

materials for someone learning to read be written the way the reader speaks. As a person becomes a better reader, he or she is more able to read material that is written differently from the way it is spoken.

Material such as folk tales that comes from a specific dialect can be written in that dialect. This is sometimes done even in English when a writer wants to quote speech unique to a dialect.

Use a common form instead of a unique form.

If a form is found that is used in both Dialect A and Dialect B, and a competing form is used only in Dialect A, the first form will be used. Note that there may be some resistance to this as the common form is sometimes not viewed as “pure” Nkonya by the speakers of the dialect that uses both forms.

In the case of the *-la-* vs. *-ya-* / *-le-* vs. *-ye-*, the *-la-* and *-le-* forms are used in the South and sometimes heard in the North. This form will be used. For example we will write *Alabwé ató*. “He has done something”; **not** *Ayabwé ató*.

In the case of nouns with *ɔ-* and *ɛ-*, the *ɔ-* form is used in the Northern and sometimes in the Southern dialects. This means we will write *ɔnó* “mouth” not *ɛnó*.

Use an Nkonya form over a borrowed form.

Where one dialect uses a borrowed word, the Nkonya form is preferred.

Choose Twi over Ewe

Nkonya is more closely related to Twi than Ewe, and Twi is more widely used than Ewe in Ghana, so the Twi form should be chosen.

Use the form of the dialect with the largest number of speakers.

If none of the above guidelines apply, the form used in the Southern dialect will be chosen, as the Southern dialect has the largest number of speakers.

Nkonya Spelling Rules

by

The Nkonya Orthography Committee

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B. Guidelines for selecting forms to use in a unified orthography

In this appendix, the guidelines that were used for determining the orthography rules are presented. The guidelines are written in the order they should apply. For example if Guideline 1 and Guideline 3 would apply to a problem to provide different solutions, then Guideline 1 should be used.

Same form read differently

If a form can be found that will be read differently in two different ways, it should be chosen.

If we represent the “ch” sound with *ky*, it would cause a problem. We would have to choose between *ntsu* (Southern) and *nkyu* (Northern) and *wankyi* (Southern) and *wanki* (Northern). If we avoid *ky*, then both dialects will read the same writing in different ways, according to the dialect.

This guideline means that we would write *ntsu* not *nkyu*, *tsvn* not *kyvn*; *wanki* not *wankyi* and *kiai* not *kyiai*. When a Northern speaker read *ntsu* he will say *nkyu*. When the Southern speaker reads *wanki* he will say *wankyi*.

Some forms can be left unmarked.

If a form marks a feature that is not critical to understanding the text, it can be dropped. It is easier to read text that doesn't have some forms marked at all than if it is marked in a way that is wrong for your dialect. This guideline would apply to nasalisation. If a word is nasalised in only one dialect, then the nasalisation will be dropped.

This guideline means that we will write *asa* **not** *asan* “before”; *ahande* **not** *ahanden* “elder”; *isv* not *isvn* “ear”; *ha* not *han* “give”. Nasalisation that is in both dialects would still be written. For example *han* “annoy” and *asvn* “word”.

Perhaps this guideline should appear after the next, so that it will not apply to materials produced for a given dialect.

Produce two versions of the publication, or write in one dialect.

Some materials should be produced in both dialects. Primers and some post-primers will be produced in both dialects. It is more important that

For example if we use ch to represent the sound of ch, note the following:

	South	North	
“water”	<i>nts<u>u</u></i>	<i>n<u>ch</u>u</i>	North uses <i>ch</i> where South uses <i>ts</i>
“pass by”	<i>ts<u>v</u>n</i>	<i><u>ch</u>vn</i>	North uses <i>ch</i> where South uses <i>ts</i>
“clear”	<i>wan<u>ch</u>i</i>	<i>wan<u>k</u>i</i>	South uses <i>chi</i> where North uses <i>ki</i>
“dog”	<i><u>ch</u>ai</i>	<i><u>k</u>ai</i>	South uses <i>chi</i> where North uses <i>ki</i>

7. Vowels in the verb phrase before kp

The consonant *kp* in the Northern dialect, causes the same vowel changes as *w*. For example:

	Southern	Northern
“I will get down here”	<i>N<u>é</u>kpl<i>i</i> nfi</i>	<i>N<u>ó</u>kpl<i>i</i> nfi</i>
“I scraped cassava”	<i>Nekpi agbodi.</i>	<i>Nokpi agbodi.</i>
“He stole something”	<i><u>O</u>lowi ató</i>	<i><u>O</u>yowi ató</i>

I. The Nkonya Orthography Committee

This paper is written to present the findings of the Nkonya Orthography Committee. Previous versions of this paper were drafted by the GILLBT Nkonya Language Project and distributed to Nkonya opinion leaders. Their comments and suggestions were adapted into a working paper which formed the basis for deliberations by the Nkonya Orthography Committee. The committee members were selected by the chiefs of Nkonya. They reviewed the issues and made the decisions which are documented in this paper.

The word “orthography” refers the way to write a language. As its name implies the Nkonya Orthography Committee is concerned solely with how the Nkonya language is to be written. The goal of the committee is to provide a way of writing Nkonya which will allow people to easily read and write Nkonya.

The committee is **not** trying to say that any particular form of Nkonya is “pure”. If they choose certain forms or words for a unified orthography, they are not saying that these are better, they are only saying that these are easier for all Nkonyas to read.

II. How Nkonya is Written

A. Alphabet

A.1.a 1. Vowels

<i>a</i>	<i>ab<u>a</u>ba</i>	“termites”
<i>e</i>	<i>kle</i>	“to want”
<i>ε</i>	<i>k<u>ε</u>ntε</i>	“bag”
<i>i</i>	<i>b<u>i</u>bi</i>	“black”
<i>ι</i>	<i>d<u>ι</u></i>	“sleep”
<i>o</i>	<i>og<u>y</u>ó</i>	“a yam”
<i>o</i>	<i><u>o</u>bó</i>	“hole”
<i>u</i>	<i>w<u>u</u>lu</i>	“town”
<i>v</i>	<i>b<u>v</u></i>	“to own”

A.1.a 2. Consonants

<i>b</i>	<i>bíbi</i>	“black”
<i>d</i>	<i>dáda</i>	“old”
<i>f</i>	<i>fɛflɛ</i>	“corn porridge”
<i>g</i>	<i>ganú</i>	“can”
<i>gb</i>	<i>ɔgbɔn</i>	“lizard”
<i>gy</i>	<i>gyagya</i>	“bat”
<i>h</i>	<i>hɔ</i>	“receive”
<i>k</i>	<i>ka</i>	“cut”
<i>kp</i>	<i>kpakpa</i>	“rub”
<i>l</i>	<i>lu</i>	“hate”
<i>m</i>	<i>mumu</i>	“hem”
<i>n</i>	<i>nana</i>	“grandmother”
<i>ɲ</i>	<i>ɲain</i>	“to hide”
<i>p</i>	<i>pépe</i>	“red”
<i>r</i>	<i>srúfɔ</i>	“elephant”
<i>s</i>	<i>sisa</i>	“housefly”
<i>t</i>	<i>tati</i>	“cloth”
<i>ts</i>	<i>ntsu</i>	“water”
<i>v</i>	<i>vunvun</i>	“wasp”
<i>w</i>	<i>wánwan</i>	“surprise”
<i>y</i>	<i>yiyí</i>	“shadow”
<i>z</i>	<i>a_za</i>	“celebration”

B. Letters from loaned words

The letters “v” and “z” occur only in loan words. Loan words with “c” will use *s* or *k*; For Example, *sidi* “cedi”; *basikeli* “bicycle”

C. Additional Vowels

The vowels “i” “v” are not written in Twi or Ewe. They are however used in some other Guang languages, and other languages throughout the world. The vowel variation between “e” and “ɛ” also occurs between “i” and “ɪ” and between “u” and “v”. For example

4.2 One dialect uses a borrowed word, the other an Nkonya word.

Southern	<i>baka</i>	“basket”	from Ewe <i>abaka</i>
Northern	<i>lakpa^l</i>	“basket”	
Southern	<i>ológyó</i>	“chameleon”	
Northern	<i>ɔkɔmfɔ bowuo</i>	“chameleon”	from Twi

There are a few words where one dialect uses an Nkonya expression and the other uses a borrowed word.

e.g.

4.3 One dialect borrows from one language, the other from a different one.

There are a some words where one dialect uses an borrowed expression from one language and the other uses a borrowed word from another.

Southern	<i>Bodo wun.</i>	“They kept wake”	from Ewe
Northern	<i>Besripé.</i>	“They kept wake”	from Twi

5. Indirect Quotes

When a person is quoted indirectly, the Southern and Northern dialects use different forms. The Southern uses the pronoun *mv*, the Northern uses the pronoun *ɔ-*. For example

“He said he will come”	Southern	<i>ɔbéé mɛ́éba</i>
	Northern	<i>ɔbéé ɔbéba</i>

5. The ky (ch) sound

The *ky* (ch) sound occurs in both dialects, but in different places.

Northern Dialect. Here are some examples:

1. South nasal, North non-nasal

	South	North	
“give”	<i>han</i>	<i>ha</i>	but compare <i>han</i> “to annoy” in both
“person”	<i>ɔhan</i>	<i>ɔha</i>	but compare <i>ɔhan</i> “flying squirrel” in both
“ears”	<i>asvɛn</i>	<i>asv</i>	but compare <i>asvɛn</i> “word” in both

2. North nasal, South non-nasal:

	South	North
“before”	<i>asa</i>	<i>asan</i>
“elders”	<i>ahande</i>	<i>ahanden</i>

There is some variation in each of the dialects with some people nasalising more than others.

4. Words that differ between the two dialects.

The difference between the dialects also includes word differences.

4.1 Both dialects use different Nkonya words.

Southern	<i>Okplo!</i>	“I’m going to tell a story.”
Northern	<i>Ogblo!</i>	“I’m going to tell a story.”

The two dialects sometimes use different words for the same item. There are a few cases where both dialects use Nkonya words, but they are different in each dialect.

compare the following pairs of words:

<i>abé</i>	“oil palm”
<i>abébí</i>	“palm nut”
<i>ɔtv</i>	“ladle”
<i>otubí</i>	“spoon”
<i>ansí</i>	“face”
<i>ansíbí</i>	“eye”

In the same way that the Greek letter Ε (epsilon) is used for /ε/, the Greek letter Ι (iota) is used for /i/ and the Greek letter Υ (upsilon) is used for /v/.

D. Nasalized Vowels

Nkonya makes a distinction between nasalised and non-nasalised vowels. The nasalised vowel is written with an *-n* after the vowel. For example:

Non-nasalised	vs.	Nasalised
<i>ɔkpa</i> “path”		<i>ɔkpán</i> “large black ant”
<i>si</i> “stop”		<i>sin</i> “to remain”

E. Syllabic Nasal

Nkonya has an *n-* sound (nasal) which occurs as a syllable by itself. It occurs in certain nouns; e.g. *ntsɔ* “water”, *ɛfɔ* “oil”. It also occurs as a plural e.g. *nswi* “hearths” and *nke* “days”; and as the first person singular “I” e.g. *Mbá?* “Should I come?” and *Ndá mv?* “Should I hit him?”

When this is spoken it occurs at the same place as the following consonant. It will be written as *m* in front of *m*, *p*, and *b*, and as an *n* elsewhere, including before *f*, *k* and *g*. Examples are in the previous paragraph.

F. Tone

High tone syllables with vowels will be marked with an acute accent.

G. -w- following consonants.

-w- will be used to represent the sound in words like:

<i>bwe</i>	“to do”	not <i>bɔɛ</i>	compare this to <i>bɔi</i> . “to split”
<i>fwɪ</i>	“to be lost”	not <i>fuɪ</i>	
<i>ibwi</i>	“stone”	not <i>ibui</i>	
<i>tswɪ</i>	“throw down”	not <i>tsuɪ</i>	
<i>bwie</i>	“break”	not <i>bue</i>	
<i>swie</i>	“plant”	not <i>sue</i>	

H. The Nkonya Verb Phrase

The Nkonya verb phrase consists of a Pronoun or Noun, followed by a tense marker, followed by the verb. The tense marker is joined to the verb. If a pronoun is used, it is joined to the tense marker. A noun is a separate word. For Example:

Marker	Meaning	Parts of Speech (- indicates part of the same word)
-tɛ- Habitual.	“always”	
<i>Mlitɛblí ásón.</i>	“You(pl) always speak”	Pronoun-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
-lɛ-/-yɛ- Past.	“-ed”	
<i>Blu létu mv.</i> (South)	“God called him”	Noun TenseMarker-Verb Pronoun
<i>Blu yétu mv.</i> (North)		
-la-/-ya- Perfect.	“has ... -ed”	
<i>Anilasú.</i> (South)	“We have cried”	Pronoun-TenseMarker-Verb
<i>Aniyásu.</i> (North)		
-bɛ- Future.	“will”	
<i>ɔbékí tókú.</i>	“She will look at something”	Noun-TenseMarker-Verb Noun

be. The -y- form is not used in the South. Note that the tense marker -lɛ-/-yɛ- is different from the auxiliary verb yɛ which is the same in both dialects. *Fayó yékí mv.* “You have gone in order to see it.” is the same in both dialects.

2. ɔ- vs. ɛ-

There are many nouns which start with ɛ- or e- in the South which start with ɔ- or o- in the North.

Southern	<i>ɛke</i>	“day”
Northern	<i>ɔke</i>	“day”
Southern	<i>ɛnye</i>	“night”
Northern	<i>ɔnye</i>	“night”

The ɛ- and e- does not occur at the beginning of any nouns in the Northern dialect but there nouns that begin with ɔ- or o- in both dialects

- ɔkpa* - “path” Same in both dialects
- owie* - “chief” Same in both dialects

The ɛ- form is not universally used throughout the Southern dialect. It seems to be strongest in the southern towns of Asakyire, Akloba and less so in Ntumda. Even in the towns where it is commonly used the ɔ- form is more common than a generation ago. There is a certain amount of confusion in peoples’ minds as to which words should have the ɛ- form and which should have the ɔ- form.

3. Nasalisation

Some words are nasalised in the Northern Dialect but not in the Southern Dialect. Others are nasalised in the Southern Dialect but not in the

The Nkonya Dialects and Orthography

The Dialect Situation

The Nkonya community has two major dialect groups, the Northern and the Southern dialect communities. The Northern is comprised of Wurupong, Bumbulla, and other smaller communities. The Southern Dialect community encompasses the communities of Asakyire, Ahundwo, Akloba, Ahenkro, Ntsumuru, Kadjebi, Tayi, Ntumda, Tepo and some smaller communities.

The two dialect groups are approximately equal in land area but the southern dialect area is more populous as reflected in the number of communities. Figures from the 1984 census adjusted to reflect the number of Nkonya speakers show that the population is approximately 2/3 southern Nkonya, 1/3 northern Nkonya.

Although one can speak of two dialect groups, within each group dialects vary from town to town. An observant listener can tell the town a speaker comes from, sometimes dialect will vary even within a town.

Languages change and so do the dialects within the language. In fact, elders in both communities will say that the dialects are becoming more like one another. This is doubtless the result of greater inter-marriage and communication between the two dialect communities.

Specific differences in the dialects

1. -l- versus -y-

The past tense markers are different between the two dialects. Compare the following:

Southern	<i>Alanu ntsu.</i>	“He has drunk water.”
Northern	<i>Ayanu ntsu.</i>	“He has drunk water.”
Southern	<i>Olonu ntsu.</i>	“He drank water.”
Northern	<i>Oyonu ntsu.</i>	“He drank water.”

Although the -y- form is the most common in the Northern dialect, the -l- form is occasionally used, more frequently now than it used to

But the tense markers with two syllables (*tama* and *mɔkv*) join only to the pronoun, not the verb:

<i>-tama</i> Habitual.	Negative	“never”	
<i>Bvtama wá áfunu.</i>		“They never tell lies.”	Pron.-TenseMarker Verb Noun
<i>-mɔkv</i> Perfect.	Negative Per-	“not yet”	
<i>Fvmɔkv yó nv.</i>		“You have not yet gone there.”	Pron -TenseMarker Verb Noun

The continuous tense marker *-de-* joins to a verb but not to a noun:

<i>-de</i> Continuous.		“is ...-ing”	
<i>Bvdesú.</i>		“They are crying.”	Pron.-TenseMarker- Verb
<i>Ɔde gyaditɔ fei.</i>		“She is sweeping the kitchen.”	Pron.-TenseMarker Noun Verb

1. Verb Phrase without Tense Marker

When the tense marker is omitted in the “should” (obligatory) tense, the pronoun attaches directly to the verb. For Example:

<i>Mliki wanklaan.</i>	“You(pl) should watch well”	Pronoun-Verb (Adverb)
<i>Ɔfei nwunsinésú.</i>	“She should sweep the courtyard.”	Pronoun-Verb Noun

2. Verb Phrase with Auxiliary Verb

The auxiliary verbs *ye* “go in order to” and *be* “come in order to” join to the following verb.

<i>Nebá besina fv.</i>	“I am coming in order to visit you.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Auxiliary-Verb Noun
<i>Fayó yéki mύ.</i>	“You have gone in order to see it.”	Pronoun-TenseMarker-Verb Auxiliary-Verb Noun

3. Vowel Changes in the Verb Phrase

The vowel in the tense markers *-te-*, *-le/ye-*, *-bé-*, *-de* and the auxiliary verbs *-be-* and *-ye-* change according to the vowel in the verb.

In front of *ε*, *ι* and *α*, the vowel is *ε*. For Example:

<i>Nέbá besina fú.</i>	“I am coming in order to visit you.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Auxiliary-Verb Noun
<i>Ḑbéfei gyaditɔ.</i>	“She will sweep the kitchen.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun

In front of *e* and *i*, the vowel is *e*. The pronoun *ɔ-* will also

<i>Ḑbégyi fufu.</i>	“He will eat fufu.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
<i>Beplei Dinsv.</i>	“They played in Denso.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun

change to *o-*. For Example:

In front of *ɔ* and *υ*, or where the consonant is *w*, the vowel is *ɔ-*. The Tense Marker *-de-* remains unchanged. For Example:

<i>Bvdekɔ.</i>	“They are fighting.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb
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<i>Ḑtɔyɔ́ ndɔ.</i>	“He always goes to farm.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
<i>Ḑlɔwa atadie.</i> (South)	“He put on a shirt”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
<i>Ḑyɔwa atadie.</i> (North)		
<i>Ḑbɔ́tsun oyí ámv asɪ.</i>	“He will pass by the tree.”	Pron.-TenseMrker-Verb Noun Adverb

T Indirect Quotes

In an indirect quotation the pronoun *mv* will be used instead of *ɔ-*.

Southern	Northern	Standard
<i>ɔbéé meéba</i> “He said he will come”	<i>ɔbéé ɔbéba</i> “He said he will come”	<i>ɔbéé meéba</i> “He said he will come”

U Vowels in the verb phrase before kp

In the Standard Spelling, The vowels *-ε-* and *-e-* will be used rather than *ɔ-* and *-o-* before verbs that begin with *kp*.

For Example:

Southern	Northern	Standard
<i>Nékpɪ nfi</i> “I will get down here”	<i>Nɔ́kpɪ nfi</i> “I will get down here”	<i>Nékpɪ nfi</i> “I will get down here”
<i>Nekpi agbodi</i> “I scraped cassava”	<i>Nokpi agbodi</i> “I scraped cassava”	<i>Nekpi agbodi</i> “I scraped cassava”
<i>Olowi atɔ́</i> “He stole something”	<i>Oyowi atɔ́</i> “He stole something”	<i>Olowi atɔ́</i> “He stole something”

R Nasalisation

Where a word is nasalised in only one dialect, it will not be spelled with *-n*.

Southern	Northern	Standard
<i>han</i> “give”	<i>ha</i> “give”	<i>ha</i> “give”
<i>ɔhan</i> “person”	<i>ɔha</i> “person”	<i>ɔha</i> “person”
<i>asa</i> “before”	<i>asan</i> “before”	<i>asa</i> “before”
<i>ahandɛ</i> “elders”	<i>ahanden</i> “elders”	<i>ahandɛ</i> “elders”

S Words Different in Each Dialect

Where a word or expression is different between the two dialect, the following rules will be followed.

- 1) If one dialect uses a borrowed word, and the other uses an Nkonya word, the Nkonya word will be used in the Standard Spelling
- 2) If one dialect uses an Ewe construction and the other uses a Twi construction, the Twi construction will be used in the Standard Spelling.
- 3) If both dialects use Nkonya words, the Southern form will be preferred.

Southern	Northern	Standard
<i>baka</i> “basket” (Ewe <i>abaka</i>)	<i>lakpa</i> “basket”	<i>lakpa</i> “basket” (Rule 1)
<i>ológyó</i> “chameleon”	<i>ɔkɔmfɔ bowuo</i> “chameleon” (Twi)	<i>ológyó</i> “chameleon” (Rule 2)
<i>Bodo wun.</i> “They kept wake” (Ewe)	<i>Besripé.</i> “They kept wake” (Twi)	<i>Besripé.</i> “They kept wake” (Twi) (Rule 2)
<i>Okplo!</i> “I’m going to tell a story.”	<i>Ogblo!</i> “I’m going to tell a story.”	<i>Okplo!</i> “I’m going to tell a story.” (Rule 3)

In front of *o* and *u*, or *w* with *e* or *i* the vowel is *-o-*, except for *-de-* which changes to *-de-*. The pronoun *ɔ-* will also change to *o-*. For Example:

<i>Odewu.</i>	“He is dying.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb
<i>Mltonu nta.</i>	“You(pl) always drink palm wine.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
<i>Ibóbon.</i>	“It will stink.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb

I. -tɔ, -su and -hɛ

The prepositions¹ *-tɔ* “in” and *-su* “on” attach to the word they follow. Note that *-su* “on” is different from *su* “because, so” which does not attach. *-hɛ* attaches to the word it follows. For example:

<i>Idin ɔprún ámvɔv.</i>	“It is on the table.”	Pron.-Verb Noun Deictic- Locative
<i>Nɔyɔ wóitɔ.</i>	“I am going to the house.”	Pron.-TenseMarker-Verb Noun
<i>botodua bɔíhé.</i>	“split bamboo.”	Noun Verb-Adjectivizer

J. Verbal Noun Constructions

In Nkonya, some verbs require a noun (direct object). When these verbs are changed to nouns the direct object comes in front of the verb. For example, *ɔleda ɔkan.* “He beat gong-gong” becomes *ɔkan da* “proclamation”.

If these constructions are short, they will be spelled without a hyphen, for example *ɔkanda.* When the noun is long, four or more syllables, the construction will be hyphenated, for example, *iklvntɔ-damli* “repentance”.

¹ In Nkonya these are technically called ‘post-positions’, but they correspond to English prepositions.

K. -gyi- Constructions

The construction -gyi- “every” has the same rule as the verbal noun construction above. Compare *Brégyíbré* “every time” and *Nyankpusa-gyi-nyánpusa*.

L. Some Additional Noun Adjective Constructions

There are some noun-verb-he construct that will be joined together. *Asúnblíhé, Atogyihe, Atowunhe, Atokiehe.*

M. Other Vowel Changes

The pronouns ɔ- and i- change to o- and e- before certain vowels (e, i, o, and u), for example *Ogyí fufu*. “He should eat fufu.”; *Igyi wanklaan* “It is fine.” Other pronouns do not change in the same place:

<i>Bvgí fufu.</i>	“They should eat fufu.”
<i>Mlgyí fufu.</i>	“You(pl) should eat fufu.”

ɛ and a as Separate Words

ɛ “also” is a separate word; a has two meanings. When it is a contraction of *ání* “that”, it is joined to the previous word. When it is a clause marker, indicating the end of a thought, it is a separate word.

<i>Bré <u>ání</u> anilóyɔ́ <u>á</u>, ɔma inv.</i>	“When we went he wasn’t there.”
<i>Bré<u>á</u> anilóyɔ́ <u>á</u>, ɔma inv.</i>	“When we went he wasn’t there.”
<i>Mí é, nóyɔ́</i>	“I too will go”

For example:

Ky- is not used

The *ky* is not used in Nkonya, instead of *ky-*, *ts-* will be in words like *ntsu* “water” or *tsun* “pass by”, *ki* will be used in words such as *wanki* “clear” or *kiai* “dog”.

P. Dialect Differences

Appendix A below describes the differences between the two main dialects of Nkonya. Sections A. through O. above apply to all materials written in any dialect of Nkonya. Because it is easier to learn to read in the dialect that one speaks, there will be some material written in a either the Northern or the Southern Dialect. The rules given below refer to materials that are to be published in the standard orthography. They will not apply to materials written in one of the dialects.

The reasons for the rules and forms that were chosen are given in Appendix B. In the examples below, the form in the Column labeled Southern Spelling will be used in publications written in the Southern Dialect; the form in the Column labeled Southern Spelling will be used in publications written in the Southern Dialect; the form in the Column labeled Standard Spelling will be used in publications written in the Unified Orthography.

P. -l- versus -y- in past tense markers

The -l- spelling of the past tense markers will be used in the Standard Spelling. For Example:

Southern Spelling	Northern Spelling	Standard Spelling
<i>Alanu ntsu.</i> “He has drunk water.”	<i>Ayanu ntsu.</i> “He has drunk water.”	<i>Alanu ntsu.</i> “He has drunk water.”
<i>Olonu ntsu.</i> “He drank water.”	<i>Oyonu ntsu.</i> “He drank water.”	<i>Olonu ntsu.</i> “He drank water.”

Q. ɔ- vs. ɛ- noun marker

Nouns that begin with either ɔ- or ɛ- will use the ɔ- in the Standard Spelling. For Example:

Southern	Northern	Standard
<i>ɛke</i> “day”	<i>ɔke</i> “day”	<i>ɔke</i> “day”
<i>enye</i> “night”	<i>onye</i> “night”	<i>onye</i> “night”