You cooked’.

SA₁-past-OM-cook-APPL-FV
‘He/she is cooking for you/ He/she cooked for you’.

(49) Ma-ka-bika.
SA₁-past-cook
‘You(PL) are cooking/ You cooked.’

(50) Ba-ka-bika.
SA₁-past-cook
‘They are cooking/ They cooked’.

(51) Ta-ka-ba-bik-il-a.
SA₁-past-OM-cook-APPL-Fv
‘We are cooking for them/We cooked for them’.

Shortened pronouns that require a host:

After the preposition *na* ‘with’
(52a) Izha na-mi.
    come with-me
(52b) *Izha na-imì.
    Come with-me

After conjunctions such as ‘and’
(53a) Neo na-we mo-endaku minda.
    Neo₁a and-you SA₁-go to farm
    You and Neo are going to the farm.
(53b) *Neo na iwe mo-endaku minda.
1a.Neo and you 1.SA-go to farm
You and Neo are going to the farm.

2.4.3 Ikalanga Verbs

Like other Bantu verb forms, the Ikalanga verb is structurally complex. It consists of three parts: a) the verb prefixes b) the root c) the suffixes

2.4.3.1 The root

This is the part of the verb that is free of affixes, that is, prefixes, infixes or suffixes. It is the part which cannot further be reduced morphologically (Mohammed 2001). It constitutes the lexical meaning of the verb. All verb stems end in a vowel –a in Ikalanga but possibly in Bantu in general.

Examples:
(54) zan-a play
    shak-a want

2.4.3.2 Prefixes + verb stem

Unlike in English, verbal inflectional (i.e grammatical morphemes) morphology in Ikalanga precedes the verb. Some of the verbal prefixes in Ikalanga include the subject agreement marker, the tense morpheme, aspect, negation, and conditionals, sometimes even adverbs (Letsholo 2004). These prefixes attach to the verb in specific orders, that is they do not pile haphazardly on the verb. For example, the SA has to come before the tense marker ka- as in (55). If the tense marker precedes the SA, then the sentence is ungrammatical as in (56).

Examples:
(55) BoNeo ba-ka-bik-a.
    Neo2a SA2-past-cook-FV
    Neo and others cooked/Neo and others are cooking.

(56) *BoNeo ka-ba-bik-a
    Neo1a past-SA1-cook-FV
    Neo and others did not cook.

(57) Bo-Neo a-ba-zo-bik-a.
    Neo2a Neg-SA2-past-cook-FV
    Neo and others did not cook.
(58)* Bo-Neo ba-a-zo-bik-a.
   Neo$_{2a}$  SA$_{2}$-Neg-past-cook-FV
   Neo and others did not cook.

(59) Bo-Neo a-ba-to-so-bik-a.
   Neo$_{2a}$  Neg-SA$_{2}$-pres-never-cook-FV.
   Neo and others never ever cook.

The prefixes discussed above can not be separated from the verb, that is, nothing other than other prefixes can be inserted between them and the verb.

2.4.3.3 Verb + suffixes

Ikalanga is rich in derivational morphology. The Bantu verb in general takes on more than one suffix. These suffixes are word deriving suffixes, that is, once added to the verb, the verb acquires a new meaning. Suffixes that can be added to the Ikalanga verb include: a. passive (-w/-iw) b. stative (-ik-). c. the applicative (–il/-el-) d. causative (-is-) e. intensive (-isis-), f. reciprocal (-an-) g. reversive (-ulul-),

The passive –w/–iw-.

(60) Nyama ya-ka-bik-iw-a ndi Neo. (bika)
   Meat$_9$  SA$_9$-past-cook-FV by Neo$_{1a}$
   The meat was cooked by Neo.

Stative verbs

(61) Itilo cha-ka-vun-ik-a. (vuna)
   Chair$_7$  SA$_7$-past-break-stative-FV
   The chair is broken.

The Causative

(62) Fojo i-no-koshol-es-a ngwana. (koshola)
   Cigarrette$_9$  SA$_9$-pres-cough-CAUS-FV 1.child
   Cigarrettes make the child cough.

The applicative

(63) Neo u-no-suk-il-a ngwana zwiambalo. (suka)
   Neo$_{12}$SA$_1$-pres.-wash-appl-FV  child$_1$ clothes$_{10}$
   Neo is washing clothes for the child.
The Reciprocal

(64) Bana ba-no-zomol-an-a. (zomola)
Children₂ SA₂-pres-pinch-rec.-FV
The children are pinching each other.

The Intensive

(65) Mbisana wa-ka-ling-isis-a ini? (linga)
Boy₁ SA₁-pres-intens-FV what
What is the boy looking so intensely at?

The Reversive

(66) Sung-unul-a nsungo iwoyu. (sunga)
Tie-reversive-FV rope this
Untie this rope.

2.5 Tense/Aspect

It is commonly believed that Bantu languages (for example, Zulu, Sotho and Swahili among others) have a five tense system. It is not obvious that this is the case in Ikalanga.

The Bantu five tense system includes the following:

1. Present
2. Remote past
3. Immediate past
4. Immediate future
5. Remote future

It is not clear what the dividing line is between the remote and immediate past. Some scholars (e.g. Doke, 1954) suggests that events that occurred yesterday/day before yesterday are part of the immediate past. Events that happened two days before yesterday are referred to in the remote past. Although Ikalanga has the immediate and remote past, it does not have the same distinction in the future tense.

1. The present progressive

The present progressive is indicated by the morpheme –o/-no- (illustrated in example
(67) as well as by the morpheme –aka-, illustrated in example (68). The morpheme aka- is used with verbs that express states of affairs, i.e. stative verbs. Note that this morpheme is usually used to denote the remote past.

(67) Neo u-no-enda.
     Neo₁a SA₁-pres-go
Neo is going/leaving.

(68) Neo wa-ka-izela
     Neo₁a SA₁-past-sleep
Neo is sleeping.

The Past Tense:
Ikalanga has two past tense forms: the immediate past and the remote past.

The Immediate Past

The immediate past is expressed by adding –a- to the subject agreement marker. It denotes activities that happened not so long ago.

(69) Neo wa-enda.
     Neo₁a SA₁-TNS/asp-go
Neo has gone.

The remote past

It is not very clear what the difference between the immediate past and the present perfect tense is. What is clear however, is that in Ikalanga if the tense morpheme –ka- is added to the sentences above, then these sentences cannot mean the action happened earlier on today. It can only mean the action happened a long time ago. It is not clear how long ago exactly, but at least some time has gone by since the action occurred.

(70) Neo w-a-ka-enda.
     Neo₁a SA₁-TNS/asp-go
Neo left.

The Past Continuous

The past continous is expressed by adding the auxiliary morpheme –be- to the remote past tense marker –ka-. Notice that when –be- is added, the sentence changes from being a simple clause to a complex one, i.e. a second agreement marker is observed. The appearance of the second agreement marker suggests that the morpheme –be- has full
verbal status or that at some point in the history of the language this morpheme had the status of a full verb and therefore required its own agreement morpheme just like any verb.

(71) Neo  wa-ka-be-e-bika.  
Neo1a  SA1-past-been-SA1a-cook  
Neo was cooking.

The Future Tense

Ikalanga uses the long –noo- to indicate futurity.

(72) Neo  u-noo-enda.  
Neo1a  SA1-will-go  
‘Neo will go’.

Future continuous

The future continuous is expressed by adding the auxiliary morpheme –be- to the future tense marker –oo-.

(73) Neo  u-noo-be-e-bika.  
Neo1a  SA1-will-be-SA1-cook.  
Neo will be cooking.

The copula verb in Ikalanga

There are two common ways of expressing the copula in Ikalanga: through the subject agreement marker or through tone. I illustrate each use below.

a. SA as copula

(74a) Neo  ú-lélé.  
Neo1a  SA1.sleep  
Neo is sleeping.
(74b) Nyoka  í-ndefú.  
Snake9  SA9-long  
The sanke is long.

b. through tone
(75a) Neo  ngwánána
Neo girl
Neo is a girl.
(75b) Nlume nlefu
Man1 tall1
The man is tall

Notice that when tone is used to express the copula, a high tone is placed on the first syllable of the predicate i.e. on ngwa- in (75a) and on the syllabic ŋ in (75b). This tone placement contrasts with the following example where the first syllable of the attributive adjective gets a low tone.

(75c) Nlume nlefu
Man1 tall1
The tall man

The copula can also be expressed through ndi/-i- in constructions involving focus such as responsens to WH constructions involving focus. (76c) as a response to (76a) is infelicitous.

(76a) Ndiboani Neo ba-a-ka-bona?
Foc-who Neo1a WHagr2-SA1-past-see
Who(PL) did Neo see?
Response:
(76b) Ndi boNchidzi.
Foc Nchidzi2
It is Nchidzi and others.

(76c) *BoNchidzi.
Nchidzi2
It is Nchidzi and others.

(77a) Ini ikoku?
Foc-what this
What is this?
(77b) I-zhani.
Foc.-leaf5
It is a leaf.
(77c) *Ndi-zhani.
It is-leaf5
It is a leaf.
Example (77c) is ungrammatical because of the use of ndi- since ndi- is used specifically with for classes 1a and 2a.

**Ikalanga Adverbs**

Ikalanga has an impoverished adverb system. The rarest type of adverb is the adverb of manner.

**Adverbs modifying verbs (adverbs of frequency)**

(78) Neo u-no-bika kanjinji.  
Neo1a SA1-pres.-cook many times  
Neo cooks frequently.

**Adverbs of manner**

Other examples: *shomanana* ‘a little’, *tikinini* ‘little’, *kwazo-kwazo* ‘entirely/altogether’

(79) Neo u-noo-bika nyama zubuyanana  
Neo1a SA1-will-cook meat9 well/properly/nicely  
Neo will cook the meat well.

**Adverbs of time**

Some examples of time adverbs: *madeekwana* ‘late afternoon/evening’, *busiku* ‘at night’, *mangwanana (maphakela)* ‘morning’, *zhulo* ‘day before yesterday’, *ntolo* ‘a long time ago’, *ntolotolo* ‘a long long time ago’, *sangwenu (saku)* ‘right now’, *shule kwa ipapo* ‘after that’

(80) Nchidzi wa-ka-pedza ikwele makenyi.  
Nchidzi1a SA1-past-finished school7 last year  
Nchidzi finished school last year/next year (context determines whether last year or next)

**Adverbs of place**

These are mainly locatives:

(81a) pa nti  by the tree  
(81b) mu nsha  in the compound  
(81c) ku nzi  at home

**Degree adverbs**
Prepositions

Prepositions can be used as adverbs. Simple prepositions include: *na* ‘with’, *sa* ‘as/like’, the locative ones: *pa* ‘by’, *mu* ‘in’, *ku* ‘at, to/towards’, *ndi/nge* ‘by’, *a* ‘of’

a. *na/ne* meaning ‘by means of’

(83) Mbisana wa-ka-baya mbga ne mpanga.
Boy1 SA1-past-stab dog9 with knife3
The boy stabbed the dog with a knife.

b. *na-* ‘with’

(84) Nzhuzha u-no-shaka ku zana na-we.
young man1 SA1-pres.want to dance/play with-you
The young man wants to dance with you.

c. *ne* meaning ‘on account of/because of’

(85) Nda-fa ne zhala.
SA1-die of hunger9
Literally, I’m dying of hunger “I am starving”.

d. *ne* meaning ‘by the agency of’

(86) Mme ba-noo-bulawa ne moyo.
Mother1 SA2-will-killed by heart3
Mother will be killed by heart. “Mother will die of too much worrying”.

2.4.6 Ideophones

Since Ikalanga does not have too many adverbs, ideophones are usually used in conversation to convey adverbial meanings. They are used to express intensity of action, color or sound. Examples are given below:

(87a) Kwa-ka-thula ku-kati tu!
SA17-past-quiet SA17-say ID
It went deadly quiet.

(87b) Kuzhe kwa-kati zwiti!
Outside17 SA17-say ID
Outside is very very dark!

(87c) Kwa ka-be ku li ku-shaba kwa-kati gobe!
It was blood red all over!

‘It is very dry.’

2.4.7 Clause Structure

As already pointed out in section 2.3 the basic word order of the Ikalanga sentence is SVO. The different sentence types of Ikalanga are illustrated below.

The Simple Declarative Sentence

(88) Neo ŋ-lefu. (intransitive)
Neo1a 1.-tall
Neo is tall.

(89) Neo w-aka-bona Nchidzi. (transitive)
Neo1a SA1-past-see Nchidzi1a
Neo saw Nchidzi.

(90) Neo w-aka-pa Nchidzi buka. (ditransitive)
Neo1a SA1-past-give Nchidzi1a book9
Neo gave Nchidzi a book.

(91) Neo w-aka-suk-il-a ngwana ndilo. (applicative)
Neo1a SA1-past-wash-APPL-FV child1 plate9
Neo washed the plate for the child.

Complex sentences

Conditionals

(92a) Neo ha-é-zhá, Nchidzi ú-nóó-izéla.
Neo1a if-SA1-come Nchidzi1a SA1-will-sleep
If Neo comes, Nchidzi will sleep. (present)

(92b) Neo ha-á-singá- zhé, Nchidzi ú-nóó-izéla.
Neo1a if-SA1-Neg-come Nchidzi1a SA1-will-sleep
If Neo doesn’t come, Nchidzi will sleep. (present Neg.)

(92c) Neo ha-á-sá- zhá, Nchidzi ú-nóó-izéla.
Neo1a if-SA1-Neg-come Nchidzi1a SA1-will-sleep
If Neo hasn’t come, Nchidzi will sleep. (present perfect)

Compound sentences
(93) Neo wa-ka-milika mangwanana ngono a-a-thu a-ka-swika.
Neo₁a SA₁a-past-leave morning but NEG-SA₁-yet SA₁-past-arrive
Neo left in the morning but she has not yet arrived.

Embedded clauses
(94) Neo u-no-alakana kuti Nchidzi u-noo-buya.
Neo₁a SA₁-pres.-think that Nchidzi₁a SA₁-will-come back
Neo thinks that Nchidzi will come back.

(95) Neo wa-ka-ti-dwa a-ka-ti ti-nunge thula.
Neo₁a SA₁-past-OM-tell SA₁-past-that SA₁-pick up morula fruit₁₀
Neo told us to pick the fruits.

(96) Ta-ka-fanila ku suka ndilo ti-sathu ti-ka-endu.
SA₁-past-should to wash plates₁₀ SA₁-before SA₁-past-leave
‘We should clean the dishes before we leave.’

Interrogatives

Yes/No questions
There are two strategies of forming Yes/No questions in Ikalanga. Yes/No questions can
be formed by using the particle a (97) at the beginning of the sentence or using a rising
intonation at the end of the sentence (98).

(97) A Néó wá-ka-búyá?
Q-part. Neo₁a SA₁-past-come back
Has Neo come back?

(98) Néó wá-ka-búyá?
Neo₁a SA₁-past-come back
Has Neo come back?

WH questions
Ikalanga has three types of WH constructions: in-situ WH phrase, left edge WH phrase
and right edge WH phrase.

Object
(99a) Nchidzi a-a-zo-bona ani?
Nchidzi₁a NEG.-SA₁-pres.-see who
Who didn’t Nchidzi see?
Object WH phrases can occur in-situ as illustrated by example (99a). However, they may be moved to the left edge of the sentence as shown in example (99b). When this happens, a focus marker *ndi-* is required. Also, a WH agreement morpheme which has the same features as the object is triggered on the verb (see Letsholo 2002 for further discussion of this).

Subjects

(100a) Ndi-ani u-sá-ká-bona Nchidzi? foc-who 1a WHagr-SA1-Neg-past-see Nchidzi1a
   Who didn’t see Nchidzi?
(100b) U-sá-ká-bona Nchidzi ndi-ani? WHagr-Neg-past-see Nchidzi1a foc-who
   Who didn’t see Nchidzi?
(100c) *Ani u-sa-ka-bona Nchidzi? Who WHagr-Neg-past-see Nchidzi1a
   Who didn’t see Nchidzi?

Example (100c) is ungrammatical because the WH phrase cannot occur in a sentence initial position without the focus marker.

Relative Clauses

Object relative

Ikalanga does not have relative pronouns. Relativization is achieved in two ways: a) by moving the head NP of the relative clause to the left edge of the clause as shown in (101a & 101b). This movement triggers a relative agreement marker on the verb (notice that the relative marker has the same form as the WH agreement marker). b) by placing a low tone on the relative marker to distinguish it from the subject marker which has a high tone.

(101a) Nlume Neo wa-á-ká-bóna
       Man1 Neo1a rel1-SA1-past-see
The man that Neo saw

(101b) Nlume Neo wa- á-sá-ká-bóna
Man1 Neo1a rel-SA1-Neg-past-see
The man that Neo did not see

(101c) *Nlume wa Neo á-ka-bona
Man1 rel1 Neo1a SA1-past-see
The man that Neo saw

In Ikalanga, the relative marker cannot be separated from the verb; that is, it cannot intervene between the head NP of the relative clause and the subject NP as evident from the ungrammaticality of (101c). Other Bantu languages such as Setswana for example, allow this as illustrated by (102).

(102) ‘Monna yo Neo á-sa-mmónang
Man1 rel1 Neo1a SA1-NEG-see
The man that Neo did not see’

Subject relatives

(103a) Nlume wa-ká-bóna Néo.
Man1 rel1-past-see Neo1a
The man who saw Neo

(103b) Nlume u-sá-ká-bóná Néo
Man1 rel1-Neg-past-see Neo1a
The man who did not see Neo

Notice that the only difference between example (102a) and (102c) is the tone: the relative marker in (103a) has a low tone while the subject agreement marker in (103c) has a high tone.

(103c) Nlume wá-ka-bóná Néo.
Man1 SA1.-past-see Neo1a
The man saw Neo.

Bibliography