

## Languages by Region and Context

### Shona transcript:

A: Mutauro wekutanga kuZimbabwe Chishona uyezve kune Ndebele asi Ndebele inotaurwa kuzasi kweZimbabwe. Vanhu vashoma-shoma vanoshandisa Ndebele asiwo zvekare Chirungu ndiyo official language. Tinoshandisa Chirungu muzvikoro, mumabasa nemudzimwe nzvimbo. Asi kumba mutauro waamai Chishona. Ini ndinotaura Chishona.

B: Ndingada kuziva kuti muShona imomo kana kuti muNdebele iyoyo mungaita here aya atingati madialects, mabazi eShona kana kuti Shona iyoyo yakangofanana nyika yose?

A: Ahh mubvunzo wakanaka chaizvo. Shona yakasiyana munzvimbo dzakasiyana-siyana dzeZimbabwe. Kune mazezuru vanowanzo wanikwa kuMashonaland. Kazhinji kunana Harare, kuChitungwiza, Marondera. Kotiwo kune makaranga anowanikwa kunana Masvingo, kotiwo manyika anowanikwa kunana Mutare ana Manicaland Province. Zvakare kune Matonga maVenda varikumusoro kweZimbabwe kunana Kariba kumusoro kunana Victoria Falls naizvozvo Chishona chinosiyanasiyana nemunzvimbo dzinogara vanhu asi vanhu vanokwanisa kunzwisana kana vachitaura vose. Tinoshandisa Chishona kumba nekuti ndiwo mutaro waamai. Asiwo zvekare muzvikoro tinodzidza neChirungu. Mabhuku edu akanyorwa nechirungu. Tinodzidza History, Science, Geography nechirungu, asi tinodzidza chishona muchikoro naizvozvo kana tichidzidza Chishona tinotaura nechishona muchikoro asi kana tichidzidza zvimwe zvidzidzo tinotaura nechirungu. Dzimwe nguva vadzidzisi vedu vanotikurudzira kuti titaure Chirungu nguva dzese kana tiri kuchikoro kuti tidzidzire kutaura zvakanaka. Asi nekuti Shona ndiwo mutauro waamai tinofarira kutaura neChishona nguva zhinji. Mumabasa vazhinji vanoshandisa Chirungu vamwe vanoshandisa Chishona asi panhau tine nhau muchirungu, nhau muchishona uye nhau mundebele. Tinotanga kudzidza Chishona mugore rekutanga kuprimary school uyezve tinotanga kudzidza chirungu zvakare mugore rekutanga kuprimary school. Dzimwe nguva tisati taenda kuchikoro kwatingati kucreche tinodzidzawo chimwe chirungu chekuti “hallo. How are you” asi tinodzidza Chishona kazhinji. Tinotanga kudzidza chishona tiine makore mashanu nechirungu zvakare tine makore mashanu.

B: Ehh ndingada kuziva kuti mukataura chishona chenye tichitarisa nguva ino yamazuvano, Shona yenyu mungati munonyatsotaura Shona yakadzama here kana kuti kunyangwe pakutaura kwenyu zuva nezuva munoshandisa yatingati slang? Zvinowanikwawo here sezvinoitika kuno kuti chirungu chine slang

A: Hongu Shona ine slang yakanyanya. Sekuona kwangu vechidiki vamazuvano vava kushandisa Shona slang yakanyanya kupfuura Shona yakadzama ino Shona yakadzikadzika. Shona inotaurwa nana sekuru inotaurwa nanambuya uye shona inonyorwa mumabhuku. Asi mabhuku vanonyora Shona yakadzama asi vana kana vavakutaura vanowanzotaura Shona yakasangana nechirungu yatingati kana Shonglish.

Izvozvo zvinokonzerwa nekuti vana vamazuvano nyangwe mumhanzi wacho wasangana Shona neChirungu zvekuti pazuva unogona kutadza kutaura Shona yakadzama, Shona yakazara. Semuenzaniso mumutsara munhu anoshandisa Shona neChirungu sekuti izvoni, “Ahh nhasi ndadya lunch yangu. Ihh and chikafu chacho changa chichishata. It wasn’t even good.” Saka tinosanganisa nguva zhinji zvekuti vana vechidiki zvakaoma kuti vataure Shona yakazara.

### **English translation:**

A: Shona is the main language in Zimbabwe, and Ndebele is the other language. Ndebele is common in the southern part of the country. Only a small percentage of the population uses Ndebele, but English is the official language. We use English in schools, business, at workplaces and other places. However, Shona is the mother tongue and mostly spoken at home. I speak Shona.

B: If I may ask, do you have dialects in Shona and Ndebele? Do you have different ways of speaking and writing Shona, or is the language used in the same way across the country?

A: Ah, that is a good question. Shona is different in different parts of Zimbabwe. There is the *zezuru* dialect found in the Mashonaland Province. This is around Harare [the capital], Chitungwiza, Marondera. Then there is the *karanga* found in Masvingo, then the *manyika*, in Mutare or Manicaland Province. There are also *venda* and *tonga* dialects found in the northern part of Zimbabwe, where you find Kariba and Victoria Falls. Therefore, Shona differs depending on the different regions, but people can understand each other across these dialects. We use Shona at home because that is the mother tongue. But in school, we use English. Our textbooks are written in English. We learn History, Science, and Geography in English. We also learn Shona in school, but we learn Shona using Shona. Sometimes our teachers encourage us to speak in English all the time when we are in school so that we can be fluent in the language. But because Shona is our mother tongue, we enjoy speaking in Shona most of the time. At workplaces, people use English, but some use Shona. But we have news broadcast in English, Shona and Ndebele. We start learning Shona in school during first grade [6-7 years old] in primary school, that is when we also start learning English. Sometimes before primary school, in *crèche* [nursery school], we learn some English, for example, “Hello,” “How are you?” but most of the time we learn in Shona most of the time while in *crèche*. We start learning both Shona and English when we are five.

B: Ehh, I would like to know if the Shona you speak today is standard Shona or slang. Is it common in Shona to have slang words, like English sometimes?

A: Sure, Shona has a lot of slang too. As I see it, a lot of youth these days use more slang than standard Shona. Standard Shona is usually the Shona you find in books or the Shona that the elderly such as grandparents use. When they write, the youth use standard Shona, but when they speak, they use Shona mixed with English, called “Shonglish.” This is

partly caused by the mix of Shona and English in popular music these days. It's common, such that sometimes you find that people rarely use standard Shona at all in a day. In a sentence, a person can use both Shona and English. We use both languages every day, and sometimes it is hard to speak standard Shona only.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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