

The following is a list of permissible consonantal combinations in Ciyawo:

b-, bw-, c-, cw-, d-, f-, fw-, fy-, g-, gw-, h-, j-, jw-, k-, kw-, l-, lw-, ly-, m-, mb-, mbw-, md-, mg-, mgw-, mj-, mk-, mn-, mndy-, mng-, mng'-, mnj-, mp, mpw-, ms-, msw-, msy-, mt-, mtw-, mw-, my-, nd-, ndw-, nj-, ng-, ngw-, nt-, nw-, ny-, nyw-, ng'w-, p-, pw-, py-, s-, sw-, sy-, t-, tw-, ty-, w-, y-

*citumbili* (baboon)

*cenene* (fine)

*candanda* (first thing)

*cawo* (his/hers/theirs)

*cawu* (dry season)

*citumbo* (pregnancy)

*come* (cat)

*cangu* (mine)

1.0

## VOWELS

There are five basic vowels in Ciyawo, namely: a, e, i, o and u. The vowels can either be short or long, for example:

a: *alendo* (visitors); *ambuje* (grandfather) e: *elo* (yes); *pele* (there)

i: *isogosi* (fruits); *indu* (things)

o: *soona* (tobacco); *soia* (dig)

u: *upile* (luck); *umi* (life)

1.1

## VOWEL LENGTH

Short vowels should be represented by use of a single vowel as shown in examples such as:

1.2

*musi* (village)

*liso* (eye)

*magombo* (banana)

*citumbili* (baboon)

*kawa* (to pluck)

*kusyeto* (mother)

Long vowels, on the other hand, should be represented by doubled vowels as in:

*soona* (tobacco)

*saasu* (firewood) *muusi* (afternoon) *liiso* (yesterday) *kusyeto* (behind)

*kaa* (to delay) *mwisi* (pestle)

2.0

## TONE

In ordinary texts, tone should not be marked except in technical literature such as in dictionaries and grammar books. The following symbols: ´ for high tone and ˘ for low tone should be used in the technical literature. It is not necessary to mark tone because this practice makes reading arduous and cumbersome.

*Kuchigawe* (at Kuchigawe);

(iv) days of the week and months of the year for example:

*Lyatatu* (Wednesday) *Okotobala* (October) *Nofembala* (November) *Disembala* (December)

(b) In Ciyawo, **ce** and **ku** are honorifics, for example:

*ce Kawinga* (Mr Kawinga)

*mwenye ku Michongwe* (Chief Michongwe) *mwenye ku Ntaja* (Chief Ntaja)

*ce Umali* (Mr Umali)

*mwenye ku Mtumanji* (Chief Mtumanji)

When used at the beginning of a sentence, the honorific prefix should be capitalized and written separately from the proper noun as in the following examples:

*Ce Kishindo* akusosa mesi (Mr Kishindo wants water)

*Ce Kamwendo* ayice (Mr Kamwendo has arrived)

When the honorific prefix is not at the beginning of a sentence, it should not be capitalized and should be written separately from the proper noun as follows:

*Kwana ce Kishindo* kweleko? (Is Mr Kishindo there?)

*Ana ce Amadu apite ku sukulu* (Has Mr Amadu gone to school?)

*Mwenye ce Awali akuja ku msika*. (Chief Awali is going to the market.)

*Ulamusi wa mwenye ku Ntaja waliji wambone*. (Chief ku Ntaja's rule was good.)

## 6.0

### REDUPLICATION AND USE OF THE HYPHEN

Reduplicated words in Ciyawo should be written as one word and without a hyphen, for example:

*Kusosasosa* (look for something continuously/frequently) and not *kusosa-sosa*

*Kuwinawina* (dance frequently/continuously) and not *kuwina-wina* *Kulapitalapita* (to leak repeatedly) and not *kulapita-lapita*

The hyphen is not a sound, therefore it should not be part of reduplication.

The hyphen should not be used to mark an incomplete word at the end of a line due to lack of space. If there is not enough space at the end of a line, the word should be written on the next line,

## 7.0

### PLACE NAMES AND LOCATIVES

Place names should have their initial letters capitalized as in:

*Ntaja Balaka Liwonde Zomba Likwenu*

Locative prefixes should be written disjunctively with place names as in:

*pa Majiga* (at Majiga)

*ku Zomba* (in Zomba)

In case of a locative and a common noun, disjunctive writing should be used as follows:

*Pa nyumba* (at home) *Ku nyumba* (at home)

*ku mangwetu* (at our home)

There are times when a common place name behaves like a proper noun. In such a case, it should be written conjunctively, for example:

*Pamajiga* (at Majiga) *Pamajuni* (at Majuni)

## 8.0

### FOREIGN OR BORROWED WORDS

(i) Foreign common nouns should be written according to the way they are pronounced in Ciyawo i.e. written following the phonological structure of

Ciyawo as in:

*jusi* (jersey) *talawusa* (trouser)

*galaja* (garage)

(ii) For foreign proper nouns, the original language's spelling should be retained as in: England, German, Japan. But names of people should be preceded by an honorific prefix such as in:

*Ce Smith*

*Ce Gregory*

*Ce Frank* (and not *ce Fulanki*) *Ce Steven*

(iii) As a matter of principle, when morphemes are used to derive new parts of speech, the new forms should be written conjunctively, for example:

*pakwawula* (when going) - from verb *kwawula*

*amacili* (a strong person) - from noun *macili*

*mwamwano* (rudely) - from noun *mwano*

9.0

## GLIDES

Glides should be written as they sound. for example:

*syambone* (good ones) and not *siambone*

*liwu* (soot) and not *liu*

*lyuwa* (sun) and not *liua*

*miyasi* (blood) and not *miasi*

*liwupa* (bone) and not *liupa*

10.0

## USE OF THE APOSTROPHE

The apostrophe has two distinct functions in Ciyawo:

(i)

First, it shows omission or deletion of a sound such as in:

*Mukati* (*m'kati*) - inside

*munyumba* (*m'nyumba*) - (in the house)

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(ii) Secondly, it distinguishes the ng sound from the velar nasal ng' as in:

*ngong'o* (tortoise) as opposed to *ngonokono* (snail)

*ng'anda* (play) as opposed to *ngalawesa* (finger nails)

*ng'ala* (cataract) as opposed to *ngala* (crab)

11.0

## TENSE AND ADJECTIVAL PREFIXES

(i) Tense markers should be written conjunctively with a stem as in:

*pakwisa* (when coming) *pakwinjila* (when entering) *pakulya* (when eating)

(ii) Adjectival prefixes should be written conjunctively with the following stem such as in:

*jwamkulungwa* (an adult) *jwapacitengu* (chairperson) *jwalunda* (an intelligent person) *jwambone* (good person)

*cepiliwu* (black thing)

12.0

### THE HABITUAL TENSE MARKER

The habitual tense is variably shown as *-kasa-*, *-kusa-* and *-kisa-*. The standard form should be *-kusa-* as in:

*Ce Mtenje akusawinaga manganje* (Mr Mtenje dances manganje)

*Ce Kadeweke akusawalanga ngani* (Mr Kadeweke reads news)

*Ce Lisimba akusamwaga utobwa.* (Mr Lisimba drinks thobwa)

*Wewewo akusakumulaga masengo akuno* (He/she/They work(s) here)

13.0

### NEGATIVE MARKER

There are a number of negative markers such as:

*nga-*, *nge-*, *ngi-*, *ngo-*, and *ngu-*, which create cases such as:

*ngatulya* (we will not eat) *ngetulya* (we will not eat)

*ngitulya* (we will not eat) *ngotulya* (we will not eat) *ngutulya* (we will not eat).

The standard form to be used is *nga-*, for example:

*ngatulya ngaajenda ngaajawula ngatulombela ngajendajenda ngawusya nganinjawule ngasinjawula*

(We won't eat)

(He,She won't walk)

(He/She won't go)

(We will not marry)

(Don't move about)

(Don't give back)

(I've not yet gone or never gone) (I will not go)

14.0

### LID ALTERNATION

There is a dialectal alternation between **L** and **D** in Ciyawo in words such as:

*likoko/dikoko* (porridge) *litaka/ditaka* (soil)

*liiso* (yesterday)

The standard form should be *li-* as in: *litaka* (soil)

*likoko* (porridge)

*liiso* (yesterday)

15.0

### W/ OR BW

In Ciyawo, there is a dialectal variation involving forms which begin with the bilabial nasal /m/ which is followed by a bilabial consonant (**w**, **or b**). This is shown in words such as:

*m'wale* vs *m'bwale* (get dressed)

*m'weni* vs *m'bweni* (you have seen)

In such cases, the standard form to be used is one which has the sequence m'w such as *m'wale* and *m'weni* above.

16.0

### CONJUNCTION

There is more than one form for the conjunction 'and' in Ciyawo such as: *na*, *ne* and *ni*.

The standard form should be *ni*, for example:

*Ajigale liwago ni mboga* (get an axe and relish) *baba ni mama* (father and mother)

*nsano ni cimo* (six)

## 17.0

### HOW TO REPRESENT THE VELAR NASAL

The velar nasal in the initial sound of the word *ng'ung'usya* (mumble) should be represented by *ng'*.

*ng'ombe* (cattle)

*ng'anda* (play)

*ngong'o* (tortoise)

*lung'wanu lwamasengo* (desire for work)

## 18.0

### FOREIGN SOUNDS

The following sounds do not exist in Ciyawo: *z*, *v*, *h* and *r*. When using them, they should be written as follows: '

(i) The sound *z* should become *s* for example:

*juzi* - *jusi* (jersey)

(ii) The sound *v* should become *f* as in: five - *faifi*

valve - *falafu* (valve)

vinyo - *finyo* (wine)

(iii) The sound *h* should remain unchanged *hamala* (*hammer*), *hutala* (hooter). *holo* (hall),

(iv) The sound *r* should become *l* as in: ruler - *lula*

rubber - *labala*

(v) The sound tu as in *tube* and *tune* should be changed to *cu* as in *cubu*, (tube) and *cuni* (tune)

(vi) Names of places should be written as in the original language as in:

*Zomba* and not *Somba*

*Mzuzu* and not *Msusu* *Zimbabwe* and not *Simbabwe* *Zambia* and not *Sambia* *Mwanza* and not *Mwansa*

## 19.0

### SEMI VOWEL W AND W

In Ciyawo, W and W are distinct sounds as in:

waka (sound as walking on leaves) vs waka (build)

wala (dress) vs wala (shine)

The bilabial fricative should be represented by a circumflex as in w.

## 20.0

### CONTRACTED FORMS

Enclitics should be written conjunctively with nouns, for example, *nyumbaji* (this house) for *nyumba aji*

*munduju* (this person) for *mundu aju*

*mbogasi* (this relish) for *mboga asi*

*citelaco* (that tree) for *citela aco*

*mkologowu* (this beer) for *mkologo awu*

## 21.0

### SUUJECT/OBJECT PREFIX FOR SECOND PERSON

*m* should be the standard letter for the subject/object prefix for the second person (familiar) pronoun as in:

*mpikene* (you have heard) and not *npikene*  
*mpocele* (you have received) and not *npocele*  
*mumputile* (you have hit him/her) and not *munputile*

22.0

#### USE OF *W* AND VOWELS *O* AND *U*

A glide should be written between *two* vowels if it is pronounced as such;

for example:

*Ciyawo* (name of a language) and not *Ciyao*

*iyayi* (no) and not *iai*

*liwupa* (bone) and not *liupa*

23.0

#### COMPOUNDS

Compounds should be written without a hyphen or space, for example:

mlokotangani (journalist) and not mlokota - ngani

asyenecilambo (owners of the land) and not asyene-cilambo  
msemamatuli (makers of pounding mortars) and not rnsema-matuli  
mkwendajika (loner) and not mnkwenda-jika

mtendangoto (free person) and not mtenda-ngoto.

24.0

#### IDEOPHONES AND INTERJECTIONS

(a) **Ideophones** should end with a long vowel: and when they are exclaimed, they should have an exclamation mark at the end. For example:

*psuu!* (very red)

*pee!* (cool breeze)

*gwaa!* (very strong/hard) *bii!* (very dark or black)

*wii!* (whisking sound)

*mbee!* (white, clear)

*see!* (very smooth)

(b) **Interjections** should be written with short vowels followed by an exclamation mark. For example: *lo!* *Ogwe!* *Okwe!*