

Production of Tyap Primer Textbook in Accordance with National Policy on Education (NPE)

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Publication Date: 2025/12/16

Abstract: Out of the 67 ethnic groups in Kaduna State, only two have produced early elementary education literature. The goal of this project is to publish Tyap-language primer textbooks. The study collected data using linguistic approaches during fieldwork and then verified the current orthography using a mixed-method approach for analysis, quantitative descriptive polling, and a participatory orthography creation process. Three Local Government Areas (LGAs) at the heart of the Tyap language cluster—Zangon-Kataf, Jema'a, and Kaura—are the subject of this study. The results show that more than 60 ethnic groups in Kaduna State are severely lacking in educational resources. The study is a strong proponent of using instructional materials in ethnic languages to improve the quality of education. The practical outcomes of this research include promoting inclusive and equitable quality education, improving lifelong learning opportunities through Tyap literature, improving reading skills in the Tyap language, developing a Tyap language curriculum, and encouraging teacher training and community engagement, all of which are in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.2, which promotes equitable access to high-quality education and the availability of appropriate teaching resources. These results align with Nigeria's National Policy on Education, which promotes multilingual education and emphasizes the value of indigenous language development.

Keywords: Tyap Language Cluster, Dialects, Early Primary, Literature Development.

How to Cite: Amos, Dauda Bivan; Haddy Yunana Yashim; La'ah Maureen (2025) Production of Tyap Primer Textbook in Accordance with National Policy on Education (NPE). *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(12), 714-719. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25dec304>

I. INTRODUCTION

A pressing concern among many languages in Southern Kaduna, Nigeria suffer the lack of approved and recognised orthographies by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). Some, some of these languages includes Tachrak (Kachechere) language in Kaduna State's Zangon-Kataf Local Government Area, are on the brink of extinction. The Tyuku (Atuku) language in Jema'a LGA and the Dingi language in Lere and Kauru LGAs are equally endangered with a few native speakers. Failure to take immediate action to preserve and introduce these languages in early primary education could lead to their sudden disappearance. Reflecting on the history of Native American languages, we are reminded of the consequences of language loss due to external pressures. Native American children were compelled to attend government boarding schools, where they were prohibited from using their mother tongues, often enduring punitive measures.

By emphasizing the production of literature in five Tyap language dialects for early primary education, this study aims to increase the diversity of language teaching materials or texts in Kaduna State educational sector, while also acknowledging the diverse linguistic landscape of the Five Tyap Language Cluster for a sustainable national development. Indigenous language promotion and preservation in educational contexts is emphasized in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004). This study's advocacy for Tyap language Cluster literary production is in line with NPE (2004). Therefore, creating early primary education reading materials in Tyap dialects makes it easier for learners who speak Tyap or its dialects to access learning materials, lowering language barriers and encouraging inclusive teaching methods. Early primary learners will benefit from engaging with literature in their local tongue because it helps them develop strong language skills and critical thinking abilities from an early age.

Consequently, many of these languages face decline or extinction, and this condition is neither natural nor voluntary. The urgency of the issue at hand is underscored by the findings of the previous research conducted in 2017/18 and published in 2019 regarding the use of mother tongue in elementary schools within the state. To address this challenge, it is crucial to initiate the development of orthographies and literature in these languages. Rather than attempting to tackle numerous languages simultaneously, a strategic approach that focuses on a select few languages or dialects is recommended in this study.

➤ *Problem Statement*

In Kaduna State, a region home to over sixty distinct languages, a stark reality emerges: only a handful of these languages, including Hausa, Tyap, Ham, Oegworok, and Jju, have orthographies, as indicated by a prior survey conducted by our team (Christiana Ladidi Cato and Amos, Dauda Bivan) in 2018, published in 2019. While many languages lack standardized writing systems, the researchers have observed that these languages are in various stages of development through interactions with the Nigerian Bible Translation Trust (NBTT) in Jos and discussions with our target focus groups. This observation highlights the potential for linguistic growth and preservation.

However, a dire statistic looms large: approximately 10% of the 6,000 to 7,000 languages spoken globally, as estimated by linguists at the turn of the twenty-first century, face the risk of extinction by the twenty-second century if no intervention occurs. UNESCO underscores the significance of every language, each representing a unique worldview, value system, philosophy, and distinct cultural identity. The extinction of a language translates into an irreversible loss of invaluable cultural information, encompassing historical, spiritual, and ecological knowledge. This loss not only impacts the speakers' survival but also deprives a multitude of scholars, including philosophers, scientists, anthropologists, folklorists, historians, psychologists, linguists, and authors of access to an irreplaceable source of data.

➤ *Aim and Objectives of the Study*

The aim of this study is to harmonise and use the current Tyap orthography to produce comprehensive textbooks in the Tyap language that include essential areas such as Language and Arithmetic for elementary school learners of Primary One; for the Tyap five dialects. The project would specifically concentrate on achieving the following basic goals to:

- Develop and produce some primer texts for the Tyap language with its five other dialects using its harmonised orthography.
- Ensure that the literatures are in line with the existing curriculum, of the early primary educational level.
- Encourage the teaching and learning of the Tyap language cluster in the study location, and subsequently, in the Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan-Waya, Kafanchan through the National Commission of Colleges of Education (NCCE) intervention.

➤ *Hypothesis*

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➤ *Justification of the Study*

The Tyap language, which is spoken by a significant number of the people in Southern kaduna in more than three LGAs of the eight LGAs, lacks the availability of any educational materials, especially learners-centered textbooks. By producing outstanding culturally appropriate textbooks that will improve literacy and academic results for Tyap language speakers, our proposed initiative aims to close this gap.

Languages are not merely tools of communication but also reservoirs of tradition for their respective speakers' communities. They constitute the foundation of cultural identity and form an integral part of a community's heritage. Shockingly, according to Crystal (2000), a language vanishes from our world every two weeks, a startling statistic that underscores the urgency of addressing this issue of language extinction. This study assumes a primary focus on the revival and preservation of Nigeria's minority languages, aligning with the government's initiative to bridge education with the holistic needs of the community (NPE, 2004:3). However, it is evident that the dearth of standardized orthographies for numerous indigenous languages especially, in Kaduna State with no fewer than 63 ethnic groups, poses a substantial barrier to achieving this goal. The gap in existing knowledge lies in understanding the complexities and potential solutions to this challenge, which is critical for the successful development of the nation. Unfortunately, only Hausa and Fulani (Fulbe) have texts books among the sixty-three languages in Kaduna State. As such, producing resource materials or textbooks for the Tyap language cluster or dialects (comprising of 5 languages), as it was the case with the Yoruba language which has different dialects would be a milestone achievement, bringing the number to seven languages in Kaduna State with teaching and learning materials at the early primary education level.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Tyap language cluster, as categorized by Meek (1963), Gerhardt (1989), Kwasu and Samuel (2022), includes Oegworok (Kagoro), Takkad (Attakar), Kacicere, Sholyo (Maroa), and Fantswam (Kafanchan). These dialects are part of the broader Tyap language cluster, characterized by mutual intelligibility among dialects, primarily found in the Southern regions of Kaduna State. Specifically, five dialects, including Tachrak (Kachechere), Fantswam, Antang, Sholio (Marwa), and Oegworok (Kagoro), were sampled from Zangon-Kataf,

Jema'a, and Kaura Local Government Areas (LGAs) and validated by language experts.

These dialects belong to the larger Tyap language cluster, which is mostly spoken in Kaduna State's Southern Districts and is distinguished by dialects that are mutually intelligible. In a recent study on the Tyap language, Sanni (2023:9) corroborates with Gerhardt (1989) and Blench (2020:137) on the foregoing postulation by Kwasu and Samuel (2022) and classified the Tyap language under the Benue-Congo and Plateau branch of Platoid.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004), as outlined on page 19, specifies that when orthographies are available, the language of the immediate environment should be the primary language of instruction (L1). In cases where orthographies are lacking, a focus on spoken language (oracy) should be applied when teaching it as a second language.

This research builds upon a 2017/2018 Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) Institutional Based Research (IBR) funded study conducted by researchers Christiana Ladidi Catoh and Amos, Dauda Bivan, published in 2019. The earlier study, titled "An Assessment of the Implementation of Mother-Tongue or the Language of the Immediate Environment at the Pre-Primary Education Level in North-Western Nigeria," laid the foundation for the current research. Section 2, subsection 14 (c) i and ii of the Early Childhood/Pre-Primary Education policy (pages 11 and 12) emphasizes the government's responsibility to promote teaching in the mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment. This commitment includes two critical aspects:

- Developing Orthographies: The government is tasked with creating writing systems (orthographies) for numerous Nigerian languages.
- Producing Textbooks: Additionally, there is a requirement to produce educational materials, including textbooks, in these Nigerian languages.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Williamson (1984)'s articulation emphasizes the essential elements of a functional orthographic system: familiarity, consistency, inclusiveness of sounds, and simplicity of use—all of which are critical for efficient language representation and communication. Follingstad (1990) explored the construction of the conventional Tyap accepted orthography by the Tyap Literacy Committee, and Sanni (2023) modified this. According to McKinney (1980) and Follingstad (1990), Tyap's orthography includes sounds that are common to other Benue-Congo languages, just as other languages' orthography. The 38 consonants in the proposed modified orthography by Sanni (2023) include 26 lenis sounds, 9 fortis sounds as against the 7 that was proposed by Follingstad in 1990, and 3 syllabic nasals (Sanni 2023:14).

In essence, the Tyap language orthography plays a crucial role in supporting literacy development among Tyap speakers. A well-designed orthography provides a standardized writing system, enabling learners to decode and encode written text with ease. This, in turn, enhances reading skills, comprehension, and writing abilities. Alignment with the National Policy on Education (NPE) outcomes is evident, as the Tyap orthography promotes indigenous language development, multilingual education, and cultural preservation. By using a standardized Tyap orthography, learners can access educational materials, develop literacy skills, and participate in language-based activities, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes and cultural heritage preservation.

Compared to the earlier research on the seven oral vowels in Tyap that were proposed by McKinney (1980) and Follingstad (1990), the present study finds Seven (7) pure vowels Eleven (11) diphthongs and Twenty-Eight (28) consonants. These are displayed as follows:

Table 1 Tyap Vowels

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| a | fak “cutting” |
| <u>a</u> | fak “hear” |
| e | yet “good” |
| i | di “look” |
| <u>i</u> | fik “evaporate” |
| o | long “fire” |
| u | lu “play” |

Table 2 Tyap Diphthongs

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| aa | naat “going” |
| <u>Aa</u> | ma kpaat |
| ai | mai “measure” |
| <u>au</u> | lau “too much” |
| Ea | feang “two” |
| <u>Ee</u> | neet “going from” |
| ei | tyei “putting” |
| ii | chunchwiit “little” |
| oo | doot “get up” |
| oi | bwoi “fetch” |

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| uu | lyuut “write” |
|-----------|----------------------|

Table 3 Tyap Consonants

| | |
|------------|--|
| b | bat “wall” bwuak “turn” |
| Ch | chat “want” chyat “grass” |
| D | dam “think” dyam “ferment” |
| F | afai “new” fwuai “stomp” |
| G | gang “separate” gwaat “noise” |
| Gb | gbang “far” |
| Gh | ghan “hurry” ghwang “drawing” |
| H | hyat “kill” hyiap “blow” |
| j | jang “escort” jojwaat “pointed” |
| jhy | jhyang “another” |
| k | kang “gum” kyuak “scoop” |
| kh | khang “scrape” khwat “pull” |
| kp | kpa “to pound” kpyat “load” |
| l | lang “line” lwi “slap” |
| m | mam “sun” mwang “coax” |
| n | nang “give/gift” |
| ng | ngang “gulp” ngga “take it” |
| ny | nyang “scorpion” nywang “quiet” |
| p | pampang “useless” pyia “hair” |
| r | rarak “straight” |
| s | sai “shine” swai “new” |
| sh | shwai “roast” shai “shin” |
| t | tai “resemblance” twai “sew” |
| ts | tswam “iron” tsuam “to stalk” |

| | |
|----------|---|
| v | van “tired” vwoun “difference” |
| w | wan “cook” |
| y | yak “grain” yawn “ropes” |
| z | zat “dodge” zwuat “shaking” |

The foregoing highlights how Understanding of Tyap's sounds systems and orthography has changed over time, considering new discoveries in linguistics as well as the identification of sounds and ‘phonological processes which were previously unaccounted for that were previously unknown. It emphasizes how crucial continuing research is to improve our understanding of linguistic systems and processes.

The core of standard orthography is best captured by this phrase, which highlights the standard's function as a learnt and consistent set of norms that are accepted throughout a culture. It emphasizes how crucial orthographic standards are to formal education and literature since they guarantee consistency and clarity in written communication across different authors and situations. This emphasizes the rationale behind this study's adoption of the collaborative orthography creation process for producing textbooks or elementary literature for the Tyap Language Clusters. A space where different Tyap dialect speakers and professionals may get together to adopt a standard orthography that would represent some mutually comprehensible harmony among Tyap Language Cluster speakers.

➤ Harmonized Orthography for Tyap:

a a b bv c d dv e f g gb gh h i j jh k kh kp l lv m mn n ng nw ny o p r s sh t tf ts u v w y z

- 'nw' was added above although it is only a labialized form of 'ng' i.e., /ŋw/
- Fantswam has no 'v', but 'lv' and 'dv' instead.
- Only Gworog, Sholyio, and some Mabatado Tyap-subdialects have 'bv'.
- Only Fantswam has 'tf' like in 'tfwua' (mind, neck); Gworog is 'tswuo' and Mabatado Tyap is 'fwuo'
- Mabatado Tyap always palatalizes the 'jh' /ʒ/ sound. I.e., it's always 'jhy' /ʒi/. Fantswam seems to lack the /ʒi/. In instead has 'jy' /dʒi/ -- a palatalized 'j' to replace the 'jh' like in a word like 'jhyi' (to repair) --- Fantswam will be 'jyi'.)
- The above sounds have long and short labial and palatal consonants (lenis and fortis consonants) as well as long and short monophthong vowels and diphthongs.
- Gworog does not use 'a' for /ə/ or 'i' for /i/ or 'ng' for /ŋ/. It instead uses the phonetics ə, i, ŋ.

Table 4 How Words are Pronounce in Tyap Language

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Zon | zon “goat” | | kham “calabash” |
| Zón | zón “goats” | | khám “calabashes” |
| Zwan | zwan “disease” | | mai “measure” “test” |
| Zwán | zwán “diseases” | | maí “laughter” |
| a/Á | Á kun at “He/She went” | á/Á | Á ku nat “Someone (people) went” |
| Bah | Zi lyen bah “we don’t know” | ba | Zi lyen ba “we know them.” |

The researchers contend that producing reading resources in the Tyap dialects or language cluster is a powerful way to refute the claim that political influence and social mobility require fluency in English. It encourages linguistic diversity, improves access to education, gives communities more influence, raises political engagement, and opposes elite control over language policy.

This is why language ideologies that closely associate academic achievement with the English language are promoted by private school owners and publishers that influence language regulations for financial advantage. Considering the aforementioned, the researchers agree with Igboanusi (2017) that ideas around language education in Nigeria are primarily shaped by political and economic considerations.

However, this study makes a case for the Tyap cluster in line with the NPE and the SDG goal 4. This is so because

of the dearth of instructional materials or texts books among the other sixty (60) languages in Kaduna State who do not have any, as against the Hausa and Fulbe.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the participatory orthography development method in the production of elementary textbooks for the Tyap Language Clusters. The research also used a quantitative descriptive survey, and a mixed-method approach to evaluate and validate the existing orthography by the Tyap language cluster experts in the light of the modification done by Sanni (2023).

It is expected that Elicitation was used to record language use in a variety of speech genres, including narratives, everyday conversations, poetry, music, and many more. Elicitation is a linguistic technique for describing language and is used for data gathering and field work. It would be deployed to test run and validate the orthography that would be used for the development of the literature, by Tyap language experts in the end of this project.

Various elicitation techniques were used in field work for linguistic description and validation. Both schedule-controlled elicitation and analysis-controlled elicitation fall under this category, and each has its own subbranches. When a researcher wants to collect information from a person, they use a questionnaire and ask the questions in a certain sequence according to a timetable. The second sort of elicitation is analysis-controlled elicitation, which is unscheduled elicitation. In this case, the elicitation was really controlled by the language analysis (Chelliah, 2011).

Table 5 Summary of a Simple Diagram of Elicitation

| ELICITATION | VALIDATION | ANALYSIS |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Identify stakeholders/expert | Review elicited data | Tyap language/cleaning pre-processing |
| Prepare elicitation instrument (e.g. surveys, interviews) | Verify data accuracy | Tyap language coding/ categorization |
| Conduct elicitation sessions | Resolve discrepancies | Identity patterns/themes |
| Document elicited data | Validate data with stakeholders | Draw conclusion from insights |
| | Finalize validated data | Communicate findings |

V. CONCLUSION

This study has led to the adoption of a harmonized orthography to produce literature in Tyap language cluster as well as dialects. Given the above, this study ensures the implementation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) on indigenous literature development and production, stakeholders such as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Tyap Literacy Project (Translation Committee) and policymakers should prioritize the following recommendations: Develop and integrate indigenous language curricula, provide funding for literature production and teacher training, establish partnerships with local communities and language experts, and create incentives for authors and publishers to produce high-quality indigenous

literature materials. Additionally, policymakers should allocate resources for research and development, support the creation of digital resources, and promote multilingual education to enhance literacy rates and cultural preservation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers acknowledged the tremendous contribution of TETFUND in sponsoring this research work and experts in Tyap language clusters that supported the translation work.

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