

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 Kadewele akusawalanga ngani (Mr Kadewele reads news)

Ce Lisimba akusamwaga utobwa. (Mr Lisimba drinks thobwa)

Wlewele 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

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!*