SPEAKING WITH A DIFFERENCE:

BORDER THINKING IN RUFUMBIRA

Inaugural-Dissertation

zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität zu Köln

im Fach Afrikanistik

vorgelegt von

Nico Nassenstein

geb. am 20.02.1985

in Lindlar

Köln 2019

First Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Gerrit J. Dimmendaal
Second Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Anne Storch

This dissertation was accepted by the Philosophische Fakultät der Universität zu Köln in July 2016.

Date of oral defense: 16 November 2016.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

The present work, a study of the "border tongue" Rufumbira in Uganda, would not have come into existence without the help of many friends, colleagues and language assistants, who went out of their way to support me in various aspects throughout the different stages of the current description of Rufumbira. Creativity is not only what makes Rufumbira language distinctive, but also what was needed in order to complete this book, supported by a range of people, both on-site in Kisoro and also in Germany, to whom I owe my deepest gratitude.

My first visit to the Rufumbira-speaking area in the southwestern part of Uganda dates back to September 2011. I stopped in Kisoro for a couple of days while travelling from Kinshasa to Kampala and crossed paths with the missionary Doris Sauder, who had completed a grammar sketch of Rufumbira two years earlier. Since then I have come often to Kisoro District, the fertile and misty land of volcanoes located between Lake Mutanda to the north and the peaks of Mt. Sabinyo, Mt. Muhabura and Mt. Gahinga to the southwest, developing my interest not only in Bafumbira people's language and culture but also increasingly focusing on everyday conversations with inspiring and warm-hearted people, to whom I am greatly indebted for all their insights, explanations and ideas. I warmly thank members of the Kisoro District Language Board, especially Rose Manirakiza, for the discussions and help. I thank the DAAD for the first generous travel grant, and Cusanuswerk e.V. (Bischöfliche Studienförderung) for a three-year scholarship (2012–2015) that made it possible for me to complete this study on Rufumbira, including travelling to Uganda several times a year.

My deepest gratitude goes to my supervisor Gerrit J. Dimmendaal, without whom the present work would have never taken the form it now has, for his endless efforts, generous support and motivation; and to my second supervisor Anne Storch for her inspiration, very valuable ideas and overall support; and to both for their constant interest. Murakoze cyane!

I am greatly indebted to all Bafumbira research participants who have helped in various ways, among them small-scale entrepreneurs Moureen Uwimana and Hope Mahoro, the student Corazon Aquino Ukuli, the barkeeper Allan Musekura, the software programmer Dave Mutabazi, university professor Alois Kwitonda (Makerere University Kampala) and especially retired government official Joseph (Joe) Haguma, former administrative officer Paul Manirakiza, and the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva from the radio station Kisoro FM. Also Capher Nsabiyumva's friends Innocent Mugisha, Peter Uwimana and Rebecca Dufimahoro are warmly thanked for their help, and also the UOBDU Batwa project in Kisoro and the Batwa families. Warm thanks go to Doris Sauder and Reverend Muruta for the first

LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND MAPS

Tables

Figures

Maps

ABBREVIATIONS

-	morpheme boundary	INTERROG	interrogative
=	boundary between clitics	JD, JE	Bantu language (sub)groups
*	underlying form, stem; ungrammatical	Ling.	Lingala
		LOC	locative
∅	zero morpheme	Lug.	Luganda
1	first person	MP	modal particle
APPL	applicative	NEG	negation
AUG	augment	O	object
CAUS	causative	p.c.	personal communication
CJ	conjoint marker		
cl1	noun class 1	PASS	passive
COM	comitative	PFV	perfective
COND	conditional	pl	plural
CONN	connective	POT	potential
CONS	consecutive/narrative	POSS	possessive
COP	copula	PRG	progressive
DEM	demonstrative	PST1	recent past
DJ	disjoint marker	PST2	remote past
DR Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo	QUANT	quantifier
		REC	reciprocal
ENCL	(locative) enclitic	REFL	reflexive
Engl.	English	REL	relative concord
EXCL	exclamation	S	subject
Fr.	French	sg	singular
FTA	face-threatening act	STAT	stative/neutro-passive
FUT1	near future	Std.	standard(ized)
FUT2	distal future	SUBJ	subjunctive
FV	final vowel	SUBST	substitutive
IMP	imperative	Swah.	(Ki)Swahili
IMPV	imperfective	NC(P)	noun class (prefix)
INF	infinitive		

Abbreviations used in cited/adapted language data may slightly deviate from the above-listed terminology.

1. Introduction

*"How do languages maintain unity across political boundaries,
and how do languages create new borders?"*
(Greenberg 2004:19, *Language and
identity in the Balcans*)

1.1 Background to the present study

Rufumbira is a language of Uganda with approximately 250,000 speakers, which in its current form is characterized by contact-induced language change and a high degree of linguistic variation in relation to other closely related languages. Located in the extreme southwest of the country, adjacent to Rwanda and DR Congo, with national borders to the west and south, Bafumbira[1] permanently deal with 'the border' as a liminal zone established in a colonial context. The aim of the present study is a documentation of the salient features of the Rufumbira language, together with a discussion of the strategies employed by speakers in order to create difference from their neighbors beyond the (national) borders. The present study analyzes to what extent language ideologies and a re-interpretation of the colonial border have, from a linguistic-philosophical point of view, contributed to the current form and features of Rufumbira as spoken by Bafumbira in the district of Kisoro.

When first documenting Rufumbira language in Kisoro District (Uganda), I was primarily focusing on the salient phonological and morphosyntactic features of the language and was determined to write a descriptive grammar, discussing mostly language contact phenomena. By doing so, I was paying considerably less attention to speakers' perception of themselves within the border triangle of Uganda, Rwanda, and DR Congo, or to the conceptualization of 'the border' in Bafumbira's thought and social interaction. This changed when I sat one day in the 'Coffee Pot Café' in the center of Kisoro town (southwestern Uganda) with the Congolese linguist Paulin Baraka Bose – a speaker of the closely related language Kinyabwisha, spoken across the border – after having completed several recording sessions with my Rufumbira-speaking research participants. Suddenly, a pickup truck came through the town center, giving notice of its coming with the help of enormous loudspeakers that emitted a booming sound from the cab, while a group of half-naked girls were performing sexually suggestive dance moves on the loading space. The banners on the back of the truck announced the release of the latest album of a major Ugandan musician, and, briefly looking up, Paulin Baraka Bose commented *"ah, si on faisait ça chez nous, de l'autre côté de la frontière, les*

---

[1] The languages of the border triangle that are frequently mentioned are Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda. When referring to the speakers, the (established) labels Mufumbira (singular) and Bafumbira (plural), Munyabwisha/Banyabwisha and Munyarwanda/Banyarwanda are used, while the geographical areas covered are referred to as Kisoro District (Uganda), Bwisha/Bwito (as part of North Kivu Province, DR Congo) and Rwanda, respectively.

1

gens allaient jeter des pierres…" [if they did that in our place, on the other side of the border, people would throw stones], shaking his head in astonishment. By the other side he was referring to Bunagana, the divided town at the Ugandan-Congolese border, and from there eastwards through the villages to the town of Rutshuru, the main settlement of the Banyabwisha community (see Map 1.1).

After my return to the Ugandan capital Kampala I narrated this incident to one of my Bafumbira interlocutors, an elderly and respected man of around 60 years who had formerly worked for the government, and he told me that Bafumbira were nowadays very open-minded and liberal in their expression, and were not afraid of topics that related to sexuality, while *he* shook his head about the obvious prudery on the other side of the border. Here, it must be explained that Banyabwisha and Bafumbira actually share a cultural heritage. Apart from the closely related languages Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira, which have both been described as varieties of Kinyarwanda (see Sibomana 1974: 1), most cultural practices are congruent. Individuals belong to the same clans, share the same clan animals, and, particularly in the divided border town of Bunagana, visit each other when important ceremonies such as weddings or burials take place.

When we addressed language taboos, pragmatic strategies, 'sex' and the 'initiation of boys and girls into society somewhat later in my research, there was a specific recording session when he openly talked about "(…) 'the vagina', those are two words meaning the vagina in *Gifumbira, igisundi nangwa igituba* [Rufumbira, *igisundi* or *igituba*]" (as expressed by former government official Joe Haguma, May 2014), followed by detailed descriptions of how adolescent Bafumbira girls dealt with their first menstruation. Several months later I handed some of the recordings to the above-mentioned Congolese colleague to assist me with a handful of crucial transcriptions, among them the narration in question on 'sex' and 'initiation'. His astonishment when he sent me the requested files after a couple of days via e-mail became evident when asking me what kind of a man the elderly speaker in the recordings was, and if I knew him well. After explaining to him the circumstances of the recordings and the high social status of my elderly interlocutor, he commented *"et moi, je pensais un soulard!"* [and I thought (of) a drunkard!] (Paulin Baraka Bose, September 2014). By way of explanation, he added that this would actually not be much of a surprise, since Banyabwisha on the Congolese side would often reprimand their bad-mannered children for 'slowly becoming Bafumbira' and adopting the Ugandan lifestyle.

The apparent differences between the pragmatic strategies employed by Bafumbira and Banyabwisha when talking about taboos, 'the unspeakable' in language, attracted my interest, and made it clear that speakers on the two sides of the border do not simply have divergent morphosyntactic means of expression but also create identity by marking an ideological, and here pragmatic (thus, usage-based) difference in language. In the following weeks I began to interview my research participants in terms of their attitudes toward their neighbors, a couple

of miles away from their home town across the border, and often encountered swift rejections of any interest in crossing toward the 'Others'. "I have never been to Congo, why should I? Nothing good comes from there…" was among the most expressive statements I recorded when I asked older speakers to tell me about their relationship to their neighbors, the Kinyabwisha-speaking community in DR Congo. Others would respond with catchy poetic phrases, simply stating "in Congo you can get food, but no sleep", or explaining that Congolese would usually come to Uganda to purchase goods while Bafumbira crossed the border with the intention of selling products, which proved that there was "nothing special to get" on the other [Congolese] side. While 'cross-border languages', or 'trans-border languages' have increasingly moved into the academic focus (see Legère 1998, Filppula et al. 2005), and also the sociolinguistics of borderlands (Omoniyi 2004) in terms of the permeability of languages, people and culture, we here deal with the opposite phenomenon: despite a permeable 'open' border, words and forms are almost never borrowed from the other side(s) and therefore mark a clear linguistic boundary – but why?

1.2 Communicative practices at the frontier: A little foretaste

As will be shown in the present study, the communicative practices of Rufumbira speakers seem to be bound to 'border thinking' (see Mignolo 2012, among others); the colonial border is re-established, re-negotiated and manifests itself linguistically, which is achieved through structural esoterogeny, the "restructuring processes whereby speakers of a language add linguistic innovations that increase the language's complexity" (Dimmendaal 2015: 23) through deliberate change and specific lexico-pragmatic choices.

The motivations and causes of Bafumbira's linguistic 'relocation of the thinking' (as labeled by Mignolo 2012), and the ideological foundation of speakers' 'iconization' patterns and processes of 'fractal recursivity' in language (see Irvine & Gal 2000: 37, see Section 2.2.2), can be found in their marginalized status; they have been considered as a kind of additional areal appendage to Uganda from independence until 1995, when Rufumbira was eventually acknowledged as a 'language of Uganda' (see Lewis et al. 2015) in the constitution. Until then, Bafumbira were mostly referred to metalinguistically as *Banyarwanda* (see Ngologoza 1998: 31) by their neighbors, and their language as *Runyarwanda*, 'the language of Rwanda'. Due to constant stigmatization, lack of official recognition and negative attitudes, 'border thinking' is thus not merely an intrinsic phenomenon that causes Bafumbira to restructure and re-adapt their language, rituals and heritage, but also stems from external ascriptions of Otherness to them by other Ugandans. When I worked with Bafumbira who had lived and grown up in Kampala, a day's journey from Kisoro, they would often narrate incidents of

social exclusion and profiling: "Even at campus, I was always called Kagame.[2] Hey, how's Kagame? It's annoying, but you just keep quiet and move on […]" (as stated by the small-scale entrepreneur Moureen Uwimana, September 2012).

Map 1.1: The diffusion of Rufumbira in the border triangle, Kisoro District

Apart from Rufumbira, most speakers also claim to have knowledge of Rukiga, the language of the nearest town to the east, Kabale, as well as English, while some also speak Luganda. This was ascertained through a sociolinguistic questionnaire that was distributed in Kisoro, and also among speakers in the capital Kampala. Knowledge of Swahili was constantly denied, and only two of the speakers I met would eventually admit that they spoke "a bit of others", an expression with which they referred to their basic knowledge of Kiswahili. Due to trade connections to eastern DR Congo, as well as to the scattered diffusion of Swahili speakers in Rwanda (see Karangwa 1995), I had first assumed that communication in Kiswahili would be a daily endeavor in Kisoro. However, during my repeated visits to the area I heard Swahili only in two places, firstly around the vibrant night spots in town, and secondly when the

---

[2] Paul Kagame is the current president of Rwanda. Bafumbira who were said have specific physiog-nomic characteristics often associated with the caste-like label *umutuu(t)si* ('Tutsi), would face this kind of stigmatization more than others.

Ugandan head of the customs office at the border in Bunagana communicated with his Congolese counterpart, the *chef de douane,* addressing specific visa difficulties of people crossing. Kiswahili seemed to be the appropriate means of communication for both of them in this situation.

In the present study, the analysis of languages spoken by Bafumbira is carried out with a repertoire approach (Chapter 2), considering the linguistic resources that are at people's disposal as folders, or registers, of a broad repertoire (cf. Gumperz 1972, Matras 2009, Blommaert & Backus 2011, Lüpke & Storch 2013). The repertoires of Bafumbira seem to be characterized by specific 'empty slots', as still to be discussed in more detail. These blanks in speakers' repertoires stand for the linguistic resources that they are constantly exposed to, and which outsiders would assume to be known by the speaker. In the case of Rufumbira speakers, one of the 'empty slots' is Swahili.

Starting from the notion that individuals are said to pick up linguistic material that they encounter and are confronted with along their trajectories through life, due to the "biographic dimension of repertoires" (Blommaert & Backus 2012: 7), one would assume that inhabitants of Kisoro know some Kiswahili, due to the constant cross-border trade with Congo (where it serves as the national language of the area), to the semi-official status of Kiswahili in Uganda and its use among the military and police, and to the tremendous number of Swahili-speaking refugees from eastern DR Congo who have been registered in Nyakabande, Kisoro's refugee camp, over the past decade. The same applies to Kinyabwisha. No Munyabwisha would expect a Mufumbira to *speak* his/her language, but (s)he would at least expect him/her to know and to speak *about* it. When asked in the course of this study if speakers had heard of Kinyabwisha and if Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha were closely related, most Bafumbira denied ever having heard of Kinyabwisha (or could not give any specific information), and referred to Kinyarwanda as the only related language[3]. It is common knowledge, learnt in schools and taught in history classes, that Kinyarwanda is a related language, and speakers know that the northern Kinyarwanda dialect Kirera (Rosendal 2011: 78) shares morphophonological features with Rufumbira; this does not seem to bother most Bafumbira.

Not knowing a language that is present in one's nearest surroundings (as in the case of Kinyabwisha), or knowing the basics of a language but not making use of them (Swahili), is an ideological choice, and can metaphorically be understood as 'polishing' one's repertoire in order to leave blank spaces. The supply of linguistic material clearly outstrips speakers'

---

[3] It is clear that speakers must have at least a vague idea of what is spoken on the other side of the border, and also how that language sounds or is constructed. Linguistic differentiation and the choices of Rufumbira speakers emerge out of a certain association with, or mental models of these varieties, otherwise the differentiation of languages in the border area as an 'act of identity' (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985) could not be achieved by speakers.

demand, due to the fact that speakers do not need these languages. These 'zero practices' are either eradicated, or they are banned and shifted to other domains where they can do no harm and cannot interfere in the 'creation' process of Rufumbira. As already mentioned, Kiswahili has shifted to specific domains of usage, to certain *'non-lieux'* ('non-places', see Augé 1995), "crowded places where individual itineraries converge[d] for a moment" (Augé 1995: 3) and where the use of linguistic resources may be less meaningful. Kisoro's bars and few night clubs, the entire border zone, e.g. around the customs offices (see Figure 1.1), and the local refugee camp are suitable 'non-places', where individuals come and go, and where otherwise ostracized communicative 'zero practices' (the use of some Swahili, or even Kinyabwisha) can take place.

Figure 1.1: The border zone (DR Congo/Uganda) – a 'non-place' and threshold

Identification with specific language practices seems to be minimal in these settings, and these places are always characterized by liminality, either through the consumption of alcohol, the overt exchange on local politics and spread of latest rumors, or through the transgressive interactions with 'the Others', thus with Congolese refugees. The use of Swahili at the border zone (a *'Schwelle'*, i.e. 'threshold', in Benjamin's (1991) terms, see Chapter 6) between Ugandan and Congolese officials can furthermore be seen as 'applied border thinking': while Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha as spatiolects are avoided in order not to question the arrangement of their complementary distribution, and the official languages English and French are rejected due to speakers' limited knowledge of them, Swahili fills this gap. The use of Swahili along the border is also demanded by the flux of numerous people of various backgrounds, who do not all speak Kinyabwisha or Rufumbira. The Ugandan-Congolese border zone around Bunagana is a place where intelligence services from all three countries are active and political developments are observed with vigilance (since most Congo rebellions since 1996 have

started there). Trucks loaded with export goods, as well as some of the rare tourists, are some-times stuck there for days, and it is also the place where (former) Congolese rebels, traders, and customs agents share the latest local rumors.

The analysis of Rufumbira speakers' repertoires must therefore critically assess whether it is relevant to apply an assumption (often over-generalized) of superdiversification of communicative practices in communities around the world, based on Vertovec's (2007) 'super-diversity' concept, and then applied to multilingual communities by Blommaert & Backus (2012), among others. Speakers who consciously strive for an esoterogenist repertoire will not necessarily transform their community of practice into anything 'super-diverse'.

Apart from speakers' repertoires, a study on the 'making of Rufumbira' that focuses on deviation and saliency based on language ideologies, postcolonial constructions and geo-political languaging also has to include speakers' awareness of their own linguistic and poetic means. The metadiscursive practices of speakers on what is "good Rufumbira", and on what might presumably not be considered Rufumbira at all, often led to heated arguments among speakers. These arguments circled around matters of authentic speech style, proficiency and a speaker's personal trajectories, which were often presented as the principal reason for one's claim of proficiency, and thus as a form of linguistic legitimacy.

When organizing my first research in Kampala and looking for interlocutors, I met two Rufumbira-speaking sisters, Moureen Uwimana and Hope Mahoro, who expressed their intention to help me and invited me to their home in Kampala-Ntinda, where I went through word lists and lists of elicited sentences with both girls. They had both graduated from uni-versity and were now running a small food catering business. After some days filled with recording sessions, I began to notice slight disagreements that were adding up between the two sisters. At times, when going through basic word lists, both girls would offer different terms for a single concept, particularly when recording body parts and household items. Moureen Uwimana would then often criticize Hope Mahoro for apparently having "spent too much time in Kabale with the Bakiga" (where people speak Rukiga). In crucial situations both would reduce the apparent tension by asking their aunt Viola. This situation caused Hope Mahoro to constantly doubt her own provided data, and from then on she began to stay in the kitchen more often, while Moureen Uwimana would sit outside with me and continue the recordings. To agree that there were patterns of free variability in Rufumbira seemed to be an unsatisfactory solution for either party.

Much later, when working with former official Joe Haguma over a couple of weeks, who had been employed by the President's Office, it happened once in a while that he would ask me to "please delete that last sentence… that was not right", in the middle of a working session. When I told him that it could not simply be deleted once it had been recorded but that he could surely repeat it once more the way he intended, I noticed his gloomy face afterwards, and his apparent displeasure. In contrast, after having produced complex (and distinctive!)

syntactic constructions, the recordings include at times his enthusiastic exclamations "… that just was very good Rufumbira, very good!" before continuing with the narrative chain. Sometimes, he also provided additional alternatives, for instance after recording the sentence *"n'icyo kiményesha cuwo (u)umugáni"* [that's what it says, its proverb], by adding *"or better, uwo (u)mugáni n'icyo uményesha"* [or better, that proverb, it's what it says]. "Very good Rufumbira", or *Urufumbira rwíza*, in the sense of Joe Haguma, would thus be characterized as a way of speaking Rufumbira that made it sufficiently distinct from Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha across the Rwandan and Congolese borders, while at the same time including specific lexical and morphosyntactic 'outstanding' features. These outstanding features, a 'unique selling proposition' at a linguistic level, indexed speakers' underlying knowledge, often of Rukiga, of Ugandan English, and sometimes also of some Luganda, and marked a specific style: the creation of a distinctive communicative practice.

My friend Dave Mutabazi, a Mufumbira in his late twenties, who also offered me his help, was, as he would repeatedly state, not a "good" speaker of Rufumbira. Having spent most of his life in Kampala, the communicative practices he would employ when speaking 'to his uncles' lacked certain of the Rukiga flavoring, and, for instance, did not have the syntactic variations that would make someone like the retired government official Joe Haguma metalinguistically reflect on his own speech production with pride. Despite the fact that I never got a chance to speak to Dave Mutabazi's numerous 'uncles', I repeatedly noted down in my books "ask uncles!" whenever I came across insoluble issues. Whenever he called his uncles, for instance when working on phonological variation in Rufumbira and the apparent omission of Dahl's law, they knew the answer, and would tell him what was 'right' and what was 'wrong'. The uncles rejected the omission of Dahl's law in words such as *dufite* ('we have') and *dushobora* [dushoβora] ('we can'), while Dave Mutabazi had also given the free variations *tufite* and *tushobora* [tʰushoβora]. Linguistic ownership therefore seemed to lie in the hands of specific individuals, while others had less authoritative power over language.

The linguistic outtakes of Joe Haguma that contained his little blemishes, Moureen Uwimana and Hope Mahoro's discussions over who was more proficient in Rufumbira and whose realization more correct, and Dave Mutabazi's uncles all expressed speakers' wishes to overcome linguistic doubts (and self-doubts regarding their own linguistic identity as Bafumbira) with a linear 'codification' (beyond colonial, western or foreigners' standardization) of Rufumbira in order to eradicate painful variation. That variation could otherwise diminish the accuracy and distinctiveness of one's own linguistic 'borders'. Even in this first stage of research, it already seemed that Bafumbira avoided wandering in the rhetorical lands of their neighbors, since difference here creates, or denies, identity.

Achieving saliency in linguistic patterns seems to be not only a political process emerging from the sociohistorical necessity of being different from Rwandans and Congolese, and thus avoiding the threat of potential linguistic doppelgangers, but is also a process of meaning-

making that ensures one's linguistic identity within society. It seems that emblematic "Ugandanness" in speech and *Urufumbira* as an accepted and specific way of speaking Rufumbira, are performative acts of "stylistic differentiation" (Irvine 2001: 22) in Kisoro. This can be explained as a form of linguistic citizenship (Stroud 2001, among others) where speakers express their sense of spatial belonging through performed linguistic interaction, and also metalinguistic discourse. The performative acts of differentiation strengthen the community's social cohesion through an ecolinguistic "system of distinction, in which a style contrasts with other possible styles, and the social meaning signified by the style contrasts with other social meanings" (Irvine 2001: 22). The present study aims to demonstrate that Rufumbira is therefore created, performed and conceptualized as a counter-image to something else not only on a mere grammatical basis (as analyzed by the western researcher in his structural micro-analysis) but in the broader frame of social and postcolonial theory. The cornerstones we use to differentiate related languages by arbitrary grammatical means emerge from our episteme, and are by no means congruent with the episteme used by speakers themselves, which is determined by the spatial and temporal dimensions of 'border thinking', and which will stand central to the present study, alongside a discussion of emblematic features in language use.

1.3 Documenting Rufumbira – how far along are we?

What I thought would turn out to be a clear and linear documentation of the Rufumbira language actually proved to be a challenging task, especially when trying to assess how Rufumbira and its many competing forms, variations and choices could possibly be narrowed down to one "coherent" representation of the language. While working on the phonology and morphosyntax of the language, I eventually rejected the idea of writing a grammar that is organized in the form of clear paradigmatic tables and that provides one specific catalogue of realizations as approved by the linguist. Instead, the description of Rufumbira as a non-linear, variable continuum of ideological choices, from which different realizations are provided that stand for different strategies of differentiation from the surrounding languages, has taken a more speaker-oriented approach to analysis.

SIL has begun working on a Bible translation of Rufumbira, and has also come up with a suggested alphabet (see Section 1.5). The Bible translation deviates from the Kinyarwanda Bible, especially in terms of the graphic representation of phonemes, but also in specific morphosyntactic structures (Constance Kutsch Lojenga, p.c. 2014).

While there are several exhaustive Kinyarwanda grammars (Hurel 1911, Hurel 1959, Kimenyi 1980, 2002, Sibomana 1974, Zorc & Nibwagire 2007), there is so far only one grammar sketch (Sauder 2009) of Rufumbira, which can be seen as an overall description of the main morphosyntactic structures of the language. Although the sketch gives detailed information, mainly organized in tables, on nominal and verbal morphology, it neglects most of

the phonological features of the language. This phonological evidence is needed in order to analyze Rufumbira contrastively with the surrounding varieties (for instance by analyzing prosodic structures and the variability of palatalized and non-palatalized velar stops, see Chapter 3).

The Kisoro District Language Board, an institutional group consisting mostly of teachers and local authorities, at some time chaired by Rose Manirakiza and Juliana Munderi, is active in the promotion of the language and aims to publish manuals on grammar, readers for school children and collections of fiction books and orature. So far, they have published one compact dictionary, a short manual *Inyandika y'Urufumbira* ('Rufumbira orthography') in 2009, and a short manual *Ingingo z'Urufumbira* ('Rufumbira grammar') (all published by the Kisoro District Language Board in 2009). Doris Sauder (2010) has also written a compact manual on 'Rufumbira writing rules', which has been approved by the Kisoro District Language Board.

Apart from linguistic and instructional works, several authors have collected and published collections of short stories in Rufumbira. Among them is the late Bishop of Muhabura Shalita with *Iga gusoma Urufumbira* ('Learn to read Rufumbira') (2005), a lesson book, as well as *Amago yifuzwa* ('Homes that are needed') (2007), *Ubuntu* ('Being kind') (n.d.) and a range of others, which are unfortunately no longer available. Sauder & Muruta (2010) edited a collection of short stories written by Senoga, Halerimana & Bugingo, *Hitamo ubwenge* ('Decide taking knowledge'), and Munderi (2005) published a short book entitled *Abantu b'iwacu* ('People from among us').

1.4 Methodology and data collection

The collection of data for the present study on Rufumbira was carried out during several research periods in the Ugandan capital Kampala and on-site in Kisoro District between 2012 and 2015. Some data, needed to cross-check first hasty assumptions, was collected via phone calls, WhatsApp audio recordings and communication via Skype between Cologne and Kisoro. During fieldwork sessions on Rufumbira I traveled to the DR Congo several times, and spent some time in Bunagana, the border settlement that is split between Congo and Uganda.

The sociolinguistic data was collected by means of a sociolinguistic questionnaire that was completed by 40 speakers of Rufumbira, most of whom are based in Kisoro town and in the adjacent villages. In addition, a range of qualitative sociolinguistic interviews was recorded with speakers of different ages, genders and social backgrounds.

In order to analyze the language I began by eliciting basic word lists, and also employed lists of elicited sentences; however, this granted me only very limited success. I organized joint sessions during which I would work simultaneously with one Kinyabwisha-speaking research participant and one Rufumbira-speaking participant, who would then produce the

requested sentences accordingly. While this was efficient for a couple of days, it led to complete chaos as both soon began to quarrel about the results provided. As both interlocutors' mothers belonged to the same clan (*Chameleon)*, they had quickly established a joking relationship, and the male Kinyabwisha speaker would continuously mock the female Rufumbira speaker. This was very interesting from a pragmatic point of view, and encouraged me to focus more on pragmatic differences, but it rather impeded my initial venture in the morpho-syntactic analysis of the language(s).

Thereafter I began to concentrate more on recording texts, and examining morphosyntactic deviation with the help of textual analysis. I recorded texts in Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha, and during visits to Rwanda also in Kinyarwanda. I also analyzed variation in Kirundi (Burundi) and Kinyamulenge (Hauts-Plâteaux, South Kivu province, DR Congo), which are also closely related; all of these languages belong to the JD60 continuum of Rwanda-Rundi (see Maho 2009, Lewis et al. 2015). Among the recorded texts were both non-fictional testimonies (biographies, a person's trajectories, the history of Uganda), fictional narratives (short stories, jokes and song texts) and instructive texts (e.g. a speaker explaining how to prepare *umutsima,* 'maize/sorghum paste'). Moreover, the methodology also included making use of photo and video stimulations in order to produce free speech; prayers and pragmatically relevant texts on Bafumbira's traditions, taboos and social roles in society were also recorded.

Apart from the elicitation and textual analysis, most data was based on participant observation, as I spent longer periods of time within the Bafumbira community. Informal conversations with speakers of the language took place in restaurants, at the DR Congo and Rwandan borders, and with motorcycle drivers and youths lingering on the busy corners of Kisoro town. Other interviews at a later stage were conducted in Kampala in order to cross-check the linguistic data with speakers who had explicitly come from Kisoro to work with me and to go through the preliminarily annotated analyses.

When researching speakers' multilingual repertoires, I managed to do some recordings with Batwa families on the outskirts of Kisoro, which allowed me to compare translanguaging processes among what speakers called 'Bafumbira Hutu/Tutsi' communities, pejoratively referring to them as 'pygmies' (see Hollington, Nassenstein & Storch forthcoming), who are marginalized and impoverished in a socially unjust system.

A range of pragmatic interviews with a focus on linguistic taboos, politeness patterns, conflict terminology and swearing practices formed the last part of my research with speakers of the language, and contributed to my analysis of the specific contexts in which language is employed in interaction.

1.5 Orthography and representation of data

In all closely related languages of the broader geographical area, attempts to establish orthographic systems have been a recurrent matter of discussion, and no consensus has been found.

Standardized Kinyarwanda adopted the system that was established by missionaries in colonial times, which was often classified as being impractical and obsolete, due to the fact that despite having "both long vowels and short vowels as well as high tones or no tones on syllables, the official orthography does not mark vowelless consonants", which means that "written texts are thus ambiguous even to native speakers" (Kimenyi 2009: 605). The most frequently mentioned criticisms of language learners against the established missionary orthography is the form in which so-called 'complex consonants', especially the velarized, palatalized-velarized and one velar fricative consonant, are presented. While these complex consonants are mostly seen as sequences of independent consonants rather than co-articulated phonemes, their orthographic representation looks as follows.

> "The velarized consonants are the bilabial 'pw', 'bw', and 'mw'; the interdental 'fw' and 'vw'; the alveolar 'tw', 'dw', 'sw', 'zw', 'nw', 'rw', and 'tsw'; the palatal 'shw', 'jw', 'cw', and 'yw'; and the velar 'kw', 'gw', and 'hw'. Palatalized-velarized consonants are the bilabial 'byw', 'pyw', and 'myw'; the alveolars 'tyw', 'dyw', 'syw'; and the velar fricative 'shyw'." (Kimenyi 2009: 605)

While the chosen form is reminiscent of other orthographies established for Bantu languages in a colonial context that have no velarized consonants (e.g. Swahili), and looks like a historical form, it has found wide acceptance among Kinyabwisha speakers, who have adopted it (although they have no form of formal language board). The (partial) adoption of the Kinyarwanda orthography by language communities of closely related varieties further contributed to a general view, especially by Rwandan linguists and others working on Kinyarwanda, that there exist only minor differences between the languages of this group, despite speakers' repeated claims that Kinyabwisha, Rufumbira and Kinyamulenge are 'dialects' neither of Kinyarwanda nor of Kirundi.[4]

Speakers of Kinyamulenge (South Kivu, DR Congo), based in the American diaspora, have changed the form of representation to a set of orthographic features that are indexical of speakers' identity as non-*Banyarwanda* ('Rwandans'): they decided to write <bw> henceforth as <bg>, <tw> as <tkw> and sometimes also <rw> as <rgw>, with inconsistencies (Sebahizi 2014), while most other velarized consonants are maintained as adopted from the Kinyarwanda orthography. Moreover, they decided to distinguish between short and long vowels, the latter being written with a double vowel. Orthography here stands as a form of 'social action' (Jaffe et al. 2012) and refers to underlying layers of identity and speakers' striving for distinctiveness.

---

[4] This view was shared by the late Kimenyi in e-mails when responding to my inquiries about the lack of scholarly work on the Congo- and Uganda-based languages Kinyabwisha, Kinyamulenge and Rufumbira; for instance, referring to the few lexical and phonological differences found between Kinyamulenge and Kinyarwanda, and stating that "there are some few Kirundi words in the language" (Alexandre Kimenyi, p.c. January 2010).

In 2014, Kinyarwanda itself was subject to debate at the highest educational levels, intended to make Kinyarwanda orthography "easier" and "language user-friendly" (Kwibuka, The New Times 2014a). The claims "to make the writing closer to the way the language is spoken" (Kwibuka, The New Times 2014b), as uttered by the executive secretary of the Rwanda Academy of Languages and Culture, sound promising at first but are misleading when analyzed further. Instead of simplifying the graphemes for velarized stops and fricatives, the new guidelines refer only to <njy> and <ncy> which would henceforth be written as <ng> and <nk> respectively before the front vowels 'i' and 'e', with the original graphemes maintained before all other vowels.

Rufumbira was, until the late 1990s, written without consistent formality and without any guidelines, and first attempts to codify a common form have only been undertaken in recent years (Kisoro District Language Board 2009, Sauder 2010), with controversial debates on the matter. The Kisoro Language Board uses an orthography that marks distinctive vowel length but is mainly based on the common Kinyarwanda orthography, in that it does not mark velarization of consonants, such as in *umwána* /umŋgá:na/ ('child'), *bwa* /bga/ (cl14:CONN) or *ijwi* /iɟgwi/ ('voice'). Moreover, the Kisoro District Language Board (2009) suggests using <l> and <r> as complementary graphemes, as is also the case in Luganda, and reportedly determined by context (although consistencies were unable to be reconstructed). It has however to be said that both <l> and <r> stand for one single phoneme [ɾ], and that the use of a twofold representation seems to be rather a choice of appearance, making Rufumbira look closer to Luganda, and thus the capital Kampala, than to the standardized Kinyarwanda.

SIL suggested a Rufumbira orthography that is to a great extent based on Luganda orthography, with geminated consonants and, once more, including lengthened vowels. While the distinction of double consonants (see Fig. 1.2, *ibbinika* 'tea kettle) is not justified due to the fact that, unlike in Luganda, it is not a phonemic feature of Rufumbira, the use of double vowels seems to be useful as it helps learners (and speakers) of the language to differentiate between minimal pairs. The term for 'table' is therefore written as *imeeza* /ime:za/ in this Rufumbira orthography, as also approved by the Kisoro District Language Board.

INYUGUTE Z'URUFUMBIRA					RUFUMBIRA ALPHABET			
a amasaka	aa abaana	b ibabi	bb ibbinika	c igicuma	d idaara	e intebe	ee agaceece
f ifuuni	g igi	h ihene	i imizi	ii ikigiiko	j ijiisho	k ikaraamu	l Bibiliya
m imeeza	mb imbeba	mf imfiizi	mp impeta	mv imvubu	n inanaasi	nd indogobe	ng ingongoori
nj injangwe	nk inka	ns insina	nsh inshaabire	nt intaama	ny inyaanya	nz inzovu	o inkoko
oo ikigoori	p amapapaari	pf ipfupfu	r umuriizo	s isamaaki	sh amashilingi	t itaara	ts igitsi
u ukuguru	uu izuuba	v ivi	w isaawa	y umuyongoyongo	z isaazi	RUFUMBIRA Alphabet Chart, Uganda. Trial edition, February 2013. Illustrations © 2001 SIL International Literacy Department	

Figure 1.2: The suggested Rufumbira alphabet (SIL 2013; courtesy of C. Kutsch Lojenga)

Vowel length seems to be an essential criterion in discussions of the orthography of Rufumbira, and reflects a desire to establish a visual difference from Kinyarwanda. When I purchased the aforementioned publications, written by Sauder (2009, 2010) or published by the language board, I found handwritten corrections in them, mostly relating to the inconsistent use of short and long vowels in their graphic representation. On several pages in different books, a second vowel was added whenever vowel length was considered a distinctive feature (presumably by the book seller?) (Figure 1.3). The effort of making handwritten additions to published works shows the saliency of orthographic representations as acts of identity, and is an indefatigable attempt to mark an aesthetic and meaningful difference.
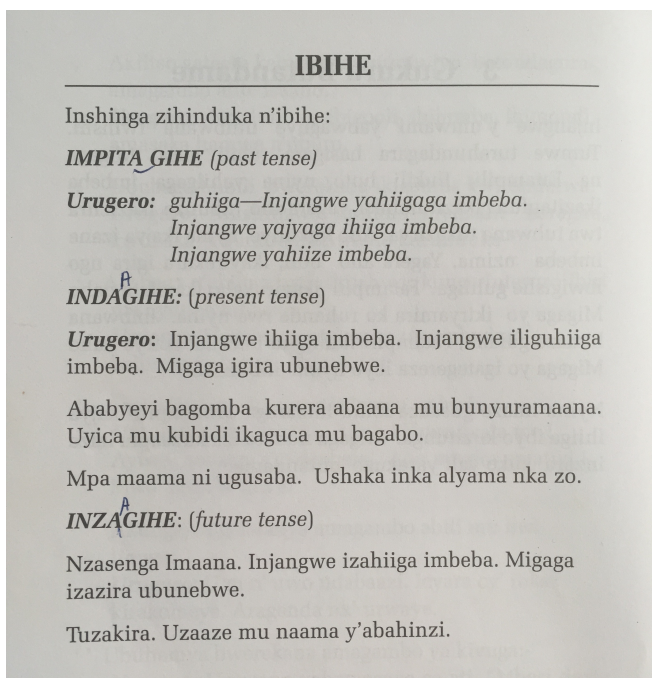
Figure 1.3: Handwritten corrections in *Ingingo z'Urufumbira* (2009: 16)

14

The linguistic data analyzed in the present study is therefore based on graphemes that are analogical with the most representative forms, suggested by Sauder and the language board, with slight modifications. For reasons of adequacy and readability, especially for speakers of Rufumbira themselves, vowel length is distinguished (<a> vs. <aa>)[5], velarized sounds are maintained in the 'traditional' form, as is also the case in all other publications on Rufumbira, e.g. <rw> is therefore written for the complex consonants [rgw], and <tw> stands for [tkw]. The phonemes [ʃ], [β], [c], [ɟ]/[ʤ], [ɾ] are realized as <sh>, <b>, <c>, <g/j> and <r> respectively. The glottal fricatives in Kinyarwanda data, which are velarized, alveolized or labialized [ᵏh]/[ᵗh]/[ᵖh] in specific lexemes, are written as <k>, <t> and <p>. In Rufumbira the corresponding forms are aspirated stops, which are realized in the same form (see Chapter 3). The linguistic data provided is, especially because of the discrepancies between written and spoken forms, therefore accompanied by an abstract morphological gloss (see e.g. examples (1–3) in Chapter 3) but also with a phonetic transcription (in square brackets) wherever needed. This has been proven to be helpful in studies such as by Harjula (2004) on Ha, among others.

1.6 About the structure of this study

After a general introduction to the main research questions in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 provides a detailed socio-historical and sociolinguistic analysis, which aims to show the complexity of border thinking among Bafumbira in Kisoro District. Chapter 3 offers a socio-phonological analysis of Rufumbira, taking both the phoneme inventory of the language and tonal patterns into consideration, and Chapter 4 contains a discussion of the most salient morphosyntactic patterns that diverge from the varieties Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha: Section 4.1 treats the nominal morphology, 4.2 offers more detailed insights into verbal morphology, and Section 4.3 provides an overview of syntactic patterns in Rufumbira. Following this, Chapter 5 discusses sociopragmatic aspects of Rufumbira, i.e. taboos and conflict, naming practices and transgressive language, against the background of linguistic distinctiveness in a border zone. While Chapters 1–2 deal with the sociolinguistic reality in Kisoro District/Uganda, and Chapters 3–5 treat the morphosyntactic and pragmatic data, together with language contact phenomena, Chapter 6 provides the theoretical background to this study with a more abstract view on border thinking. In Chapter 7, the findings of the study on Rufumbira are briefly summarized, while the appendix contains a recorded and interlinearized monologue on borders and language ideologies in Rufumbira.

---

[5] This is suspended when preceding a nasal (e.g. *umwána* [umŋgáːna]) ('child'), following a complex consonant C + <w> and C + <y> (*ubwenge* [ubgeːnɟe]) ('wisdom'), or concerning the reflexive prefix (*-í-* [íː]), resulting in a single grapheme, as suggested by "individuals with authoritative knowledge of the Rufumbira language" (Kisoro District Language Board 2009: v).

2. SOCIOHISTORICAL AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC BACKGROUND

"But what happens when we situate the border on the cultural terrain?"
(Manzanas 2007: 3, *Border transits*)

This chapter aims to provide an outline of the social history of Rufumbira in its colonial context and offers insights into the sociolinguistic construction of social identity in the Rufumbira-speaking community. The chapter also deals with speakers' underlying language ideologies when speaking their language in the border triangle and their metalinguistic discourse, and analyzes speakers' communicative repertoires. Moreover, patterns of migration and mobility are taken into consideration, as well as social fragmentation in language use and matters of inclusion and exclusion. The chapter seeks to illustrate that the creation of linguistic distinctiveness among Bafumbira is also influenced by extralinguistic and sociolinguistic factors that relate to speakers' ascription of identity through ideology.

2.1 The social history of Bufumbira and the colonial struggle

The area where Rufumbira is spoken today, by approximately 250,000 speakers[6] in around 300 villages in Uganda's Kisoro District, has been subject to severe sociopolitical changes for more than a hundred years, first due to different waves of expansion of the precolonial Rwandan Kingdom, and secondly due to numerous border conflicts between the Belgian, German, and British colonial authorities.

Around 1700, the Rwandan King Yuhi II Mazimpaka sent Mwanga-boba from the royal court to the periphery of his reign, as the first ruler of Bufumbira. Following repeated rebellions from Bufumbira against the Rwandan court, King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri finally conquered the area in 1865, introducing Buuki as *mutware* ('ruler') of Bufumbira. Buuki also held control over parts of Bwisha in DR Congo[7], and over Murera, which which was later incorporated into the adjacent area of northern Rwanda again (see Ngologoza 1998: 31). Instead of referring to Bufumbira in the 19th century as being part of the Rwandan Kingdom, it is therefore more plausible to see it as an adjacent area with nominal chiefdoms but in close contact and under direct political and cultural influence from Rwanda, as also shown by Brandstetter (1989: 123) on a map of the Rwandan Kingdom from that time. Vansina's (2004: 153) map also clearly displays how, despite the large expansion of the kingdom from 1796

---

[6] This rough estimation comes from the former administrative officer Paul Manirakiza (May 2014), and appears to be a plausible figure. While there are 392 villages in the entire Kisoro District, Rufumbira is only spoken in approximately 300, due to the diffusion of Rukiga in the east.

[7] The name of the hill Bwisha serves as label for one of the two *chefferies* (the other being Bwito) in Eastern DR Congo where Kinyabwisha ('the language of Bwisha') is spoken, and as the basis for people's self-designation as Banyabwisha.

onwards, today's Kisoro was not part of it in 1867 as the borderline passed just to the north of Lake Burera. However, under the reign of King Kigeri Rwabugiri (1860–1895), attacks against Bufumbira were carried out as an expression of his quest to expand northwards, and also toward the Ankore Kingdom (see Chrétien 2003). His predecessor Gahindiro had also established contacts with Bufumbira but it was only Rwabugiri who succeeded in imposing taxes on the country (see Vansina 2004: 159).[8]

The precolonial regions (indicated as 'Bufumbira' etc.) and the different frontier lines of Rwabugiri's Rwanda (1867 and 1895) are shown in Map 2.1. Based on Vansina's (2004: 177-179) analysis, Bufumbira region was only integrated in the realm in the later stage of Rwabugiri's Rwanda (between 1867 and 1895). It was lost again as soon as the latter died during his return from an attack on Nkore, as "his death triggered the immediate loss of Bushi, Ijwi Island [in Lake Kivu], and other territories" (ibid., p.177), among them Bufumbira. The approximate collapsed frontiers of the realm in 1897 after Rwabugiri's death were almost congruent with those from 1867. After the short rule of Rwabugiri's son King Mutarindwa (1895–1896), overthrown by Rwabugiri's widow Kanjogera in December 1896, who then installed her son Musinga as a successor to the throne (1897–1931), in March 1897 a first alliance with the German officer van Ramsay was accepted. This meant the beginning of the colonial era in Rwanda, resulting in the 1910 border demarcations.
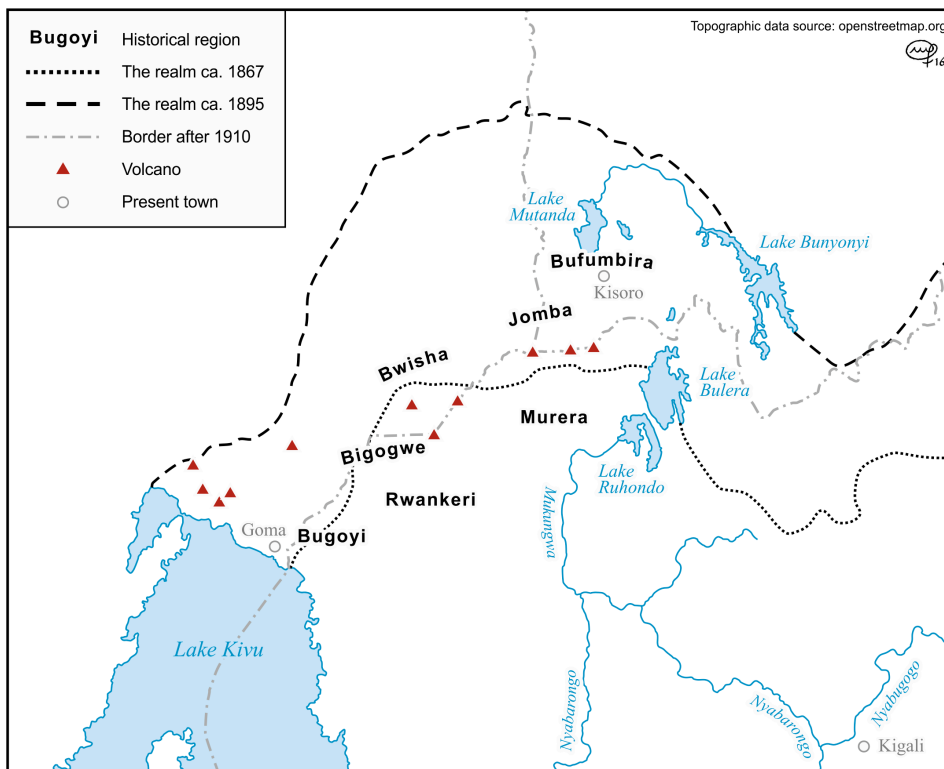
Map 2.1: The precolonial situation – historical regions and Rwabugiri's expansion

---

[8] Vansina's (2004) study is based on colonial documents and oral traditions collected in the area.

It was not until the arrival of the European colonial forces that the apparent need to draw clear borders emerged, although the decisions from the Berlin conference in 1885 often did not correspond with the territorial reality of extension on-site (mainly due to cartographic short-comings). The European struggle for colonies in Africa and the striving for expansion in the late 19th century

> resulted in the Anglo-German-Belgian colonial rivalry and it was **concluded diplomatically in 1910-1911 through the signing of the Anglo-German-Belgian Agreement**. It was then implemented through the **demarcation of the British Uganda, Belgian Congo and German East Africa**. (Murindwa-Rutanga 2011: 5)

British East Africa's political intentions were based not only on extending the influence of the Crown and annexing the Mfumbiro area[9] from 1906-07 on, but also on weakening the adjacent Belgian colony by cutting channels of supply to the Belgian post at Rutshuru in order to achieve the desired British Cape-to-Cairo connection (it was necessary to include the plain around Rutshuru in the railway planning), as becomes evident in letters written by the British colonial officer Coote in 1910, cited by Murindwa-Rutanga (2011: 63).

In Murindwa-Rutanga's (2011) third chapter of his book on politics and power in the Great Lakes Region, he addresses the colonization of Mfumbiro, (according to him) officially part of the Belgian territory, along with the post of Muhavura[10], which was repeatedly invaded by the British, and from 1906 claimed to be integrated into the British colonial territory. All of this led to the Mfumbiro crisis in November and December 1909, when Britain was preparing its forces for war against Belgium, with the Belgians also arming their troops to be ready to defend their side of the Mfumbiro area (Murindwa-Rutanga 2011: 79–80). Britain then invaded the Congo Free State and rapidly set up two posts at Burungu and Mount Lubuna (Lederer 1993).

---

[9] *Mfumbiro*, or sometimes in early colonial maps also *Mfumbiro Massif*, designates "a region of volcanoes lying south of 1° S latitude and west of the 30th meridian" (The Geographer 1965: 3), today situated mainly in Kisoro District, Uganda. Other names that are also found in colonial literature are Ufumbiro and Mufumbiro. Bufumbira is usually used as a label to denote the cultural sphere of influence of Bafumbira people. According to Phillips (1923: 235) the name is derived from the verb -*fumbir* 'to cook' and designates "the cooking place of God" as a metaphor to describe the volcanoes.

[10] This stands in stark contrast with Chrétien's (2003) view that Bufumbira was German, and then became British, which is a too simplistic view. The original Anglo-German treaty from 1890 reads that Mfumbiro was *not* German but fell under British territory (see Hertslet 1967: 900), clearly reading "Mount Mfumbiro to be British". The German boundary line was supposed to correspond with 1° south latitude further east but was indicated to exclude Mount Mfumbiro "if that mountain shall prove to lie to the south of the selected parallel" (ibid., pp. 899-900). To the west, Bufumbira was to some extent Belgian, initially up to the 30th meridian east. When invading the Free State Congo in 1909, British officials announced to push the Belgian border up to 29°47' (cf. Lederer 1993).

Repeatedly thereafter, agreements between all three European nations regarding the border triangle were revised and re-negotiated: after the Berlin conference in 1885, notable revisions took place through the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890, an arrangement between the Uganda Protectorate and the Congo Free State in 1894, another agreement between England and the Congo Free State in 1904, a convention in 1906, and the Anglo-Congolese Commission in 1907–1908, all of which Belgium referred to when Britain expressed its territorial claims over the area (Murindwa-Rutanga 2011: 68). These frequent border negotiations show how the control over the border area around today's Kisoro had turned into a sensitive symbol of colonial dominance, and also explains how the foundations of the local people's 'border thinking' were laid within the colonial period.

Territorial claims were not always clear and caused some confusion, as stated by Ngologoza (1998: 58), since "at this time [1909], it was not known to whom the Kigezi belonged. A German called it his, a Belgian also called it his, as well as the English", then resulting in the claim of Captain Coote from the Kivu mission to annex the area, "until the boundary was fixed in 1910" (ibid., p. 58). Chrétien (2003: 219) claims that Bufumbira, which he describes as corresponding to Stanley's Mfumbiro Massif (ibid., p. 390), belonged to Rwanda, and therefore to Germany, which stands in contrast with Murindwa-Rutanga's (2011) description of Mfumbiro as belonging to Belgium (see also footnote 9).

When comparing 16 different maps published by German, Belgian and British official sources between 1890 and 1906, it becomes evident that the borderline was often marked apparently arbitrarily in favor of whichever colonial authority had commissioned the map. In most cartographic material, however, the Virunga volcanoes (=Mfumbiro) lie in King Leopold's II (Belgian) territory as part of the Congo Free State. Severe inconsistencies also occurred due to the fact the exact location and extension of Lake Kivu were to some extent unknown to early cartographers, which distorted preliminary reproductions.

A comparative map of the border triangle before 1910 (subject to the 1890 treaties) and after 1910 (showing today's borders as the outcome of the 1910 conference), which was drawn according to the indications given in the above-mentioned agreements, is presented in the following (see Map 2.2). It clearly shows that the area of the Virunga volcanoes (sometimes called Mfumbiro) and most of today's Kisoro District as the successor to Bufumbira County was indeed situated on Belgian territory, despite all claims to the contrary and despite early cartographic realizations. Even when considering the British request to change the borderline to E 29°47' S 1°20' (indicated as a dotted line), the whole Mfumbiro range (and today's Kisoro) would still have been on Leopold II's territory.[11]

---

[11] When comparing all maps from 1890 to 1910 that were available to me, it became obvious that the line of E 30° longitude was indicated too far westwards in most maps. When overlaying the old maps with current (correct) material, it became obvious that the line of E 30° as indicated in the distorted
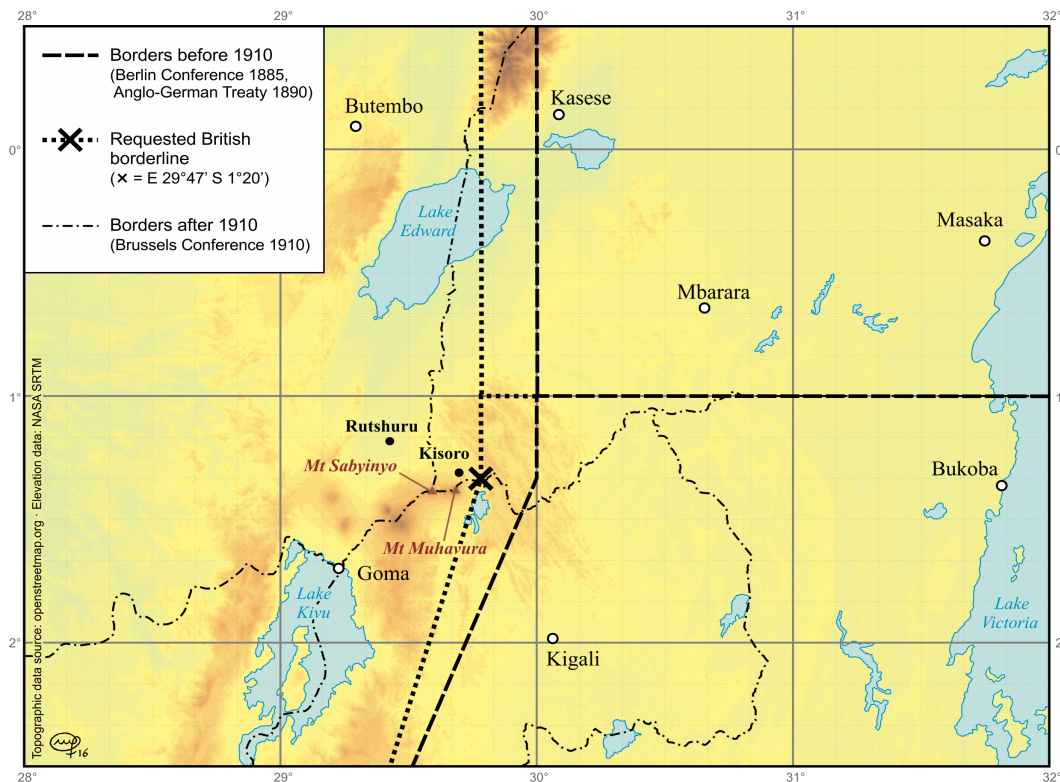
Map 2.2: The colonial borders before and after 1910

The final agreement between all three European nations was eventually concluded in Brussels in 1910, as also discussed by Chrétien (2003). The central focus lay in the "agreement on [Mount] Sabinio as the tripoint of the territories of the three states" (The Geographer 1965: 3), which role it still serves nowadays. On 4 May 1910 an Anglo-German agreement signed in Brussels defined the clear borderline between today's Rwanda, DR Congo and Uganda, clearly marking Bufumbira as part of British East Africa. This had direct implications on the political, cultural and (socio)linguistic development of the area.

In October 1912, the question of chieftainship was addressed, and in a meeting between two British army officials, four Baganda agents and seven "Kigezi men", alongside the British District Commissioner, Chief Nyindo was chosen to be "leader of Bufumbiro as Umutwale" (Ngologoza 1998: 62), with several subordinate chiefs in the sub-areas of Bufumbiro. The influence of colonial Baganda agents such as Ssebalijja on local politics and chiefdoms in Bufumbira lasted throughout the colonial period, beginning in 1909 when British officials, with Sudanese and Indian soldiers, first settled in a place called Kigezi, part of Bufumbira, led by the same agent Ssebalijja (ibid., p.58). In the following decades, local chiefs from

---

maps almost exactly corresponds with the (correct) E 29°47' (I am indebted to Monika Feinen for this information, p.c. 2016). It is not clear if the incorrectly drawn degrees of longitude were simply mistakes (due to a lack of geographical knowledge of the area), or political strategy. Did the British in the end discover that the indicated demarcation line of E 30° as displayed in most maps actually lay on E 29°47', which then led to their demand that the border be relocated westwards to this degree?

Bufumbira had advisors, agents and political representatives who were closely connected to the Kabaka ('King') of Buganda, based in Kampala. This ensured that political control from Kampala was constantly guaranteed. The constant political influence of Baganda people in today's Kisoro District has on the one hand led to civilians' antipathy against the Buganda Kingdom, since it was associated with power, political oppression, and inequality (also see Section 2.2), but has on the other hand contributed to numerous lexical and morphophonological influences from Luganda on Rufumbira, thus making it a "Ugandan" language. The influence of Luganda and the Buganda Kingdom on Bafumbira culture and the Rufumbira language have therefore contributed to its distinctiveness from the adjacent closely-related varieties, as is still to be discussed in the present study.

Muzee Niyibizi, an elderly inhabitant from Bunagana, from the Congo side of the divided border town, could still point to the top of an adjacent hill overlooking the area where, according to his father's story, British colonialists had taken the rough measurements about which part of the triangle would henceforth be under British rule. The hill now hosts a group of Congolese soldiers who have erected their tents on its top, and also a power pole, which overlooks the area. The memories of the effects of the Brussels conference of 1910 are still vivid and are found in storytelling narratives. However, I was unable to ascertain whether the hill in question was indeed the specific location from which the detachment of Bufumbira had been targeted and planned, since it is mentioned neither in Chrétien's (2003) nor in Murindwa-Rutanga's (2011) historico-political studies. However, the projection of Bafumbira's social history (and social identity) on one particular landmark in the area has a primarily pragmatic motivation: it narrows down processes of hegemonic and authoritative arbitrariness in border demarcation to a very visible and tangible level, and includes the colonized community in the discourse. It relocates history written in the Global North (for instance at the conference of Brussels) to a local context, and comes up with a logical epistemology – the effects of today's sociolinguistic situation are, according to Niyibizi's story, rooted in the border area of Bunagana, and not at all in the colonial buildings of Brussels. It turns the colonized subject into part of the (hi)story, and Rufumbira as the language of the Ugandan borderland into a symbol of postcolonial wrenching and linguistic autonomy for Ugandans.

In the course of the present study, as part of an emic analysis, Rufumbira interlocutors were also questioned about how "history making" is usually talked about in narratives and daily life conservation. Most speakers claimed that the 1910 decision to fully and officially integrate Bufumbira into British East Africa was "the best decision" (as Capher Nsabiyumva phrased it, November 2015)[12] in order to facilitate its detachment from Congo and Rwanda.

---

[12] The mentioning of individual speakers' names was agreed upon in the course of this study. They often underlined that *the* Bafumbira are not a homogenous entity, and language awareness therefore reveals a high degree of variation, as becomes evident in the present analysis. Whenever mentioned in detail, interlocutors encouraged me to indicate their comments as the opinions of one individual.

Speakers often claimed that by that time Rufumbira already constituted the most used local language, which according to them is part of the justification as to why it needed to be separated from influences such as the Rwandan court. While it is true that Kinyarwanda varieties spoken in the periphery deviate(d) largely from the variety of the Rwandan court and South-central Rwanda, often known as *Rwanda rwa Gasabo* (see Rosendal 2011, Nassenstein 2015a), it is questionable whether the label Rufumbira already existed, or was in use. Until 1995, non-Rufumbira speakers would often refer to the language as *(U)runyarwanda*, which has developed into a label that describes Kinyarwanda in Uganda. While this label was always rejected by speakers, Rufumbira as a linguistic label has only spread into official levels from 1995 on, when it was officially recognized as a language of Uganda in the constitution. The following sections seek to discuss how social criteria bound to language use and speakers' multilingual resources in interaction have built upon the European colonial policies, and how attitudinal and ideological aspects have transferred aspects of 'border thinking' from an initially political to a linguistic and postcolonial level.

2.2 Sociolinguistic analysis – the social making of a difference

The following sections discuss the main sociolinguistic topics which relate to Bafumbira's social identity and matters of style, considering Rufumbira as a specific 'way of speaking'. Language ideological questions and the quest for distinctiveness, the repertoires that are at speakers' disposal, and questions of mobility and migration are also included.

While most of the data presented were extracted from qualitative interviews with research participants, a general sociolinguistic overview was obtained through the distribution of a questionnaire that was filled in by 40 speakers (see appendix). **Matters of identity** (2.2.1), **ideologies and metalinguistics** (see Section 2.2.2, among others), **multilingual repertoires** (see Section 2.2.3), **speakers' mobility** (2.2.4), and **processes of Selfing and Othering** (2.2.5) are at the center of the analysis. Further data that were included in the questionnaire touch upon language use in specific contexts and are presented in Chapter (5) in the in-depth pragmatic analysis.

2.2.1 Style and social identity: Being Mufumbira through a 'way of speaking'

Rufumbira speakers, when asked to explain in a few words what 'being Mufumbira' meant to them, would usually refer to a specific "way they [the Bafumbira] speak, and actually the way they take themselves [which] is not the same" in comparison to surrounding groups, and would explicitly also refer to in-group naming practices. According to speakers, their social identity is mainly achieved and maintained through these two determining factors, according to which the Rufumbira language can be seen as a contrastive 'way of speaking' (rather than as a mere variety of Kinyarwanda), while speakers also employ different naming practices

compared to their linguistic neighbors. The community of Rufumbira speakers shares a 'social identity', whose construction goes along with

> processes by which peoples in vastly different societies use their linguistic resources (…), **to set boundaries and borders linguistically**, to overcome the strong forces, both external and internal, of conquest. (Blot 2003: 8)

The boundaries that are constructed through identity-building processes relate to Auer's (2007) work on 'acts of identity', building on Le Page's (1978) model, according to which "our socio-stylistic choices are made in order to conform to the behavior of those social groups we wish to be identified with" (Auer 2007: 4). Contrasting with Labov's (1972) view of an individual belonging to different groups that impact on his language, Le Page's model emphasizes the individual's choice to affiliate with one specific group, whereafter (s)he expresses his/her belonging through linguistic features. More precisely, Auer (2007: 6) defines these acts of identity as

> (…) the selection of a **linguistic element which indexes some social group A** and which is chosen on a particular occasion (in a particular context) in order to affiliate oneself with or disaffiliate oneself from a social group B.

Rufumbira speakers' acts of identity are expressed through 'communicative management' on various levels, and include emblematic features that are specifically employed to "disaffiliate" themselves from adjacent communities. The underlying processes include the re-arrangement of existing linguistic material, and can therefore to some extent be seen as stylistic performance, or 'stylization' (ibid., p.6). This process can be understood as a form of 'linguistic constructioneering', a concept introduced by Suleiman (2006: 53), who also refers to similar cases as "the operation of fashioning the language-identity link", in relation to languages in Norway. When focusing on the predominance of constructed social identities in interaction, the question must also be raised as to what extent cultural or ethnic identities play a role in Kisoro.

While Dimmendaal (2015: 77–78) narrates an incident from the Nuba mountains (Sudan) where descendants of two different groups in armed conflict discovered shared blood lines and clan lineage, which resulted in the attenuation of a critical encounter, the clan structure found in the Central African border triangle presents itself quite differently (and the comparison of both may appear as arbitrary in the present case). Identity concepts that are bound to clan affiliation, as they are common in parts of Rwanda, and especially in Eastern DR Congo, have tended to diminish in meaning over time in Kisoro. Among Banyabwisha in Congo, the clans to which an individual's parents belong not only regulate questions of belonging but are also of importance for marriage customs in a certain constellation. In Kisoro, most young speakers were unable to give detailed information on their clan background, and considered it less important than did young Banyabwisha, most probably due to the fact that

power constellations shifted after the establishment of the colonial borders, with representatives of the Buganda Kingdom with dominating influence.

While Banyabwisha from Congo usually describe young Bafumbira as adolescents who suffer from a loss of culture, tradition, and politeness, Banyabwisha are characterized by Bafumbira as very old-fashioned, and also as impolite and "rough" people (as explained by the linguist Paulin Baraka Bose and the student Corazon Ukuli, March 2013). Although older speakers see less (cultural) difference between the two communities, since they can still trace their ancestors' trajectories across the borders and know about their families' shared heritage, border crossing has now become a quasi non-existent practice. Only in the divided border town of Bunagana do a few elderly men cross from Congo to Uganda and vice versa for weddings and burials (as explained by the elderly intellectual Muzee Niyibizi in Bunagana, September 2014).

Elderly Bafumbira intellectuals confirmed that their and their neighbors' "culture is perceived as one culture and one people with some differences concerning the ethnic clashes in the three countries", while they see the increasing degree of immobility (due to the conflict scenario) with resignation. "Ethnic" identities, based on the (colonially) institutionalized ethnonyms 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi', are indeed treated differently in Rwanda, DR Congo and Uganda. While both constructed ethnic groups, actually going back to a caste-like system, with time became "ethnonyms accepted by the populations they designate" (Vansina 2004: 36) in Rwanda and Congo, they did "not imply any political notion referring to their status in Ugandan society" (as stated by university professor Alois Kwitonda, September 2012). They are therefore not perceived as antagonistic groups in Kisoro, which marks a salient difference from the Rwanda and Congo situation. Politically loaded glottonyms (of so-called "Rwandophone" communities), often supposed to hastily comprise the broader area of 'Kinyarwanda varieties' in all three countries, and conflicting ethnonyms ('Hutus' and 'Tutsis') are a reflection of the complex entanglement of historico-political events, with ascribed labels of ethnicity, language and sociocultural belonging in the entire border area being initially purely extrinsic labels. While speakers themselves have mainly focused on local structures, such as clans, lineages and local authorities, external (colonial) authorities have mainly put their efforts into establishing alleged ethnic affiliations, labels of Otherness, and contrasting identities. When the conflict setting in Rwanda (1994) and Congo (from 1994–today) became more and more infused with these labels, the population in Kisoro began to face away from these instrumentalized distinctions.

Other than ethnic or lineage issues, speakers' social identity rather circles around the fact that "the way we [meaning: Bafumbira] talk is not the way the Banyarwanda talk" (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015), and would refer to the prosodic differences between Rufumbira, standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, expressing the view that "the accent is not the same". The three ways of speaking are predominantly marked by stylistic features.

Coupland (2007: 1) defines 'style' as a very specific "way of doing something", which can design choices concerning all conceivable areas of daily life, and also language. Moreover, "styles are constructed so as to build up contrasts between 'us' and 'them'", as explained by Auer (2007: 13). The linguistic style of speaking the language of Kisoro District as a Mufumbira does, in contrast to the way a Congolese speaks the adjacent variety, or as a Rwandan speaks his/hers, marks a collective social identity which is steadily produced and reproduced in a distinctive way of speaking in narratives, public discourse and in the construction of heritage in the border triangle. Ways of speaking are defined by Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz (1982: 13) as

> the actual **linguistic cues used through which information relevant to the other two perspectives** ["different cultural assumptions", "ways of structuring"] **is signalled**. This level includes grammar and lexicon as well as prosody, pausing, idioms, and other formulaic utterances.

Ways of speaking are seen by Coupland (2007: 2) as "indexically linked to social groups, times and places", just as dialects in general are. Yet, the core difference between a mere 'dialect' and a 'way of speaking', according to Coupland, is that the latter also includes an analysis of speakers' usage, enactment and performance of social styles in order to serve specific social purposes, especially in complex geopolitical settings. American megacities are in this sense as complex as the border area of Southwestern Uganda, where the notion of 'dialect' is insufficient when we look at structural differences that depend to a great extent upon performances, and upon identity constructions by speakers, and not only on sets of isoglosses between closely related language varieties.

The concept of 'style', when referred to Bafumbira's realization of a 'W(est) Highlands' (Nurse & Muzale 1999) language variety (= Bantu JD60), includes linguistic factors such as phonological and morphosyntactic variation, and also sociopragmatic and historico-political factors. The stylistic analysis of Rufumbira is therefore not uniquely undertaken from a variationist sociolinguistic angle (as e.g. by Labov 1966, 1972, 2001) or with a practice-oriented approach to studying speakers' community of practice (CoP; Eckert 1989, 2000); instead, its scope has to be extended to the study of the contexts in which the stylistic production of Rufumbira is essential (see Chapter 5), and those in which it is not.

Most Bafumbira who were contacted during my research in Kisoro were well aware of the fact that the Barera [(a)βaɾɛɾa] from the Northwestern part of Rwanda (around Ruhengeri/Musanze) speak a dialect of Kinyarwanda (*Kirera*) which is closely related to Rufumbira; most morphophonological features are shared between the two varieties. This did not seem to bother most speakers, as the national border separates the two areas of Bufumbira and Burera. When asked about the difference between Barera and Bafumbira people, one speaker replied calmly "you find it not quite different from Rufumbira". The degree to which distinctiveness from neighboring varieties must be maintained as a stylistic endeavor when

speaking Rufumbira is therefore not consistent, and can at times be suspended. However, when speakers' social identity is at stake, Kirera and Rufumbira become two different ways of speaking, particularly with regard to their different strategies of integrating lexemes from European languages.

This was expressed by two speakers who said "when they [meaning: the Barera] are talking, they (sometimes) even insert words of French, a Mufumbira can talk without inserting an English or Swahili word". This reveals similarities with Storch's (2011: 110) example of the Cameroonian secret language Shuu mum, based on "the use of typical, beautiful foreign words". By inserting French, English or German words into the secret language, "these words typically represent[ed] colonial discourse and by mimetically interpreting the Europeans' way of speaking and behaving, unmask[ed] them" (ibid.). In Bafumbira's speech, when social identity is marked in discourse, the lack of French words stands indexically for a label of being neither "Rwandan" (and speaking Kirera), nor "Congolese" (speaking Kinyabwisha). The use of English words, in contrast, can strengthen the mimetic linguistic representation of former British colonial territory, and can be seen as Mignolo's postcolonial 'relocation of the thinking' (cf. Chapter 6) as a performed practice of stylistic differentiation, or, as Suleiman (2006: 56) puts it, as 'lexical border guards' that are not to be violated. These performed practices may also reflect (post)colonial language policies, since – as stated by speakers – "[a] Munyarwanda who never went to school knows French. But a Mufumbira who never went to school doesn't know English".

Here again, the crucial focal point seems to be a matter of linguistic citizenship, as has already been introduced. Apart from being mimetic and emblematic, the production of a Ugandan identity on a grassroots level seems to be characterized by a situation "where speakers themselves exercise control over their language, deciding *what* languages are, and what they may *mean*" (Stroud 2001: 353, author's highlight), and how they are connected to social issues and policy issues. Wee (2016: 338) states that "[t]he sophistication of linguistic citizenship arises from its clear recognition that the meanings attributed by speakers to their languages change over time", for instance when comparing the emergence of a strong Bafumbira identity in a colonial context of demarcation, and then the reproduction of linguistic boundaries through interaction and performance in a postcolonial context, as a strategy of facing away from insecurity, conflict and 'traditionality'. The linguistic citizenship as incorporated by Bafumbira also has to do with positionality (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), whereby speakers position themselves on the Ugandan side, and Congolese and Rwandas who speak similar languages beyond that boundary, and beyond their linguistic citizenship.

Moreover, another context in which the stylistic production of Rufumbira is required is that of naming practices. Naming practices are seen as another crucial indicator of one's identity, as also reflected by Roof (2012) who says "[n]ames have power; they define and place us. They can be weighty (…)". In Kisoro, this often become obvious in interaction when

somebody introduces himself as *Jean Claude* [ʒɔ̃:kʁodə] or *Jean-Baptiste* [ʒɔ̃:batistə] instead of simply as *John,* "adding those French-French things" (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015). While surnames are usually identical in all three adjacent border areas, speakers' first names thus make the difference, depending on whether English or French names are given to a child. The colonial heritage in naming practices indexes one's identity and 'belonging', for instance when greeting someone (*amahoro Agnes!* [agnɛs] vs. [iɲɛs]/[aɲɛs]) with a deviating pronunciation of the first name between French and English. The different exoglossic language policies (French vs. English) mark different epistemic territories, and the different spaces of an individual's sphere of belonging. As other cultural and linguistic features are often (perceived as) similar, obvious markers of one's identity, like French or English Christian names, remain as invariable labels that index a speaker's origin and cultural terrain as belonging to a particular side of the border (see also Chapter 5).

Both above-mentioned factors are thus what most speakers refer to when they state that "the way the Banyarwanda talk is not the way we talk, so that makes a difference" (Joe Haguma, April 2014). They re-establish the order "on a cultural terrain", as addressed in the epigraph, quoted from Manzanas' (2007) inspiring volume on *'Border Transits'.* In Kisoro, "location becomes an intimate feature of identity and thus of the similitude between and among neighboring things" (Manzanas 2007: 12), and an invisible geographical line is re-invented both linguistically and culturally. The debated colonial border (see the following section) is therefore turned into a symbol of social identity and becomes multidimensional.

A similar view of geographical demarcation lines is found in Karen Tei Yamashita's (1997) novel *'Tropic of Orange'*, which deals with spatial conceptualizations in Los Angeles, where a homeless character states that "[t]here are maps and there are maps and there are maps" (cited in Manzanas 2007: 23), referring to three levels of demarcations. While some maps relate to the demarcation of the surface of the land, others refer to the political class, language and culture, and again others relate to waves of fragmentation of the sky by satellites, radio and electromagnetic waves. In Kisoro, we also find a multiplicity of "maps". The colonial borders, as lines drawn on a map, continue to represent (colonial) geographical units but also new postcolonial units that have created divergent cultural spaces and linguistic practices, as a reflection of speakers' mental maps, as "the mental images that people form of places" (Gould & White 2002: 138). The geographical maps are still ubiquitous in Kisoro in tourist agencies and craft shops, indicating the route to the Mgahinga National Park, which always also displays the adjacent Volcanoes National Park (Rwanda) and Parc National des Virunga (DR Congo). In tourists' interaction, the borders are therefore constantly addressed, and are equally included in park rangers' narratives when precautiously guiding tourists along the colonial boundaries (only crossed by mountain gorillas whose habitat lies on the territory of all three national parks, which seems rather paradoxical). In Bafumbira's thought and interaction, the maps have developed into postcolonial units, that are (re)constructed semiotically

and pragmatically in interaction, when calculating the prices for motorcycle rides up to the border towns Cyanika and Bunagana, or for instance when sharing rumors of the latest political developments across the borders, functioning as antagonistic places that contribute to a construction of a strong Bafumbira identity.

Most recently maps have also gained a third dimension, and turned into 'e-borderlands' (cf. Omoniyi 2014) due to the use of all three adjacent language varieties in CMC (computer-mediated communication) to varying extents. While young Rwandans tend frequently to use Kinyarwanda in social media, Banyabwisha make only occasional use of Kinyabwisha (they seem to use a lot more of Swahili), and young Bafumbira prefer not to use Rufumbira at all in conversations on WhatsApp, Facebook and Viber but use English in social media (see Figure 2.1, showing a Facebook group initiated by Bafumbira). These different patterns of use reflect different strategies of relocating (and copying) social scapes to virtual scapes.

The essential question of "what is Rufumbira?" must also be addressed. Or, as a more existential question, "does a language named Rufumbira actually exist?" In spite of most (Kinyarwanda-focused) linguists' accounts (Kimenyi 1980, 2002, 2004, Sibomana 1974), who describe it as the northernmost form of Kinyarwanda but not as a variety in its own right, speakers conceptualize it as lived and performed language practice, and as a form of ideological grassroots artefactualization, in contrast to a Western artefactualization of languages (see Blommaert 2008, Lüpke & Storch 2013). Speakers perform their social identity as Bafumbira in order to create 'Rufumbira' as a linguistic entity, which is also based on extralinguistic factors. This creation of Rufumbira occurrs in contrast to certain linguists who do not acknowledge the existence of a language called Rufumbira.[13]

---

[13] While Kimenyi (2009: 604), in his sketch of Kinyarwanda morphology, simply notes that "there are also ethnic Banyarwanda in Southern Uganda in the Kigezi district, known as Bafumbira", Bourgeois (1957: 209, cited by Sibomana [1974: 1]) points out that *"on se trouve pas en face de deux langues différentes, mais d'une seule langue parlée au Rwanda, en Territoire de Rutshuru (Congo Belge), au Bufumbira (Uganda) (…)"* [we are not facing two different languages but one single language spoken in Rwanda, in the *Territoire de Rutshuru* (Belgian Congo) and in Bufumbira (Uganda)].
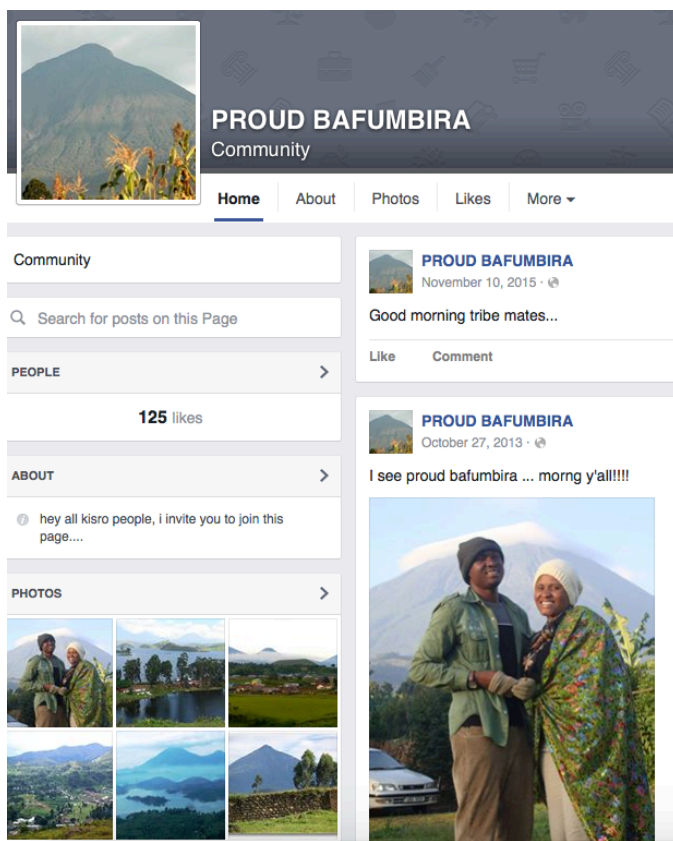
Figure 2.1: The use of English in the Facebook group 'Proud Bafumbira'[14]

The linguistic identity that is associated with speaking Rufumbira is therefore a sensitive one, and needs to be treated with care. Speakers have, at least until 1992, always been confronted with a painful rejection of their social identity as Bafumbira by other Ugandans, and also by Congolese and Rwandans alike. Labeled as *Banyarwanda, Runyarwanda speakers,* or as non-authentic Rwandans in the periphery (as at times they are described by Rwandans from the capital Kigali), they have dealt with extreme marginalization, exclusion and non-acceptance.

The diffuse border setting, still to be theoretically analyzed in this study, is therefore used as a shield of their social identity against influences from Rwanda and DR Congo. The fragile identity of Bafumbira as a product of imperial border shifts and of changing territorial claims over the area is re-invented as culturally "unique selling point" and distinctive feature. The performance of a linguistic "super-Ugandanness" functions in terms of Mignolo's (2012) 'relocation of the thinking', where the given colonial variables are creatively used as post-colonial mimesis in order to shape something new, as new symbols in an established system.

The creation of a new social identity can here also be related to Blumer's (1969) 'symbolic interactionalism'. Blumer (1969: 3) describes the central position behind the concept as being "that the meanings that things have for human beings are central in their own right", considering "meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the

---

defining activities of people as they interact" (ibid., p.4). Moreover, the concept is based on the assumption that the use of meanings by an individual undergoes a process of interpretation, constitutes a form of self-communication (or negotiation), and – essential for the case of Bafumbira's social identities – also undergoes a process of selection, transformation and formative processes of revision. Rufumbira speakers therefore transform the meanings of their surrounding world in their production of a postcolonial identity, striving for the construction of a social identity that they interpret as a Rufumbira-speaking sociocultural and linguistic endeavor. The fact that interpretation processes do not all happen in the same way or necessarily release the same "meanings" for all speakers explains why speakers' phonological and morphosyntactic realizations of the language as expressions of their linguistic identity vary, and why there is no stable consensus (apart from what is promoted by the Kisoro language board) on what Rufumbira thought, language and core culture really "mean", and how they are encoded. However, Bafumbira identity is not the only identity to be deliberately created or (re-)invented. Castells (2010: 7) refers to the constructedness of all identity concepts, whereof especially the context in which they are constructed is interesting to analyze.

> It is easy to agree on the fact that, from a sociological perspective, **all identities are constructed.** The real issue is how, from what, by whom, and for what. The construction of identities uses **building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations**. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and **rearrange their meaning**, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework.

For the social identities of Bafumbira this implies that speakers mainly build on geo-historical material, and, metaphorically speaking, make use of a "postcolonial bulldozer" to level their building plot. Thus, the construction of social identity in the border triangle of Rwanda, DR Congo and Uganda clearly has to do with 'border thinking', and the social conditions bound to speakers' distinctive realizations of Rufumbira can be analyzed through the lens of a 'sociolinguistics of the border' (Carvalho 2014). Border sociolinguistics focuses, according to Carvalho (2014: 1), on peculiar linguistic features of border communities, while "each variety carries different social capital and values, triggering attitudes and underlying ideologies among community members and outsiders". The sociolinguistic study of the Ugandan-Congolese and Ugandan-Rwandan borderlands and Bafumbira's conceptualization of their language is therefore mainly based on language ideologies, language attitudes and matters of inclusion and exclusion that define the community of practice (CoP). The definition of borderlands speakers' CoPs has to do with self-localization: they can either express their orientation toward the national or regional capital, such as Kampala for Uganda, Goma for DR Congo, and Kigali for Rwanda, or toward their neighbors across the border, as also pointed

out by Carvalho (2014: 1) insofar as "peripheral communities locate themselves in relation to their national center through language, bringing to the fore intrinsic social aspects of language behavior".

Altogether, the creation of speakers' social identity, and the emphasis on understanding Rufumbira first and foremost as a distinctive 'way of speaking', must lead us to a closer look at the underlying language ideologies.

2.2.2 Language ideologies, distinctiveness and metalinguistic discourse

Language as used by Bafumbira is ideologically motivated. It is shaped by the creation and strengthening of a social identity that contrasts with adjacent social identities, as already discussed in the previous paragraphs. Language ideology becomes visible in phonology, morphosyntax and pragmatics, whenever linguistic variation is at work. The concept of language ideology, however, is not an exclusively linguistic one since it always links "language to group and personal identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology" (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 55–56). A theoretical framework of ideology has to be taken into consideration in this study (see, among others, Joseph & Taylor 1990, Blommaert 1999, Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity 1998). Alongside the various other definitions available, language ideologies are defined by Verschueren (2012: 7) as a dynamic concept, and as

> underlying **patterns of meaning, frames of interpretation, world views, or forms of everyday thinking and explanation**. Thus the ways in which **beliefs, ideas, or opinions** are discursively used, i.e. their forms of expression as well as the rhetorical purposes they serve, are just as important for ideology as the contents of thinking for which these three terms serve as labels.

We have already seen that patterns of establishing meaning, relating to Bourdieu's (1991: 221–222) concept of "making and unmaking groups" through symbolic power, and also taking Blumer's (1969) work on semiotics into account, emerge in specific contexts, and serve as the underlying foundation on which Rufumbira speakers build language according to ideological principles. The semiotic encodings that shape Rufumbira are based on ideologically motivated processes of Selfing and Othering (see Baumann & Gingrich 2004), triggered by sociohistorical realities but also by current political challenges. Language ideology is based on a theoretical framework of 'border thinking' and results in phonological and morphosyntactic differentiation (Chapters 3–4). Ideologies may hereby comprise a number of referential frames, namely regional autonomy, identity building through differentiation, linguistic subjectivity, and the postcolonial restructuring of a colonial episteme. Scholars have agreed upon the fact that language ideologies "[...] are subject to interests of their bearers' social position" (Irvine & Gal 2000: 35), and Bafumbira's ideologies depend both upon social hierarchies in contemporary Uganda, and upon hierarchies of inequality whose foundations were laid in the colonial period (see Bauman & Briggs 2003).

Blommaert (1999: 1) also subsumes under language ideologies the assessment of "the motives and causes for certain types of language change", phenomena that also gain importance in the study of Rufumbira when speakers use emblematic features that stem from Rukiga, Luganda or English, or that relate to a different 'style' which is used when speaking. Language is always the result of construction, mostly "out of the messy variability of spoken interaction", as Gal & Woolard (2001: 1) state in their inspiring paper on *'Constructing Languages and Publics'*. While both authors focus on larger representations such as construction through grammar writing, translation, national standardization and folklore collections, language constructions also occur in everyday speech, as is the case among Bafumbira, defining and negotiating what "(good) Rufumbira" means in the context of borders, alongside processes of sociopragmatic differentiation, and in relation to the communicative needs of speakers. Bafumbira's language ideologies clearly have a historical dimension, and "attempt to specify, as well, the social location and historical context of the social actors who propose the different linguistic views" (Gal & Woolard (2001: 3). In the present study, postcolonial ideologies play a major role, since they build on people's conceptualization of the colonialists' territorial struggle in language, and the strategies through which Bufumbira (today's Kisoro District) is turned into a linguistic arena of postcolonial mimesis.

Several studies have treated the role and authoritative function of 'publics' (as the legitimizing spheres of language ideology), which are mostly defined in terms of a personified and embodied predominant authority (as in colonial systems, epistemic hierarchies, etc.). For the case of Rufumbira we can instead build on Gal & Woolard (2001: 6), who also refer to a more Habermasian understanding of 'public' (see Habermas 1989, among others), displaying it as a communication process of interacting speakers, who as an anonymous mass discuss the direction in which the construction of language ideologically moves. In a way, every single speaker is included in the process, but just as an abstract part of the anonymous mass, through which the public legitimizes objectified ideologies. While Habermas' model seems to be too organized and linear to be transferred to Bafumbira's public interaction, revealing a different concept of community, the essential commonality is the participation of all Rufumbira speakers in the creation of an established practice.

When we analyze speakers' motivations to speak differently from their neighbors with a focus on 'acts of identity', in Le Page's (1978) and Auer's (2007) sense, as speakers' linguistic acts of affiliation to a specific group and its specific way of speaking, we have to include Irvine's (2001) and Irvine & Gal's (2000) framework on ideologies. Irvine & Gal (2000: 37–38) differentiate between three ideologically motivated processes that can be separated into 'iconization', 'erasure' and 'fractal recursivity'. In the study of Rufumbira, predominantly the first and the last of these are important, since they can contribute to an explanation of iconic and contrastive language use in Kisoro. 'Iconization' means that "linguistic features that index social groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them", while

'fractal recursivity' is based on the idea that "the dichotomizing and partitioning process that was involved in some understood opposition (…) recurs at other levels". In Rufumbira, iconization is a frequent phenomenon since most chosen linguistic signs index Bafumbira's social identity, and stand as representative of an allegedly congruent representation or linkage of sign and social image. Fractal recursivity is a frequent process due to the relocation of the conflict from a mere political or politico-historical dimension, where we find established dichotomic identities produced through severe colonial borders, to a different dimension. These schisms are now projected onto a linguistic level, where they index contrasting identities through divergent ways of speaking. Both concepts will be illustrated in the course of this study. When a set of stylistic features, as one way of speaking, indexes the image of Kisoro as sociopolitical construct, we can understand that iconization here grasps at a multilayered concept, and is multi-iconic. When Rufumbira is linked to Kisoro as a Ugandan town with Ugandan citizens, this then implies the Matryoshka doll of "Kisoro is Bufumbira, Bufumbira is Kigezi Region, Kigezi is Uganda" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016), and Kisoro thus becomes Uganda – or, at least its iconic representation in discourse.

Metalinguistic discourse has to be included in the analysis of Rufumbira since the ways in which speakers conceptualize their own language in conversation reveal a key to their semiotic encoding, and to their beliefs about different ways of speaking. The metalinguistic exchange on Rufumbira therefore always has to do with reflexivity, and with speakers' intention to construct language through discourse.[15] In the direct moment of speaking about Rufumbira, the language necessarily *has* to exist, which is simply built on Descartes's (1644) logic (*ego cogito, ergo sum*). The more speakers refer to their way of speaking, its complexity, prestige and outstanding features, the more they bring it to life. According to Bakhtin's (1986) focus on 'metalinguistics', a Rufumbira speaker negotiates what (s)he perceives as Rufumbira by listening, remembering and discriminating many different 'voices'. Each utterance made about Rufumbira is dialogic, and triggers other utterances by other Rufumbira speakers. The dialogic nature of utterances on what is Rufumbira, and what it is not, actually shapes the way of speaking, when we place the creation of Rufumbira on Bakhtin's (slightly adapted) metalinguistic model, according to which the language is constantly being recreated by speakers in interaction.

Metacommunicative messages, which, according to Bateson (1972, cited by Lucy 1993: 15), are a form of communication "where the subject of discourse is the relationship between speakers", are also important to include when looking at metalinguistic Rufumbira, since speakers negotiate differences of prestige and 'proficiency' when talking about language. Older speakers are often said to speak "good Rufumbira", which is described by other speakers as "conc Rufumbira", an adjective usually used in Uganda for concentrated juice or stiff

---

[15] Reflexive language among Bafumbira often takes place in English, not in Rufumbira, as becomes obvious in these paragraphs.

soup (most probably due to a clipping process from "concentrated"). This "concentrated" language is then contrasted with the language of younger speakers, who are often criticized when copying Kinyarwanda.

> The very **old people speak "conc Rufumbira"**, not Kinyarwanda at all, they have the purest form. Of course, **the old speakers criticize the young speakers, because of being close to some Banyarwanda friends, and listening to Kinyarwanda music and whatever, you find them including that accent**. For them maybe sometimes to feel proud, (…) some of them are boasting by the way, not to go on with their usual language. The old speakers criticize them because of inserting words which are not in Rufumbira, including some words which are in Kinyarwanda. You say *Rufumbira rwawe ntaabwo arí rwiza* [ɾufumbiɾa ɾgaʌe ntʰaabg(o) aɾí ɾgʌiːza], 'your Rufumbira is not good', you're trying to copy some others' language, they tell them. *Urí kwígana izi indimi, uri kwígana abanyarwanda* [uɾí kʌíːgan(a) izi (i)ndimi uɾí kʌíːgan(a) aβanjaɾgwanda], 'you are copying these languages, you are copying Banyarwanda'. Or they say *kuki urí kwígana ikinyarwanda* [kuci uɾí kʌíːgana icinjaɾgwanda], 'why do you copy Kinyarwanda'? So, it's not an insult, **but they sit and teach them, and tell them "Rufumbira is said like this…, not like that…".** You will never find a Mufumbira copying a Congolee [kɔ̃ŋoɾiː], some try to copy Banyarwanda, what they like is mixing with Kinyarwanda, those are young speakers, not old speakers, for them they don't. They don't insult them, they tell them the right words to use, not to copy other languages [ɾangwiʤɔz]. Because also you never find a Munyarwanda to copy a Mufumbira. (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015)

The correction of younger speakers by elders, who teach them how "good Rufumbira" is spoken, is clearly metapragmatic here, since it "deals with the appropriate *use* of language" (Lucy 1993: 17, author's highlight), and is the fundament of Silverstein's (1976) work on metapragmatic discourse. Metapragmatics is "the study of the metalinguistic dimension of language" (Verschueren 2004: 55), and lets speakers address the contexts of use of linguistic forms. The advice by elderly speakers not to copy Rwandans (Kinyarwanda), and the fact that *no* advice is needed *not* to copy Congolese (Kinyabwisha), is especially interesting here. This has to do with metapragmatic indexicality, "constituted by the indexical signaling of some-thing about indexical signaling" (Silverstein 1993: 47). Advice on not using Kinyarwanda is an indexical hint since it refers to underlying ideologies of a modern, fashionable Rwanda with specific young Rufumbira speakers whom elder speakers are all aware of. *No* specific uttered hint on it being better *not* to use or copy Kinyabwisha is required, since speakers would not copy it on principle in any context whatsoever. This is due to the different indexical ideology that both older and younger speakers are aware of (and refer to by not specifically mentioning it). Eastern DR Congo is perceived as conflict-loaded, unfavorable and not at all connected to the fashionable or modern interests of young people in Kisoro. We thus deal with different hierarchical layers of indexicality in metapragmatic discourse. When asked why

it is implicitly understood that copying Congolese would not occur or be an option, one speaker replied as follows.

> **We don't like copying Congolese**, we being near it, we have never seen anything good in it. **A master will never copy his servant**. We saw Congo in conflicts from day one up to now. Maybe for Swahili you can, but for Kinyabwisha you can't, for that Lingala you can't. (Allan Musekura, November 2015)

When Rufumbira speakers talk about Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda, very subjective emotions trigger specific forms of metalanguage, which are often not based on linguistic evidence but deal with stereotypes and includes rumors, exaggerations and mock mimicry. Preston (2004) introduces the notion of 'folk metalanguage', which is applicable in these contexts. Often, comments on phonological or morphosyntactic realizations are based on ideologies of inequality (see also Bauman & Briggs 2003), and may for instance be based on colonial linguistics and missionaries' endeavors. The Kinyarwanda variety from the southern part of Rwanda (Butare/Huye) was favored in the standardization processes over the northernmost varieties. Rufumbira speakers are aware of this and will, despite their personal antipathy against the Rwandan language in general, still associate standardized Kinyarwanda with a prestigious variety, because it emerged in a colonial extent. The language from the northwestern area of Bugoyi in Rwanda, Kigoyi, and the adjacent Kinyabwisha in DR Congo, were always considered as non-standard during colonial times, and were never associated with prestigious language use. The same is reflected in Bafumbira's folk metalanguage, conceptualizing Kinyabwisha as even more peripheral and subaltern than their own variety.

In the following, speakers' communicative repertoires will be analyzed in more detail, also including attitudinal insights and a view on the contexts in which different languages are spoken.

2.2.3 Bafumbira and their repertoires – on linguistic practices, choices and attitudes

When analyzing the set of linguistic resources that Bafumbira make use of in their daily life communication, a repertoire approach (as elaborated by Lüpke & Storch 2013, building on Gumperz 1972, Gumperz & Hymes 1972, and Matras 2009, just to name a few) to language helps us to understand which languages are used throughout Kisoro District. Instead of seeing languages as demarcated and fixed entities, the consideration of languages as rooted in a speaker's multilingual repertoire pays tribute to the fluid nature of language(s). While Gumperz (1972: 20–21) understands a speaker's repertoire as "the totality of linguistic resources [...] available to members of particular communities", as also elaborated by Gumperz & Hymes (1972) in their 'ethnography of speaking', which relates to a speaker's means of speaking and his/her ideologies when speaking, as well as his/her fluid choices in interaction, Matras (2009) relates linguistic repertoires for example to the bilingual education of children. This is a common European example of repertoires, which can be however be related to the

case of Rufumbira speakers; also here the analysis of a speaker's linguistic repertoire can deliver a "picture of the potential effects of language contact on speakers, on language use, and on the shape and structure of language" (ibid., p.9). A speaker's repertoire is not organized as a system with clear folders and according to delimitable languages but is more reminiscent of a mobile briefcase which, after being re-arranged in a fresh context of utterance, changes in order and structure. Emotions, ideologies, deliberate choices, a desire for translanguaging and polylanguaging, and the quest for concealment are all part of the motivations that may characterize African speakers' dynamic repertoires, as well as aspects such as colonial mimesis.

Throughout his or her life, a speaker acquires various linguistic resources that make up his/her 'truncated repertoire' (cf. Blommaert 2010) and that are at his/her disposal. These may be languages learned in an educational context, patterns that go back to partial acquisition (see Lipski 2002), or may constitute mere encounters with language (see Blommaert & Backus 2011). Most African speakers are multilingual, and the motivations and modalities defining the frame in which one speaker uses several languages may vary considerably across the continent. In specific settings, daily interaction may be held in more than five languages (as in the Congolese city of Bunia; see Dimmendaal & Nassenstein forthcoming), in others for instance in two rival languages that are each bound to specific localities and clearly defined contexts (as in Kisangani, DR Congo; see Nassenstein 2015b: 3–5). In other contexts again, a speaker's repertoire may consist of one primary resource with various minor partial lexical influences (as may be the case for rural Kinyarwanda speakers in Rwanda, with a basic knowledge of French and Swahili).

In order to collect data on Rufumbira speakers' repertoires, a sociolinguistic questionnaire with a section on the consultant's languages that (s)he has mastered and in which (s)he acquired some proficiency revealed that the large majority of participants state they know Rufumbira, English and Rukiga (Chiiga/Ciga; Bantu JE14 according to Maho 2009). To be precise, 75% of all participants indicated that they know Rukiga as well as Rufumbira. Neighboring Rukiga has a salient influence on Bafumbira since it was the dominant language of Kigezi District, which included both the capital Kabale and a major Rukiga-speaking area, as well as today's Kisoro District, where Rufumbira was also spoken. While Bafumbira students often attended primary schools in Kisoro, many students moved to Kabale to start secondary school, or to pursue professional careers. Most Bafumbira therefore acquire the basics of Rukiga while still in adolescence, and have no negative associations with the adjacent language, as became evident in several qualitative interviews. However, when Bafumbira are more fluent in Rukiga than in Rufumbira, or Rukiga turns into the main language used at home, problems arise.

> **It's not bad to know Rukiga and Rufumbira.** Good schools were in Kabale. You find
> our youth go to Kabale for studies, they come back knowing Rukiga. Making it dominate

your mother language, is what makes raising eyebrows with elder people. We marry from there, they marry from here, even old people know Rukiga, that's how it came into. We don't like when it dominates our language, our Rufumbira. You talk Rukiga to Bakiga, **then when you come back you talk Rufumbira**. It doesn't please old people to mix Rufumbira and Rukiga (…). **Use the language in the area where it is spoken**, and use your language at home. (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015)

As stated in the fieldnote presented, Rukiga is not a real threat to the exclusivity of Rufumbira. However, it seems that structural loans from Rukiga should not outweigh Rufumbira structures or "dominate" the language. In general, language contact between Rufumbira and Rukiga is a common situation, both on the phonological and on the morphosyntactic level, since it enriches and strengthens the distinctive character of the language, in contrast with the closely-related Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda.

Although borrowing from Rukiga into Rufumbira may not be seen as deliberate language change (cf. Thomason 1999), speakers reveal a high degree of xenoglossophilia toward Rukiga,[16] and also toward other Ugandan languages, as demonstrated in the following. These attitudinal instances of xenoglossophilia, or open-mindedness in terms of language usage and tolerance toward language contact and change, are directed strictly toward the East and the capital Kampala. This can be seen as a very characteristic frontier strategy, where the epicenter of speakers' orientation is the metropole, as also explained by Newbury (1987: 164) who classifies the frontier society as paradoxical, which, while being "distinct from the metropolitan society, [it] […] can only be defined and perceived in relation to the cultural heartland of which it is an extension". Similar cases of open-mindedness are presented by Storch (2015) on communities in South Sudan. In the course of the present study, I repeatedly confronted Rufumbira speakers with their own recorded structural loans from Rukiga, which they often marked as Rufumbira, not as Rukiga. This was the case for instance when addressing morphological matters such as negation patterns, the formation of periphrastic progressives, and also syntactic re-arrangements. The apparent structural changes were then usually classified as "very good and classic Rufumbira" (as judged by Joe Haguma, May 2014) rather than as calques from Rukiga. However, when Rukiga-Runyankore data were presented (mostly taken from Mpairwe & Kahangi 2013), speakers would easily classify it as "Rukiga, not Rufumbira". This shows that despite most speakers' glossophilia toward Rukiga, calquing occurs to a great extent unconsciously, as a form of metatypy.

According to Dimmendaal (2011: 198), building on Ross (2001), metatypy can be understood as "a change in morphosyntactic type and grammatical organization [...] which a language undergoes as a result of its speakers' bilingualism in another language". In the present case, metatypy mainly affects the morphosyntactic realization of the language.

---

[16] This also has to do with the former political unit labeled 'Kigezi District', which also included the current districts of Kabale and Kisoro (among others), and existed until 1992.

Knowledge of Rukiga can also be perceived as a burden among speakers of Rufumbira, for instance when speakers' linguistic biographies reveal complex trajectories from Kisoro to Kabale and Kampala. The metatypical impact of Rukiga on Rufumbira often leads to debates on what is perceived as "good Rufumbira", and speakers who would permanently calque structures from one language to another would be stigmatized as "bad Rufumbira speakers", as illustrated in the conflict between the two consultants Moureen Uwimana and Hope Mahoro in the course of the fieldwork (see Chapter 1). Ross (2007: 130) also points to the social dimension of metatypy in multilingual communities, based on the general assumption that

> the language undergoing metatypy would be the **language which was emblematic of its speakers' identity** and the metatypic model would be the language used to communicate with people outside the speech community.

This[17] is also the case for speakers of Rufumbira, whose metatypical restructuring on the model of Rukiga (especially when morphological aspect, as in the formation of progressives or habituals, is concerned), but also Luganda (in terms of pragmatic discourse markers, etc.), strengthens Rufumbira as an in-group language. Metatypy is among the contact outcomes that are based on social conditions, but cannot clearly be separated from 'grammatical calquing'. According to Ross (2007), contrasting his own earlier accounts, metatypy is preceded by lexical calquing and grammatical calquing, being classified as "preconditions of morphosyntactic restructuring" (ibid., p.124), while metatypy refers to a 'change in type'(-ology) of syntactic components etc. This condition is met in Rufumbira since syntactic patterns are also affected, such as the periphrastic expression of otherwise suffixed extensions like causatives. While Kinyarwanda favors a suffixed causative form, Rufumbira allows a construction *yatumye aríra* ('(s)he made him/her cry', lit. '(s)he caused him/her to cry'), copied from Rukiga *akatuma yarira* with the same meaning.

Metatypy is a process which can easily be applied to speakers' multilingual repertoires and their different "folders" of linguistic resources. While grammatical calquing seems to be a narrower term which is usually used for single calqued features from one (delimitable) language to another, metatypy refers to an entire system, a typological frame which is copied. This corresponds with the repertoire approach as a system of linguistic choices from which a speaker chooses according to context, required register and conversational partner. Moreover, as becomes evident when Rufumbira is spoken in the border district of Kisoro, metatypical language turns "otherwise fluctuating, hybrid, and changing linguistic practices" (Lüpke & Storch 2013: 3) into more ideologically framed repertoires, distinct from adjacent varieties (such as Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda), and affects the entire set of practices, not only one resource among others.

---

[17] Apart from this initial claim (based on earlier studies), he also accepts in his seminal paper (2007) that the reverse situation may be found in some languages.

Due to the fact that English is the official language in Uganda, and that it is the only medium of education, all participants in the study (100%) also noted English as being among the languages of their linguistic repertoire. Attitudes toward English are mostly positive, and the use of English words in Rufumbira contributes to the distinctiveness of the language. Neighboring Banyabwisha in DR Congo have very limited knowledge of English. As it was introduced as the official language of Rwanda only in 1996 (and as the language of instruction in 2007–2008, see Kayigema & Mutasa 2014), the same is true of Kinyarwanda speakers, whereas English lexemes and borrowed structural features evoke positive associations among Rufumbira speakers. This is due to the fact that translanguaging between English and Rufumbira can be seen as an esoterogenist strategy, in which they diverge from their neighbors' repertoires across the borders.[18] The use of only English as the official language contrasts with Rwanda where Kinyarwanda, French and English currently have official status, and with DR Congo where French is the only official language. When taking a closer look at the domains in which only English is spoken, these are mainly administrative and official domains. However, the linguistic landscapes in Kisoro, defined by Landry & Bourhis (1997: 23–24) as "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs [...]" are almost all dominated by English (see Figure 5.1); this is also true of traffic signs, the names of shops and bars and the menus found in restaurants. Across the border in DR Congo, the equivalent landscapes are almost entirely in French (with a few in Swahili but not in Kinyabwisha), while in Rwanda they are mostly in (standardized) Kinyarwanda, and to a minor extent in English. Shop owners, town planners and businessmen choose the public languages wisely with regard to people's emblematic identity constructions.

The language of the capital city Kampala and the Buganda Kingdom, Luganda (JE15, according to Maho 2009), is the third most-spoken Bantu language among Bafumbira after Rufumbira and Rukiga, as indicated by 45% of speakers in the distributed questionnaires, and also as stated in most of the qualitative interviews (Moureen Uwimana, January 2013; Joe Haguma, May 2014). Compared to Rukiga as a very widespread language in Kisoro, knowledge of Luganda is however much more limited to individual speakers and their personal backgrounds. Luganda is mainly viewed as a useful resource, since it connects Kisoro District in the periphery with the metropolis Kampala, where business opportunities and possibilities for higher education range among the most attractive factors.

Despite Bafumbira's knowledge of the language, however, speakers feel a certain deep-rooted antipathy against Baganda people. This has to do with the colonial policy of implementing Baganda agents in authoritative positions in Kisoro District (see Ngologoza 1998; Bafumbira also have negative feelings toward the Buganda royal court in Kampala, which strives for a predominant and hegemonic status in the country. Ngologoza (1998: 78)

---

[18] For a detailed analysis of this concept, see the morphological analysis in Section 4.1.

explains the mostly negative associations with Baganda people as originating from the prevalent 'exploitation' in colonial times, and as a result of the fact that a colonial Muganda agent in a higher position in Bufumbira would eventually go "back to Buganda to bring his tribesmen to come and eat of the fruits of this country" (ibid., p.79). Moreover, Rufumbira speakers are often subsumed under the (here pejorative) label *Banyarwanda* ('Rwandans') by Baganda when they come to Kampala. The fact of "being Baganda, being a Muganda, that's what people don't like" in Kisoro (Capher Nsabiyumva, December 2015). This relates to a specific performed role of Baganda people in Ugandan society. Analyzed from a theoretical angle and including the notion of 'border thinking', Baganda have become a personification of the colonial state, which evokes negative colonial memories of inequalities. At the same time, the label 'Ganda' incorporates a positive connotation in the creation of 'Ugandanness', and therefore represents a very ambivalent concept.

The impact of Luganda on elderly speakers of Rufumbira usually affects their language at a lexical level and the use of modal particles such as *wama* and *bambi* as markers of empathy and pity (see also Chapter 5 for a more exhaustive discussion), which are of prime value in order to understand the pragmatics of Luganda – and languages that have borrowed them, as is also the case for Ugandan English (see Nassenstein 2016b). Modal particles "express the attitude of speakers, and this function has been referred to as their 'epistemic' meaning" (Braber 2007: 131), and they relate to the illocutionary information of the sentence. As a personal expression of stance when using linguistic material borrowed from Luganda, elderly speakers are sometimes prone to modifying modal particles, as explained by speakers. While they know the origins of the markers, they prefer calquing or adapting them as a form of agentive modification; they then use them as a source of distinctiveness, but without the "emotional and ideological baggage each word carrie[s]", as described by Greenberg (2004: 2) in the context of specific words in the Balkans. According to Greenberg, different forms and realizations of borrowings can reflect deviant affiliations, due to divergent attitudes (ibid., pp. 51–52). Or, as a Mufumbira pointed out:

> We don't like using that word *anti* [ənti], (…), *mbu*, in our language that means *ngo* [evidential hearsay marker]. When you are saying *they told me mbu she'll be coming at this time*, the same as in Rufumbira *they told me ngo she'll be coming at this time…* (…) **you'll be putting Rufumbira on another side, as in destroying it. Those words came in, *sorry bambi*, you can also say *sorry bambe* [wamβe].** So where you find a Muganda says *essimu* ('telephone'), we say *isimu*, a Munyarwanda says *iterefone* [itɛrɛfɔːnə], now that originates from French; *essimu, isimu,* varying-varying like that. (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015)

The phonological adaption, or at times also the lexical choice about which word to borrow, marks speakers' agentive repertoires. Luganda constitutes, after Rukiga, one of the possible source languages that speakers actively use, since its implementation can be seen as useful in

identity building. This became evident when I gathered opinions across the border. Congolese speakers of Kinyabwisha, the adjacent variety across the border, associate the so-called *"Kiganda"* (i.e. Luganda) with a high degree of unintelligibility to non-Ugandans, and as a symbol of 'Ugandanness'. Several Banyabwisha who, in the course of the present study, contributed to work on structural differences in both varieties, assumed that every Mufumbira would also speak *"Kiganda"* (Foreman Niyibizi, September 2014). However, in contrast to foreigners' opinions, Luganda is much less prominent in social interactions in Kisoro than one might assume, and can trigger surprise and attention. Speakers narrated incidents when they found other Bafumbira speaking fluent Luganda on the phone in Kisoro, and pointed at them with astonishment, instantly enquiring *Olugánda* [urugánda]*, waruménye hehe?* ('Luganda, where have you learnt that?').

Usually, among younger speakers of Rufumbira, knowledge of Luganda enjoys a higher prestige, especially due to the diffusion of popular music held in Luganda, the attraction of the capital city, and urban youth language practices such as Luyaaye (see Namyalo 2015), whose lexical influence also has an impact on young Rufumbira speakers. 'Knowing Luganda' is perceived as positive capital because large numbers of Bafumbira have moved to Kampala in numerous waves of migration since the early 1950s, mostly for higher education, and because it is a useful resource for business. 'Speaking Luganda' is a different matter, and many Bafumbira emphasized that they tried to use it as rarely as possible, even in Kampala, and that they mainly tried to build on their Rufumbira-speaking social networks in the capital.

The case of Kiswahili[19] is a crucial one in Kisoro District. Only 10% of the respondents of the sociolinguistic questionnaire noted Swahili as being one of the languages in their repertoire. This corresponds with various fieldnotes compiled during different research stays in Kisoro District, in which speakers usually stated that they either did not speak Swahili at all, or that they did not employ it in daily life. Given the fact that Kisoro District touches the Congolese North Kivu Province, where (Congo) Swahili is spoken throughout, and given also the implementation of Swahili as the second official language alongside English in the Ugandan language policy (Clause 5 in the 2005 Constitution; see Namyalo 2015: 316)[20], one would expect a broad diffusion of Swahili through Kisoro District. Instead, Bafumbira often claimed not to be interested in acquiring Swahili; one also encounters fewer people who engage in Swahili conversation in Kisoro than in other parts of the country (especially the northern parts such as West Nile, Acholiland and Karamoja).

The status and use of Swahili in Uganda is something of a "dilemma" (see Pawlikowá-Vilhanová 1996), and as discussed elsewhere, the occurrence of Swahili in conversations often

---

[19] In the following, Kiswahili sometimes also occurs in its shortened form as Swahili. Both terms actually denote the same language, Bantu G40 according to Maho (2009).

[20] Namyalo (2015) states that despite this amendment, the law has never been enacted, and its status is therefore only theoretically acknowledged.

has a rather metrolingual purpose (Nassenstein 2016a). This means that speakers employ Swahili emblematically in urban spaces where many languages are in contact, while its use as a metrolingual language may be "playful and convivial or divisive and contested", and also includes "the ludic possibilities of language play" (Pennycook & Otsuji 2015: 57). This is especially true of the Ugandan capital Kampala, where Swahili has been in use to some extent since the establishment of the King's African Rifles in 1902. This means that Swahili either has a phatic function in communication in Kampala, when speakers who are friends address each other cordially (*wewe, rafiki!* 'you, friend!'), or serves as expression of authority and dominance, since it is mainly used by soldiers, policemen and private security guards in situations with clear power imbalances, at the entry of night clubs, in traffic control and at Entebbe airport. The use of Swahili in Kampala-Entebbe is bound to the political power historically concentrated in the city.

In Kisoro, however, the situation is quite different, since the knowledge and use of Swahili marks and also stigmatizes a Mufumbira as a cross-border passenger, as a mobile subject who visits Congo, and who loses his/her authenticity by having the language in his/her active repertoire:

> You find few people speaking Swahili. Most people who speak Swahili are those walking close to the borders (…). Few schools you find it where they teach it, not to say if you learn Swahili they take you to Congo, or where [as in military recruitment]. Initially, it *is* in them. Some people who knows (sic!) it, know it when they start trading, and that's where they learn it from. **A *real real* Mufumbira who doesn't trade from crossing the borders, doesn't know Swahili,** but those who cross the borders get to learn it from there, you know? **It is not necessary.** (Capher Nsabiyumva, December 2015)

As already stated in the introduction to this study, languages that speakers do *not* speak may also occupy slots in their repertoires, due to the metalinguistic exchange that speakers share about these languages, and to the adjacent geographical location(s) where they may be spoken (such as the North Kivu Province, DR Congo). Refusal to speak or acquire a language which is actually spoken in the surrounding areas, and to some extent also by refugees, traders and soldiers pervading one's own community, has ideological motivations, and can be considered as an emblematic strategy. In this sense, Swahili constitutes a 'zero practice' in speakers' repertoires: an empty folder, a meaningful gap (see also the introductory notes in Chapter 1). At first sight, this resembles the case of bilingual adolescents who develop feelings of sympathy for one, and antipathy or disgust toward another language, and hence refuse to speak it.

When taking a second look at people's interaction in the peripheries of Kisoro town, Kiswahili *can* actually be found, although its use is limited to very specific localities. Several times, when arriving on an overnight bus from Kampala, I spent one or two hours at one of the local bus terminals when the day was dawning, and witnessed other passengers, local motorcycle drivers and also the Somali kiosk owner conversing only in Swahili. During my

stays in Kisoro I also found Swahili being spoken throughout the border area of Bunagana (to DR Congo) by residents and traders, including on the Ugandan side of the border. Moreover, Swahili seemed to be increasingly used in the local restaurants of Kisoro in the late evening hours, when elderly men gathered for an end of the day beer. In all these locations and contexts, the use of Swahili did not evoke negative associations, while its use in the marketplace, in the local shops, or around the church and hospital of Kisoro town would raise fierce opposition. Marc Augé describes in his work on 'non-places' (1995; in the original *'non-lieux'*) exactly these transient, volatile places, "in which neither identity, nor relations, nor history really make any sense" (Augé 1995: 87).[21] Bafumbira's emblematic creation of identity no longer counts in 'non-places', and they sometimes deliberately shield this identity against foreign influences (from across the border) by not speaking Rufumbira but Swahili in liminal spaces such as the 'border zone' (as already introduced in Chapter 1). Augé explains that when a person enters a non-place, he is "relieved of his usual determinants" (p.103) and becomes only a passenger, customer or driver. For Bafumbira whose identity is based on distinctiveness from surrounding communities, languages and practices, this can be tantamount to "the passive joys of identity-loss" (ibid.) when they converse in Swahili in the border zone or at bus terminals. Moreover, the border zone is a place of liminal experiences, and requires forms of liminal language, as which the performance of Rufumbira can potentially be seen. The concept of liminality in relation to Bafumbira's interaction (and as a response to the languages beyond the border) is still treated in Chapter 5.

The acquisition of Swahili as an additional language is not a favorable endeavor[22], as became evident in numerous interviews with Rufumbira interlocutors (Alois Kwitonda, September 2012). One day, however, I met Allan Musekura, a bartender in his early twenties, at his workplace and asked him about the Swahili language guide in his hands: he was looking up words and then typing them into his mobile phone. He explained that he had bought the booklet for 3,000 UGX (0,90$), and that he was eager to learn the language due to its broad diffusion, and as he pointed out, because

> [t]he refugees [who] speak Swahili, some Banyarwanda [baɲargwanda] guys also speak Swahili, those guys from Rwanda, there are some people who are nearby Congo, so they know Swahili. (…) But only few here (…) **it is useful; in Uganda, we are in borders** – when you travel almost 10 km, 30 km, you reach a border, when you reach the border of Kenya, you are going there, Zaire [Zaiːlɛ], Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya… (Allan Musekura, November 2015)

---

[21] I am particularly grateful to Anne Storch for her inspiring comments on non-places, and for bringing Augé's work to my attention.

[22] As is the acquisition of French (unless it is learned in Kampala, in an educational context in high school) and Kinyarwanda. Only 10% of Bafumbira participating in the study claimed to know some French, and only 5% indicated knowing some (standardized) Kinyarwanda.
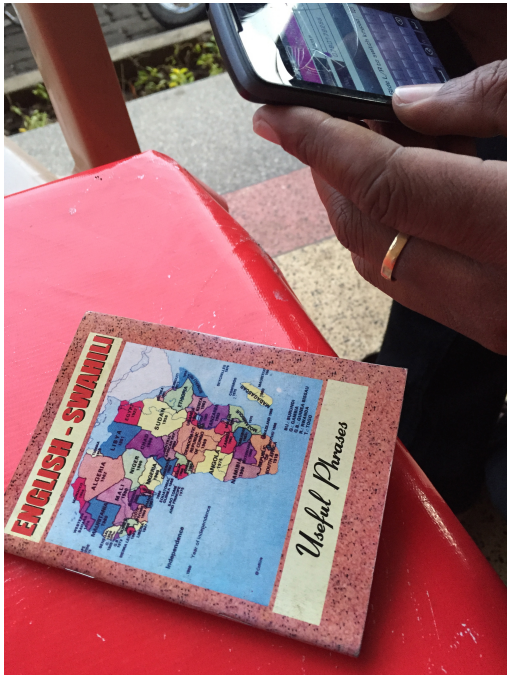
Figure 2.2: The encounter with Allan Musekura, a bartender teaching himself Swahili

At the same time, he confirmed my assumption that certain Bafumbira would not like to see him studying Swahili or would at least not see the sense in it, because it is not a language to be used beyond non-places. The bartender Allan Musekura's personal interest in language learning did not meet the expectations of his community, and although he was willing to pay for language courses, he looked for a teacher in vain.

The same applies to the knowledge and practice of Kinyabwisha (DR Congo), even more than to Kinyarwanda (Rwanda). Most interview partners would either deny ever having heard of such a variety, or would, when asked about the genetic relationship between Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha, indicate that they could not be closely related. Only 15% ticked Kinyabwisha when responding to the question "Rufumbira is closely related to… (1) Luganda, (2), Kinyabwisha, (3) Rutooro, (4) Kinyarwanda, (5) Acholi", while 85% ticked Kinyarwanda.[23] Speakers would usually indicate speaking "Kinyarwanda" when they assumed the conversational partner was not acquainted with the linguistic label "Rufumbira". In most cases, they did not actually use "Kinyarwanda" to mean the standardized language from Rwanda, but Rufumbira itself (!), with the exception of some elderly men who explicitly emphasized having mastered Kinyarwanda "from Kigali" [cigari] (as stated by Reverend Muruta, October 2011). In this case, knowledge of Kinyarwanda, paired with the speaker's age and educational background, was transformed from a stigmatizing factor into a matter of prestige.

In addition to speakers' knowledge, use of and attitudes toward some of the linguistic material collected in speakers' repertoires, creative and sometimes chaotic processes of

---

[23] See the questionnaire in the appendix.

languaging were also subject to investigation. Translanguaging practices, as introduced mainly by García & Wei (2014), have become a popular concept used to describe the fluid language practices that individuals with a broad linguistic repertoire use. The term 'translanguaging' describes "the act performed by bilinguals [or multilinguals] of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential" (see García 2009: 140). In contrast with the established yet antiquated approaches that classify the multilingual use of a speaker's resources as a switching or mixing process of separable 'codes' (e.g., see Gafaranga 2007 for this phenomenon in Kinyarwanda), translanguaging, or polylanguaging (Jørgensen 2008), seems to be more suitable for the globalized, broad and non-linear entanglement of different linguistic resources in a speaker's communicative interaction. Translanguaging, especially in a globalized world where speakers acquire linguistic items from many languages, results from Bafumbira's free linguistic choices, which they have (in some sense) as long as they maintain the authenticity of Rufumbira as a distinctive practice. The journalist Capher Nsabiyumva thus indicated that

> [i]t is not prohibited, [some of] the old people see it in a bad way only, when I am talking English and you taught me some things in Germany, and some people say 'oh you even know some words in Germany' (sic!), then we are chatting, talking, I mix there, a word of Kinyarwanda, **they don't see it in a bad way, you are free to use it, you study from Kampala, you go primary here in Kisoro, you know some of their languages, you mix it in, it is not bad, they don't see you bad**. The old people still tell you: Don't forget your language! (Capher Nsabiyumva, December 2015)

This also becomes obvious when observing how speakers would mimic a specific Congolese (Kinyabwisha) or Rwandan (Kinyarwanda from Kigali) way of speaking in narratives. These instances of playful and critical 'crossing' (Rampton 1995), given in a tone of mockery and as an act of strengthening in-group ties within the Rufumbira network, show that speakers' broad repertoires are rich and flexible communicative systems, despite the apparent fixity of borders.

2.2.4 Mobility, narratives of space and migration

Due to the importance of the colonial struggle over the border, and people's linguistic strategies for marking Rufumbira as a Ugandan language with distinctive features, and its speakers as non-Congolese and non-Rwandans according to Derrida's (1993: 3) concept of a binary "rhetoric of borders", the actual patterns of mobility of Bafumbira must also be taken into consideration. This becomes especially important in this age of large migratory shifts and new forms of mobility, building on the sociolinguistics of globalization.

Blommaert (2010: 1) describes the increased level of connectivity in a globalized world as "a tremendously complex web of villages, towns, neighbourhoods, settlements connected by material and symbolic ties in often unpredictable ways", which makes the connections

between cities, villages and individuals complex and at times hard to trace. In terms of the sociolinguistic scale of Rufumbira we are dealing with a globalized world. Instead of focusing on static variation (*the* Rufumbira language vs. *the* Kinyabwisha language) we rather deal with speakers' strategies of coping with larger global sociopolitical shifts and movements. The Rufumbira language can therefore be rather classified as a "process" (of identity creation) in relation to the political struggle over territory in colonial times, and further triggered by a postcolonial awakening of nationality and reordering. This resulted in the recognition of Rufumbira as a "Ugandan language" in 1995 (or, rather in the recognition of Bafumbira as an "indigenous community" of Uganda in the constitution), and speakers have responded to the increasing web of interconnectedness in globalization processes by either strengthening the web (i.e. toward Kampala and the East), or by cutting the ties (toward DR Congo and Rwanda).

This also becomes evident in speakers' structuring of linguistic landscapes spread in Kisoro District. When I once booked a room at 'The Golden Monkey Guesthouse' near the mainroad, I was asked which dormitory I was going to take. When taking a look at the doors of the rooms, I realized that at least the larger dormitories all carried names of countries that shared borders with Uganda, and right next to the reception, I found 'Uganda', 'Rwanda', and the 'DR Congo' (see Figure 2.3). Further down in the patio I could cast a glance at 'South Sudan' and 'Kenya'. Apparently, employees had turned the rooms into bordered spaces that reflected a shrewd mirror image of the outside world. While Kenya and South Sudan play no specific role in Kisoro, Rwanda and the DR Congo do. Tourists may choose rooms and dormitories, and have symbolic access to all three countries at the Golden Monkey Guesthouse, while the geopolitical boundaries outside of Kisoro are less easily crossed. What appears to be an easy task within the hotel, becomes a bureaucratic (in terms of Rwanda's policies) and to some extent problematic issue (considering the travel warnings in relation to the DR Congo) for tourists. Painting the doors of dormitories with the three flags symbolizes Bafumbira's 'bordering' of landscapes, and is a sign of geopolitical agency.

Figure 2.3: A clear demarcation of boundaries at the Golden Monkey Guesthouse, Kisoro

When asked how often they actually cross the border, Bafumbira often indicated to be rather immobile, despite the relatively good infrastructure toward Kigali (Rwanda) and to the villages on the Congo side beyond Bunagana. 10% of the respondents claimed to have been to Congo, while 50% stated they had only crossed to the Rwandan side, and 10% had been in the territory of both countries. This means that 30% of the Bafumbira interviewed had never crossed the nearby borders at all. One might assume that there would be a lot of bureaucracy for local civilians at the border posts; however, this is not the case, since "we don't need a passport, only ID", as stated by one speaker (Allan Musekura, November 2015). General factors attenuating mobility are the ongoing conflict in parts of the adjacent North Kivu Province (DR Congo), and a different post-genocide lifestyle (Rwanda) which has set in since the liberation of the country by the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front). This lifestyle involves cultural practices perceived as non-taboo or taboo in Uganda and Rwanda respectively. While partial nudity, obscenity in both language and in non-verbal behavior in public have all become more prominent in Uganda (cf. the incident narrated in Chapter 1), in Rwanda they have not, and they are illegal. Once, Rufumbira-speaking bartender Allan Musekura pointed to a group of adolescent women in short clothes and stated "when you reach in Rwanda, it is so harsh, you cannot see these *malayas* [maɾaȷas], they are prostitutes, but in Rwanda you cannot see them there, they are very harsh on them". Later, he changed his argument and said that these women must have come from the much stricter Rwanda to enjoy the free and liberal Ugandan society.

Several respondents, when confronted with the question of why they had not yet crossed the border to Congo, replied with the counterquestion "So what am I going to find there?" The disinterest in crossing to the neighboring country is also based on waves of forced labor migration during colonial times. Between 1928 and 1936, Belgian colonial authorities resettled 17,902 Rwandans to the Belgian Congo as so-called *"transplantés"* [transplanted people] (Stearns 2012: 16–17), which resulted in severe discussions about nationality, authenticity and origin in the following decades, and contributed to the current ongoing conflict. Also, as another form of forced cross-border migration, large and recurrent waves of refugees occurred from the Rwandan Kingdom toward Bufumbira, as mentioned by The Geographer (1965: 4), due to political repression. These factors have contributed to today's aversion to cross-border movements.

Moreover, space defines identity, and one's trajectory is an indexical path of the deliberate directions one has taken. The places an individual has been to define his/her identity and add to his/her personal life experience, which cannot be erased. Felder, Henley and Frey's song *'Hotel California'* from 1977 can be related to the fate of Bafumbira who pass the border: "you can check-out any time you like but you can never leave". Once a Mufumbira has crossed the border, (s)he has absorbed either the Congo or Rwanda, and has to some extent become part of it due to his/her indexical trajectory. The lived experience of having been to the other side will necessarily influence his/her mental maps, and may affect his/her language

ideologies relating to Rufumbira as well. If the adjacent Other turns out to be less different than has been constructed in flowery narratives, Bafumbira's contrastive 'acts of identity' are also at stake. Moreover, people are probably aware of the fact that in 1994 many Rwandan so-called *génocidaires* fled toward Congo and settled in the area, joining local armed groups. As many Banyabwisha could tell, these Rwandans have fully adapted to speaking Kinyabwisha and have given up standardized Kinyarwanda (Muzee Nyibizi, September 2014). Linguistic adaptation has therefore been a recurrent phenomenon in the entire area in the context of violent conflict, and is perceived as a danger to a specific social identity.

The perspective taken by Rufumbira speakers is clearly directed to the East, to Kampala. This is seen as the area where the 'center' is located, in contrast to adjacent border areas which are in the deep periphery, or even beyond that. It can be argued that Kampala therefore radiates a higher degree of 'linguistic gravity' (see Trudgill 1974, Chambers & Trudgill 1980) toward Kisoro than the adjacent areas in Congo and Rwanda do. When we deal with 'value-attributions to the place' (Blommaert 2005: 222–223), we usually build on center-periphery models, and speakers are aware of where the center and the periphery are located. Linguistic realizations from the center, such as the impact factor of Luganda on Rufumbira, are therefore considered to be "more valuable" than innovations in the other direction. The different evaluations of a language as being in the perceived center or in the periphery have to do with "definitions of belonging [that] are mediated through ethnodialectal indexicalities" (ibid.). This again marks Bafumbira as a frontier society, and characterizes it as a setting of 'frontier dynamics', while "the frontier may consequently act as a culturally and ideologically conservative force" (Kopytoff 1987: 14), when it comes to the representation and reperformance of norms and practices from the metropole Kampala, giving Bafumbira "the freedom of action to express the model brought from the metropole" (ibid.). The concept of 'scale' can be applied to Bafumbira's cultural and linguistic xenoglossophile movements through the rhetorical lands of their Ugandan neighbors. As explained by Blommaert (2010: 32), "when people or messages move, they move through a space which is filled with codes, norms and expectations". The concept of 'scale' represents the movements mentioned, and speakers' scale has an influence on their construction of identity.

Speakers' language practices are perceived differently when they move to other places; the way a certain sign is perceived and how it is semiotically encoded depends considerably upon the (local or global) context where it is reproduced. Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira may all be seen as forms of (linguistic) Kinyarwanda (as is the common view in Rwanda), but represent a different semiotic set of signs in the areas where they are spoken. Blommaert (2010: 29–30) discusses this for the French name *Nina's derrière* [Nina's behind], used for a chocolate shop in Tokyo and employed in a seemingly inadequate context. Kinyabwisha as a set of linguistic signs is not Kinyarwanda in its geographical local context but is defined as "semiotic Kinyabwisha" in Rutshuru, while being seen as "linguistic

Kinyarwanda" when speakers move to Kigali (Rwanda), for example, because the linguistic differences between the two languages are minimal.

Rufumbira may be seen as a form of "linguistic Kinyarwanda" when spoken in Kigali, but becomes "semiotic Rufumbira" on-site in Kisoro, "as long as the sign remains in its particular environment" (ibid., p.30). The semiotics of language and metalinguistic reference therefore also depend upon locality, and on where the process of Othering happens. Does it happen at the epicenter, bound to language ideologies of prestige, or in the periphery, where disorder (and dissimilarity) reigns as a semiotic principle? This corresponds with Blommaert's (2010: 30) observation that "the world is full of examples of signs that shift functions depending on who uses them, where and for what purpose". Rufumbira only becomes 'Rufumbira' in Kisoro, not in Kigali, nor in Kampala, where it is generally perceived as 'Kinyarwanda' because of its structural similarities. We can therefore build on Bourdieu (1991: 38), who sees the impact of grammar on meaning making processes as restricted and partial, but considers the determination of signification in discourse as bound to a 'market'. The market, or context-bound meaning making processes, contributes to "shaping not only the symbolic value but also the meaning of discourse" (ibid.).

Speakers' patterns of mobility contribute to a large extent to their linguistic realization. Because very few people have actually crossed to Rwanda or DR Congo, 'border talk' remains as narrative transgression. Linguistically, the border is crossed all the time. Stories about Congolese and Rwandans shape everyday reality, and the Other land beyond the border plays a salient role in everyday discourse. Bafumbira's narratives turn (geographically measured, postcolonial) 'space' into 'place' as a form of particular space (cf. Blommaert 2005: 222), which is filled with a discourse of belonging. These stories represent a form of 'armchair travelling', which is the topic of Pierre Bayard's (2012) book *'Comment parler des lieux où on l'on n'a pas été?'* [How to talk about places you've never been?]. Bafumbira follow Marco Polo and Karl May's footsteps when they describe the hard realities found on the ground in Rutshuru (DR Congo), or when they praise the beauty of Rwanda's capital Kigali but at the same time criticize the political regime. When Rufumbira speakers speak negatively about Rwanda, referring to the apparent lack of freedom, or to Congo, referring to matters of insecurity, they build on narratives by Congolese and Rwandans who come to the area, as evidential hearsay strategies of constructing truth without being accused of giving false information:

> Even **people from Congo do tell these stories**, they tell that it is in a good condition in our home area. Some of them prefer to be here… you know we have limited land here, they tell 'we are not okay that other side' **they tell the same stories, they don't lie, they don't say 'we are okay' when they are not okay**, even a person who comes from Rwanda says 'Rwanda is a nice place but we are not good in terms of food', I can say food. Because in Rwanda the President says this one should plant this, maize, red pepper, maybe something like that. So, they are not good. And the rules are harsh. They tell you the same stories. They are easy to cross [meaning: they cross easily]. They cross, fine, they are going for

Regardless of Bafumbira people's actual mobility and trajectories (to Bunagana, DR Congo or to Cyanika, Rwanda), the discourse is predetermined by assumptions that come from what they have heard from soldiers, traders and the numerous refugees in Kisoro District. Most people are interested in the narratives that refugees bring from the conflict areas.

Refugees, however, are indeed mobile in the true sense of the word, forced by war and instability to cross the border and seek refuge in Nyakabande, Kisoro's refugee camp. Bafumbira are nowadays used to having Rwandan (especially 1994–1995) and Congolese (from 1996 onwards) refugees in and around Kisoro, and they observe them carefully, especially the way they dress, the way they talk and interact. As long as they speak differently and have different (French) names, they are seen as refugees and provided with food by the local community. "People don't see them as bad" (Allan Musekura, November 2015), but as different. Speakers explained that "they don't think they should go back one time, and any *Congolee* [kɔŋori:] can become a Mufumbira" by befriending top officials, being registered in local council books and "being good citizens". The condition for a Congolese refugee to become a Mufumbira is to have a "good name" and to speak Rufumbira, which are the two aforementioned identity-related core features. This means that if a Congolese or Rwandan adapts his Christian name and makes it an English name, and if (s)he adopts the specific Rufumbira way of speaking, (s)he can be integrated and become a Mufumbira. Both are minor changes, but of great symbolic importance.

From the 1950s on, large waves of Bafumbira have settled in Kampala, mainly in parts of Kamwokya, Mulago and Bwaise. Affected by poverty and marginalization, these groups have named their ethnic neighborhood(s) *Kifumbira* [cifúmbiɾa], labelling it as the place(s) where Rufumbira is spoken. Heritage is re-created in the city, and Bafumbira heritage again has to do with names, and with the power of the name given to the new neighborhood, as explained by speakers.

The re-establishment of rural intimacy and in-group relations in Kifumbira in the structurally poor suburb of Kamwokya, Kampala, was triggered by the low social status that was ascribed to most Bafumbira. Because of the exclusion of Bafumbira from society in Uganda, as they were often just seen as Rwandans who accidentally turned into Ugandans, the use of Rufumbira in these structurally weaker neighborhoods became a powerful semiotic resource.

The deliberate choice of Rufumbira on signposts, in church and in the small corner bars was based on the emblematicity of language use. Interestingly, due to the popularity of Rwandan (!) beer in Kisoro at that time, most bars started to sell the beer brands Primus and Mützig, and Bafumbira bartenders began to fix decorative banderoles with beer advertisement at the outer areas of their bars, easily to spot for Bafumbira approaching from afar. While anything Rwandan is usually rejected, and Bafumbira see themselves as being in a contrastive dialectal relationship with Rwanda, here the Rwandan labels serve as markers of local identity. This practice has been kept up until today, although Primus and Mützig bars have become scarce in Kampala. Nowadays, with common perceptions of Bafumbira changing in society, and with their higher status due to their presence in the higher army and police ranks, the emblematic language use (and ethnic arrangement) in numerous neighborhoods has vanished, as have Primus and Mützig (these typical eye-catching brands are often out of stock, it seems). The waves of migration from Kisoro to Kampala have generally become less frequent, and Rufumbira speakers no longer settle only in the ethnic neighborhoods to which their relatives moved in previous decades.

2.2.5 Social fragmentations in Kisoro: Othering and Selfing

Processes of Othering and Selfing constantly take place in Kisoro, due to the community's striving for distinctiveness. The borders are both culturally and linguistically clearly demarcated, and speakers have to constantly redefine who is included in or excluded from the in-group. When "Others" such as refugees become Bafumbira, this happens due to their willingness to adapt to a specific way of speaking, and to adapt their name(s), as already explained. The case is entirely different in relation to the Batwa people, who are often pejoratively referred to as "the pygmies", or to hip hop musicians, as discussed in the following.

While research and direct access to the local community are challenging endeavors in Rutshuru among Banyabwisha (DR Congo), and a complex bureaucratic task in Kigali (Rwanda),[24] the community of Rufumbira speakers in Kisoro welcomes strangers with a high degree of open-mindedness and interest. This relates to tourists, who usually come to see the gorilla populations on the volcanoes, as well as to researchers and workers in humanitarian projects, the church or the hospital. Knowing some basics of Rufumbira, and therefore acknowledging the existence of a Bafumbira culture (and language), is rewarded with xenophilia

---

[24] When I conducted research around Rutshuru in 2014, mainly on Kinyabwisha and Swahili, speakers were concerned about whether the support and data that they provided could endanger them. They would therefore often refuse to sit down with me and record data as they were scared that local militia, police or the army would threaten them after my departure and accuse them of having participated in shady activities. In Rwanda, in contrast, research is a highly bureaucratic challenge. Research projects that do not reflect national interests are often rejected and intelligence officers try to gather information on illegal researchers conducting interviews in the country.

and interest. Kisoro has turned into a popular tourist spot, while the neighboring Banyabwisha in DR Congo receive considerably fewer visitors. Fluency in language, or being a "native speaker", the alleged "notion of a birthright of linguistic authority" (Bonfiglio 2013: 29), is therefore not a criterion for inclusion. As long as certain emblematic features – these may include lexical choices, phonological realizations or some basic grammar – are learnt, a foreigner can become part of the community, and is considered a Rufumbira speaker. Xenophilia toward foreigners, may they be researchers, missionaries or tourists, serves as positive Selfing strategy. In the encounter with the tourist or researcher from the Global North visiting Kisoro, the colonial encounter reproduces itself; it is as if the person is reconfirming the decisions taken in Brussels 1910, re-authenticating the position of the borders, serving as a proof of existence of 'Bufumbira' and 'Rufumbira'. The postcolonial mimesis as a form of 'border thinking' is thus often projected onto foreign visitors. Figure 2.4 shows the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva's Facebook profile, with a cover picture that shows his encounter with two tourists in March 2016, one from Germany and one from Kampala. During their stay in Kisoro, he looked for accomodation and guided them to the most prominent local sights in the Ugandan borderland, such as Lake Mutanda and the crowded local bars where a concert of a Ugandan artist took place. When asked how people reacted to the German tourist in his public cover picture, he replied "everybody likes her when they see her" (March 2016). Moreover, the journalist introduced them to his friends and exchanged stories about the Ugandan capital Kampala, where both visitors were based.

Figure 2.4: Capher Nsabiyumva's Facebook profile: An encounter with tourists in Kisoro[25]

The Batwa people of Kisoro District, who initially inhabited the forests of the Great Lakes Region before the arrival of other groups, are ostracized as non-Bafumbira predominantly due to their low social status, their translanguaging practices and their mobility across borders.

---

[25] See [https://www.facebook.com/nsabac] (accessed 15 June 2016).

When I worked with Batwa consultants on the outskirts of Kisoro, interlocutors would on various occasions assure me that the Batwa still had their own language, a language that was worth documenting, and which was apparently vanishing. This stood in stark contrast with what I had so far read about language shift in the Batwa community (Vorbichler 1967, 1974, Bahuchet 2006, among others), which indicated that they had already given up their language and adopted Rufumbira and Rukiga. It turned out that while certain phonological features were divergent, the language of interaction among the Batwa was indeed Rufumbira, but often pervaded with stretches of speech held in Rukiga or even Swahili (see Hollington, Nassenstein & Storch forthcoming).

The exoticizing and ostracizing ascription of Otherness to the Batwa, with whom Bafumbira have lived for centuries, can be understood as relating to Baumann & Gingrich's (2004: 25–26) concept of 'grammars of identity'. By taking distinct ways of conceptualizing self-other relationships into account, they come up with the concept of a 'grammar of encompassment', meaning that "the lower level of cognition recognizes difference, the higher level subsumes that which is different under that which is universal" (Baumann 2004: 25). The claim that the Batwa have their own language, worth preserving, makes them non-speakers of Rufumbira, and equally ascribes Otherness to the fluid linguistic practices that the Batwa employ. They are thus characterized as being different. According to the grammar of encompassment, "deep down, or rather high up, you are but a part of me" (ibid.), which means that it is actually clear that they *do* speak Rufumbira, and that they *are* part of Bufumbira. However, their mobility across borders, picking up Swahili in Eastern DR Congo, and Kinyarwanda in Rwanda, does not match the linguistic creation of borders in Rufumbira, and speakers' Selfing strategies. They are therefore often pictured as second class citizens and associated with "impure" behavior, different language use and with being a lower caste. Encompassment is hierarchical and "needs the higher caste to encompass the lower" (Baumann 2004: 25), in order to create internal difference.

Hip hop musicians are often seen as the social antagonists of language purists, as motors for social progress, change and as voices of criticism that contrast with old and established language ideologies. In the case of Kisoro, and in large parts of Uganda in general (Nassenstein 2015c), hip hop artists such as Echo C and Slenda MC have turned into positive promoters of local culture and language. Young Bafumbira artists have created the hip hop style Amahoro Fleva ('Peace flavor'), in analogy with the Tanzanian music style Bongo Fleva. Amahoro Fleva, entirely performed in Rufumbira with certain emblematic Luganda and Rukiga influences, serves as an ethno-regional strategy of differentiation, and is appreciated by both young and old speakers. Rufumbira-speaking hip hop has therefore lost its negative connotations, and has become a regional loudspeaker in social media and hip hop workshops throughout the country.

The Christmas concert advertisement on Facebook presented in Figure 2.5 shows Slenda MC, who calls himself *umujugunyi* ('the throwing one', meaning '(traditional) storyteller'), wearing a T-shirt with the slogan "Made in Kisoro". In Rufumbira he wishes everybody *noheri nziza y'abafumbira* [noherɪ niːza j(a)'aβafumbiɾa] with the meaning 'Merry Christmas from the Bafumbira (people)'. His nickname, 'The Muhabura Native', reveals attitudes of (spatial) belonging, and makes reference to one of the volcanoes (Muhabura) as a symbol of the debated affiliation of the volcanoes to different colonial powers at the same time. By referring to Mount Muhabura in his nickname, he clearly places it on the Ugandan landscape. Songs like *'Kiss my Town'* (2011)[26] also address matters of belonging, authenticity and ethno-regional pride. In his short biography on Soundcloud, he writes "he spits his tongue out kinyarwanda-kifumbira is the only langwage (sic!) his ancestors spoke"[27], and classifies Rufumbira as the ancestral and authentic language of the region.

Figure 2.5: Advertisement for Slenda MC's Christmas concert on Facebook[28]

---

[26] See [https://soundcloud.com/slenda-mc/kiss-my-town-slenda-mc] (accessed 6 February 2016).

[27] See [https://soundcloud.com/slenda-mc] (accessed 5 February 2016).

[28] See [https://www.facebook.com/slendaMC?fref=ts] (accessed 6 February 2016).

While hip hop musicians have turned from negatively perceived and repudiated youths into positive ambassadors of local culture on the Ugandan side of the border, which is perceived (by young and elderly speakers alike) as a Selfing performance, similar tendencies are unthinkable across the other two borders. In Rwanda hip hop is often associated with street life, adolescent criminals and the youth language practice Imvugo y'Umuhanda (Nassenstein 2015a), while in Eastern DR Congo hip hop music is not socially accepted at all. While there are a handful of (stigmatized) local hip hop musicians in Goma, no one would actually perform using Kinyabwisha, due to the negative prestige of Kinyarwanda and similar varieties in public discourse in DR Congo. And in rural areas where Kinyabwisha is spoken (in the *chefferies* Bwisha and Bwito), hip hop musicians are not recognized as positive messengers at all. The recognition of artists such as Slenda MC and Echo C in Kisoro is therefore an emblematic symbol of differentiation, and of dissociation from music practices across the border(s).

3. SOCIOPHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

> *"[T]he phoneme /h/ has taken on symbolic importance, as a shibboleth marking the speech of Bosniacs, bringing the phonological system of Bosnian closer to the Arabic sounds, with its guttural consonants, and a step farther from Serbian, which often loses /h/."*
> (Greenberg 2004: 146, *Language and identity in the Balkans*)

The variationist patterns that stand central to the analysis of Rufumbira in a geolinguistic context of borders has to include a study of speakers' **sociophonology** (3.1). The high **emblematic value of phonological realizations** (3.2) becomes evident in the occurrence of phonemes that are absent in Kinyabwisha (DR Congo) and standardized Kinyarwanda (Rwanda). Moreover, certain **phonological processes** that are found in Kinyarwanda (see Myers & Crowhurst 2006) could not be attested for Rufumbira (3.3), or are partially suspended. Among the most salient features that differentiate Rufumbira from standardized Kinyarwanda are speakers' **intonation and pitch contours** (3.4), while most lexical and morphosyntactic tones are maintained. In the following, the phonology of Rufumbira is discussed contrastively with Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha phonology,[29] mainly from a sociophonological angle.

3.1 Sociophonology: Studying cross-border phonology and its social dimension

Studies in sociophonology have dealt with social variables as determinants for speakers' divergent phonological realizations in a range of studies since the 1960s; see Labov (1966, 1972) and Trudgill (1974). These early studies focused predominantly on phonological features that diverged according to variables such as social class, whereas more recent contributions have mainly taken stylistic features into consideration; see for instance the study of African youth language practices (Nassenstein & Hollington 2015), ludlings (Bagemihl 1995, Storch 2011) and research on linguistic profiling (Baugh 2007, among others).

Sociophonology, in general, describes "only those differences of *pronunciation* [author's highlight] which are perceived as socially significant" (Honey 1998: 92). Honey's term 'pronunciation' here refers both to intonational features and to the articulatory set, and to a speaker's 'accent' as a set of consonantal and vowel features which marks his/her identity or refers to his/her regional background. Moreover, sociophonological research "indicates that differences in accent [...] have the potential to be more decisive than other dialect features

---

[29] In the present chapter, different realizations in the two closely related varieties Kirundi (Burundi) and Kinyamulenge (South Kivu province, DR Congo) are also often referred to, although they do not play a role in the language variation settings in the border triangle upon which this study mainly focuses.

such as grammar or lexis, because they may be salient in every social encounter in daily life" (ibid., p. 106); this also applies to the phonology of Rufumbira.

As part of the sociophonological study on Rufumbira, speakers were exposed to audio data from closely related varieties of the JD60 continuum, namely Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha, Kinyamulenge and Kirundi[30], in order to gather information on phonaesthetic judgements. All of the latter stem from a corpus collected during fieldwork in these areas between 2012 and 2015, and were mainly narratives. Rufumbira speakers were then asked to express their attitudes toward the accents of the speakers, and were asked to answer the question, *"What would you think about this speaker?"* This kind of "matched guise method", which in its development was first employed in Canada with speakers of French and English (see Honey 1998), served as a form of linguistic profiling in order to assess attitudes associated with other varieties, and to explore speakers' ideologies through their answers. Speakers' attitudes to accents usually correlated with general judgments made about the neighboring Banyabwisha and Banyarwanda, namely that Kinyarwanda speakers would be seen as "proud" and would "sing" when speaking, while Kinyabwisha speakers would be considered "rough", and their accent classified as typically "Congolese, like Swahili". The non-adjacent varieties Kinyamulenge and Kirundi triggered less specific ascriptions of attitudes, their speakers being absent in Bufumbira. When listening to a story in Kinyamulenge, one Rufumbira-speaking interlocutor remembered a bus ride from Kisoro to Kampala where he sat next to a Kinyamulenge speaking woman, and could tell that "when they [the Banyamulenge] speak they are so slow, very lazy indeed, and they are very rare, a small people", in contrast to speakers of Kinyarwanda from Kigali, who were described as "pausing all the time when speaking, and then again speaking ever so fast".

The same was also done vice versa, with Rufumbira recordings being played in their home areas to speakers of Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha, Kirundi and Kinyamulenge. While all commented on the different accent, they also expressed their astonishment concerning the mutual intelligibility of the other variety. A speaker of Kirundi (JD61, Burundi) was surprised to understand *"un Ougandais"* [a Ugandan], namely a Mufumbira from Kisoro. When he expressed his surprise about the fact that he also understood a language from Uganda, he commented on it by saying *"Alors je parle beaucoup de langues? Ainsi je parle Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, et aussi Rufumbira…"* [so I speak many languages? I thus speak Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, and also Rufumbira…] (Eloi Niragira, December 2015). This clearly shows that speakers' perceptions of phonological differences are based on demarcation lines established in colonial times. While Kirundi and Kinyarwanda are known to be intelligible, other varieties are not. When speakers found out that the alleged differences between Congolese, Burundians

---

[30] Kirundi is the variety spoken in Burundi (see Meeussen 1959), and Kinyamulenge is, together with Kinyabwisha, one of two closely related JD60 varieties in DR Congo, spoken in the mountainous area of the Haut-Plâteaux around Minembwe and Murenge (South Kivu Province).

and Rwandans were not as stark as language policies may have suggested, they began counting the "languages" they were able to understand, as done by the Kirundi speaker in question. Seeing the continuum of Rwanda-Rundi varieties, often classified as JD60 (Maho 2009) or 'W(est) Highlands' (Nurse & Muzale 1999), as different languages due to the location of borders, and as part of the linguistic landscape of a different country, is a colonial perspective.

At the beginning of the fieldwork on Rufumbira, when confronting speakers with other adjacent JD60 varieties, samples of Rufumbira were also played to Rufumbira speakers in order to see if the language actually had a distinctive phonology, or if the perceived differences were simply due to a construction of social identity, paired with morphological and syntactic features that were divergent. Indeed, speakers would always recognize the speech of their fellow Bafumbira; they would refer to the pace and to intonational features, explaining that

> [w]hen a Mufumbira is talking, only the fluency of it and the dialect differs… the way it sounds, they [meaning: Kinyarwanda speakers] are talking **a bit jumpy jumpy style**, they are talking **a bit in a speed**, because of French. A Mufumbira speaks **in a slow pace**, in our own Rufumbira. You can easily pick when a Mufumbira talks than a Munyarwanda. (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015)

What is described by a speaker as "jumpy jumpy style" clearly refers to the intervals of pitch (F_0) in Kinyarwanda that diverge from Rufumbira, as still to be discussed (3.4). Moreover, "speed" is mentioned as a distinctive criterion, which also relates to a set of intonational features which are realized differently in neighboring languages. Speakers are thus aware that the differences between standardized Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira go beyond the mere phoneme inventory. A distinctive phonology marks linguistic ownership, as expressed in the speaker's phrase "our own Rufumbira". Speakers will therefore produce and re-produce a specific style in interaction which is perceived as 'Rufumbira style'. This can be explained with Giles' linguistic accommodation theory (based on Giles 1973, elaborated by Giles & Smith 1979), stating that speakers in interaction that are members of the same affiliative group copy each others' most salient features, including accent, as a form of convergence/divergence that stems from the motivation to identify themselves with a community. In the case of Rufumbira this means that with every mimetic reproduction of Rufumbira among speakers, the group's social identity is strengthened and contrasted with Banyarwanda and Banyabwisha groups that speak differently. Such expressions have already been explained in the preceding chapter as "act of identity" (Le Page 1978).

Similar sociophonological associations with different groups are described by Greenberg (2004) for the Balkans, where the realization of the glottal fricative [h] is considered a typical feature of Bosniacs that has become emblematic (in contrast to the omission of the glottal fricative in Serbian), and also by Leikola (2014) for Manjo speakers of Kafa in Ethiopia, whose language reveals contrastive features with regard to the Kafa spoken by non-Manjo

(Gomaro). Despite a common knowledge of differences in phonology, these features do not always have to be addressed in metalinguistic discussions, as shown by Leikola (2014: 122), who states that "the members of the Gomaro group [the larger and less marginalized group] often mention the differences in pronunciation, in the Manjo [the marginalized group] mono-logues the differences in pronunciation are not mentioned"; in the case of the Manjo, this has to do with hegemonic and sometimes institutional power. In Rufumbira, despite the fact that Rufumbira has no official status as Kinyarwanda does, speakers frequently *do* address the differences between their language and standardized Kinyarwanda, and less often with refer-ence to Kinyabwisha, too. One striking feature with an emblematic function is the aspiration of voiceless stops [p^h] [t^h] [k^h] when following a nasal (N_); these are realized as glottal fricatives with a slight labial opening [^{p}h], an alveolar opening [^{t}h] and a velar opening [^{k}h] in standardized Kinyarwanda[31] (N_), and as voiceless [p] and voiced [d] and [g] in Kinyabwi-sha (see Table 3.4). In addition to intonational features, the realization of these corresponding phonemes is perceived as most striking by speakers.

The borders between the three speech areas contribute to a conscious differentiation in phonology. Despite the Barera's pronunciation of Kinyarwanda in Northern Rwanda, which shares most of the deviating features found in Rufumbira, the Rwandan capital Kigali is con-sidered as the main point of comparison (as the location that diffuses more 'linguistic gravity'), while when referring to Kinyabwisha, this is the town center of Rutshuru, located roughly 30 km from the border. Speakers mentioned, however, that a few Bafumbira who live in the border zone close to Rwanda at Cyanika pronounce all three described phonemes as glottal fricatives, due to the fact "that they got addicted, they speak like Rwandans", as an expression of prestige. They gave the example that some young men, when first trying to impress their girlfriends, might choose a more Kinyarwanda-oriented phonological realization.

Sociophonology therefore always has to do with contrastive features that are realized differently by adjacent groups, and which become emblematic due to their strong indexical character, thereby marking social categories. 'Emblematicity' of phonological features is a process which "in a social interpretation […] recognises that small linguistic differences can be seized on by social groups as indexical and emblematic, the retention of [...] [a feature] is indicative of belonging to a group and differentiation" (Milroy 2003: 154). Emblematic pho-nology thus marks Rufumbira off contrastively against the constructed 'hyperlect' of stand-ardized Kinyarwanda as used in the media and the educational system in Rwanda, and equally in contrast to the adjacent and geographically more remote Kinyabwisha. Most colonial de-scriptions of Kinyarwanda, however, referred to the emblematic value of [l] and [ɾ]; linguists

---

[31] Myers & Crowhurst (2006) transcribe the phoneme as voiced glottal fricative [ɦ] without different articulatory releases. This may be due to the idiolectal realizations of speakers. Meeussen (1959: 12) describes its realization in Kirundi when preceded by a nasal as *"p t k sont très réduits* [p t k are very reduced]*: mp nt nk [m^{p}h n^{t}h ŋ^{k}h]"*, which corresponds with my own observations for Kinyarwanda.

wondered why speakers would often not differentiate between these two phonemes. Schumacher (1931: 413) notes that

> *[a]près tant **d'humiliations phonétiques** qu'ils m'avaient fait subir, j'eus comme un sentiment de "vengeance assouvie" un jour que je réussis à les faire "se prendre aux cheveux" eux-mêmes. J'articulai un* l *indubitablement européen en les interpellant: "Hé!* ***Avez-vous cela dans votre langue?*** *" Une discussion savante s'engagea avec le résultat que la plupart des plus influents optèrent pour la négative.*

> [after such **phonetic humiliations** that they made me undergo, I had something like a feeling of "quenching revenge" one day when I succeeded in getting them to make each other take a grip on themselves. I articulated an undoubtedly European *l* by addressing them: "Hey! **Do you have that in your language?**" A theoretical discussion began with the result that the majority of the most influential ones opted for the negative.][32]

It becomes obvious that the realization of the lateral approximant [l] is here characterized as a "European" feature, in contrast to a presumably "African" realization of a tap/flap [ɾ]. The (non-)production of a specific feature was therefore associated with a generally deficient phonological realization. This was furthermore explained with reference to the authoritative Western epistemology by saying *"en cela nos braves sauvages ne sont pas de cette intransigeance académique qui nous distingue"* [in this [matter] our brave savages do not have this academic rigidity that distinguishes us] (ibid.).

Nowadays, similar tendencies are observable when assessing the state and use of Kinyarwanda and closely related varieties in DR Congo. When the Second Congo War broke out in 1998 and Rwandans were to be identified in the capital Kinshasa in order to be eliminated, Congolese armed forces would carry out shibboleth practices. If they found a suspect who would realize a tap/flap [ɾ] instead of a lateral approximant [l], (s)he was accused of belonging to the Rwandan enemies and then assassinated. The realization of [ɾ] is therefore associated with *"Rwandophone"* speech varieties, which is again based on the construction of a strong opposing identity created by the authorities, and by nationalist Congolese patriots. In the analysis of social identity constructions among speakers of Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda, [l] and [ɾ] are less emblematic, since all three varieties share the tap/flap [ɾ], and lack the alveolar lateral approximant [l]. The social dimensions of language use in public, however, differ to a great extent between the three varieties, since Banyabwisha in Eastern DR Congo are prone to social stigmatization when speaking their language (and realizing specific phonetic features) in public, while Banyarwanda and Bafumbira are not. Linguistic disguise and attempts at concealment of a speaker's accent are therefore much more prominent among speakers of Kinyabwisha, who frequently switch to Kiswahili or French in order to avoid the negative ascriptions and attitudes associated with their language.

---

[32] Rough translation by the present author.

In the course of the present study, speakers' attitudes toward their own phonological realizations were also included. In a border triangle where slight differences become significant due to their emblematic function in processes of identity formation, metalanguage also becomes important. Speakers would, when asked what made Rufumbira phonologically special, state that the 'accent' in Rufumbira, either referred to as *imvuga yarwo* ('its accent') or as *ukuntu turuvuga* ('the way we speak it'), is the most essential component in creating *intandukan(y)o* ('a difference, special thing'), both on a segmental and on a suprasegmental phonological level.

> *So ugasanga yuko byóse birí kuményesha ikintu kimwe, zóse n'indimi zimwe **aríko ikirukóra** different **cangwa se intandukano irihó n'ukuntu turuvuga** aríko umuntu wa buri (i)gihe ararukúnda* [aɾaɾukúːnda] *kuko n'ururimi rwe.*

> [So, you find that they all mean one thing/the same thing, they are all one language but **what makes it "different" or "special", is the way we speak it**, but a person from anywhere/usual person likes it [his language] because it's his language.] (Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016)

In general, the Bafumbira create distinctiveness by employing language accommodation (see above), even when they speak English. The emblematic use of Rufumbira phonology also leaves its traces in English, with several Bafumbira palatalizing *pig* [piɟ] and *spring* [spɾinɟ], and pronouncing a sequence of <sw> as [sgw], according to the consonant sequences found in Rufumbira. Words such as *swamp* [sgwɛmp], *Swahili* [sgwahiɾi] and *sweets* [sgwiːts] are therefore adapted to Rufumbira phonology.

3.2 The phoneme inventory: Emblematic differences

3.2.1 Vowels

Rufumbira has five vowels, which can be short or long. In word-initial and word-final position vowels are always short, as is also the case in Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 2009); they are moreover "always lengthen[ed] before prenasalized consonants and after palatalized and labio-velarized consonants" (ibid., p. 220). Vowel length is distinctive, as shown in Table 3.1, and both long and short vowels can carry a high tone or a low tone. More prosodic features, however, are discussed in the following sections.

As has already been mentioned, vowel length is usually marked in Rufumbira graphemes <a> vs. <aa>, which is not the case in standardized Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha (see also footnote 5). The vowel qualities correspond with those found in the adjacent varieties across the borders. This can be seen as the main argument as to why the Kisoro Language Board has favored the orthographic convention of writing double graphemes for long vowels, in analogy with languages such as Luganda (E15), marking a difference from Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha. As also stated by Suleiman (2006: 53), "orthography is an effective way of

making visible, of constructing, differences between languages".

	front	central	back
high	i iː		u uː
mid	e eː		o oː
low		a aː	

Table 3.1: The vowel inventory

In the following, minimal pairs in Rufumbira are presented that reveal the distinctive character of vowel-length (Table 3.2).

Short vowels	Long vowels
intóki [intʰóci] ('fingers')	*intooki* [intʰoːci] ('banana plantation')
umuryango [umuɾɟaŋgo] ('door')	*umuryango* [umuɾɟaːŋgo] ('community gathering')
gushima [guʃima] ('to scratch')	*gushima* [guʃiːma] ('to please')
amasuka [amasuka] ('hoes')	*amasúuka* [amasúːka] ('bedsheets')
imyenda [imjenda] ('clothes')	*imyénda* [imjéːnda] ('debts')

Table 3.2: Minimal pairs with distinctive vowel-length

3.2.2 Consonants

The consonant inventory of Rufumbira, as listed in Table 3.3, deviates from the adjacent varieties of standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha in several instances, both in terms of place and manner of articulation.

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	p		t d		c ɟ	k g	
Fricative	β	f v	s z	ʃ ʒ	ç		h
Affricate			ts	tʃ ʤ			
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ	
Approximant		ʍ			j		
Tap/flap			ɾ				

Table 3.3: The consonant inventory

In Table 3.4, a set of variants as found in Kinyabwisha and standardized Kinyarwanda is provided in order to illustrate the most salient differences between all three varieties. Among the most striking differences are the realization of aspirated stops after a nasal, where Kinyarwanda has a glottal fricative[33], and Kinyabwisha has voiceless/voiced non-aspirated stops.

---

[33] According to Demolin & Delvaux's (2001) analysis, these are rather 'whispery voiced nasal stops', while they were mostly classified as 'voiceless and aspirated nasals' in earlier studies (Jouannet 1983).

Rufumbira		Std. Kinyarwanda		Kinyabwisha	Gloss
mpereza [mpʰereza]	~	*mpereza* [mᵖhereza]	~	*mpereza* [mpereza]	'Hand me…!'
impere [impʰere]		*impere* [imᵖhere]		*impere* [impere]	'bed bug'
yampaye [jampʰaje]		*yampáye* [jamᵖháje]		*yampáye* [jampáje]	'(s)he gave me'
umuntu [umuntʰu]		*umuntu* [umunᵗhu]		*umundu* [umundu]	'human being'
ikintu [icintʰu]		*ikintu* [icinᵗhu]		*ikindu* [ikindu]	'thing'
intebe [intʰeβe]		*intebe* [inᵗheβe]		*indebe* [indeβe]	'chair'
inka [inkʰa]		*inka* [inᵏha]		*inga* [inga]	'cow'
inkoko [inkʰokʰó]		*inkoko* [inᵏhokó]		*ingoko* [ingokó]	'chicken'
inkwáangu [inkʰwáːŋu]		*inkwángu* [inᵏhwáːŋu]		*ingwangu* [ingwaːŋu]	'landslides'

Table 3.4: Phoneme correspondences of the diaphonemes /p/ /t/ /k/ in nasal-initial stems

These emblematic differences often influence Rufumbira speakers and their phonaesthetic judgments, stating that "Banyarwanda speak through the nose" (referring to the glottal fricative with slight consonantal opening) and that Banyabwisha speak "no good Kinyarwanda" due to their divergent realization, which appears to be unrelated (and not close at all)[34] to the standard Kinyarwanda variants and the Rufumbira realization. This reveals that despite the obvious attempt to speak differently from Banyarwanda, the standardized variety from Kigali is still perceived as a form of hyperlect in all varieties (cf. Honey 1998).

Moreover, Rufumbira makes use of the voiced post-alveolar affricate [ʤ]_V^back/central, which is not employed in Kinyarwanda, revealing the voiced palatal stop preceding all vowels [ɟ]_V, written as <g/jy>. While the Bafumbira also tend to write [ʤ] as <jy>, as for instance in *inshuti yanjye* [inʃuti̥ janʤe] ('my friend'), there is no palatalized stop. In Kinyabwisha, the same affricate is used in these environments.

The voiceless palatal stop [c]_V in Kinyarwanda, expressed with the graphemes <k/cy>, also tends to be realized as the voiceless post-alveolar affricate [tʃ]_V^back/central in Rufumbira, still written as <cy> when preceding /a/, /o/ and /u/, despite a lack of palatalization. This variation is not uncommon since "in many Bantu languages, ky/gy develop into alveo-palatal affricates" (Hyman 2003: 55). An example would be *cyane* [tʃaːne] ('very much'), which is realized as [caːne] in the Kinyarwanda spoken in Kigali. By speakers of standardized Kinyarwanda, the realization of stops as affricates is often seen as "rough" or

---

[34] A research participant also mentioned one specific locality in Kisoro District *"harimó bamwe abafumbira batazí ururimi harihó nka gace kitwa Matinza ho bavugaga 'intama' indama, 'inka' inga"* [where some Bafumbira do not know the language, there is a small part called Matinza where they say 'intama' [intʰama] as *indama*, 'inka' [inkʰa] as *inga*]. The realization described also corresponds with Kinyabwisha from across the border in DR Congo. Speakers of Rufumbira therefore think that the diverging realization is due to the migration of their ancestors from Congo to Matinza. They also said that while these people at times speak like that, some of them have shifted to speak "correctly" nowadays.

"unelegant" speech, a perception that some Bafumbira seem to be aware of. This might be one of the reasons why they tend to use the graphemes <jy> and <cy> when preceding back and central vowels. While the phonetic value deviates, at least the graphemic level displays that an esthetic representation is maintained.

Another difference between Rufumbira and standardized Kinyarwanda is the contrastive realization of the post-alveolar fricative [ʒ] in Rufumbira vs. the palatal stop [ɟ] in Kinyarwanda, which is the more archaic form (Meeussen 1967), as in *ejo* ('tomorrow, yesterday') and *ijyana* ('one hundred').

The voiceless bilabial fricative [f], when preceded by the prenasal [m], is often realized as the affricate [pɸ], as in *imfu* [impɸu] ('deaths'). The realization in Rufumbira is here closer to the realization in standardized Kinyarwanda (where *imfu* also contains an affricate), while in Kinyabwisha it is realized as [imfu]. Generally speaking, the variant in Kinyabwisha has undergone the entire process of spirantization attested for Bantu languages (Hyman 2003), while in Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira this has happened only partially.

Moreover, Rufumbira has maintained the glottal fricative [h] in word-initial position, where Kinyabwisha, most likely due to the influence from Congo Swahili, has dropped it, as in *harimo* [harimo̥] vs. *arimo* [arimo̥] ('there is (inside)').

3.2.3 Complex sequential consonants

Rufumbira reveals numerous complex consonants that consist of a velar stop following another stop, a fricative or an affricate. Rather than regarding this phenomenon as a form of 'co-articulation' or velarization of consonants, these have to be seen as sequential phonemes, as is also the case in Kinyarwanda (see Kimenyi 2002, 2004). However, Kimenyi (2009: 605) states that "it is still an open debate in phonetics and phonology as to whether these complex consonants are one with multiple articulators or a sequence of independent segments".

In the following, all complex velarized consonant phonemes of Rufumbira are listed, and the (few) differences that are found in relation to Kinyarwanda (see Table 3.5) are also indicated. They occur in most Rwanda-Rundi varieties, with exception of the Ha[35] language from Tanzania (Harjula 2004), where the velar is realized as glide [w], corresponding with the displayed orthographic form. In all varieties, the orthographic representation still has <w> and <y> whenever consonant phonemes are velarized or palatalized respectively. The phonetic value of the complex consonants [_g/_ɟ] is here the more archaic form, while

---

[35] While Maho (2009) subsumes Ha, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi and also Vira, Fuliiro, Hangaza etc. into the JD60 Rwanda-Rundi group, the Tanzanian language Ha seems to be considerably closer to Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyamulenge (JD61–JD62 continuum) than to the others mentioned, which seem to diverge in morphosyntax. He does not list any of the languages in the JD61-JD62 continuum apart from Kinyarwanda and Kirundi, most likely due to the lack of scholarly work so far carried out on any of them.

the orthographic representation (<w>/<y>) corresponds with more recent developments in Bantu (see Meeussen 1967 on Proto-Bantu), with the emergence of half-vocalic approximants in many languages. Prenasalized and palatalized consonants without velarization are not included here.

Both Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira reveal the complex sequential consonants <pw> [pk], <bw> [bg], <fw> [fk], <vw> [vg], <dw> [dgw], <sw> [skw], <zw> [zgw], <rw> [ɾgw]_V^front/central and [ɾg]_V^back, <tsw> [tskw], <shw> [ʃkw], <jw> [ʒgw], <kw> [kw], <gw> [gw], and the palatalized <sy> [skj] and <ty> [tcj] without notable differences beyond minor idiolectal variants.[36] Kimenyi (2009) also lists the velarized-palatalized consonants <byw>, <pyw>, <myw>, <tyw>, <dyw>, <syw>, <shyw>, <mybw>, <mvyw>, <nshyw>, <njyw>, but these could not be ascertained for Rufumbira.

Complex sequential consonants[37]	Realization in Kinyarwanda[38]	Rufumbira example		Gloss
<mw> [mg] ~ <mw> [mw]	[mg]	*mwínshi*	[mgíːnʃi] [mwíːnʃi]	'much/many (NC3)'
<tw> [tgw] ~ <tw> [tw]	[tgw]	*umutwe*	[umutkwe] [umutwe]	'head'
<nw> [nw]	[nŋw]	*umunwa*	[umunʌa]	'mouth'
<ry> [ɾdj]	[ɾgj]	*kurya* *ururyo*	[kuɾdja] [uɾuɾdjo]	'to eat' 'right hand'
<cw> [tʃkw]	[ckw]	*kwícwa*	[kwíːtʃkwa]	'to be killed'

Table 3.5: Complex sequential consonants in Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda

As listed above, there are several differences between Rufumbira and standardized Kinyarwanda. These relate to non-velarization as a free alternation in Rufumbira, mainly due to language contact with Rukiga or Luganda. Speakers of Luganda, in particular, would velarize <tw> and <mw> less often and would explain that velarization is not a required feature. These were often described by other Bafumbira as "proud" or "emphasizing that they are from the capital, and have not really been to the village", and thus lack of velarization is associated with a symbolic social value.

The sequence <nw> is also not usually velarized in Rufumbira, while velarization is required in Kinyarwanda. The sequence <ry> is also realized differently, with the Rufumbira

---

[36] As can still be seen in the orthography, processes of fortition took place, see also Dimmendaal (2011).

[37] The consonant phonemes are listed according to their place of articulation.

[38] Some of the examples are taken from Sibomana (1974), some elicited in Rufumbira and then cross-checked with Kinyarwanda speakers.

realization not being velarized. While Rufumbira only reveals an alveolar pronunciation, Kinyarwanda speakers velarize <ry>. The sequence <cw> is not palatalized in Rufumbira but includes a palato-alveolar affricate. Finally, both <yw> and <hw> lack velarization in Rufumbira and are realized as [çw] and [hw] respectively, although according to Kimenyi (2009) they are velarized. They are however not included in Table (3.5) due to the fact that no lexical examples with these complex consonants were found for Rufumbira.

3.3 Phonological rules and processes

A range of phonological and phonotactic processes that take place in Rufumbira will be discussed in the following. While some are due to emblematic phonology and are not found elsewhere in surrounding varieties, there are some processes that affect all JD60 varieties.

3.3.1 Palatalization

Palatalization has to be paid particular attention, as already stated in the introduction to this section, due to its emblematic function. In recorded data, speakers of Rufumbira showed a high degree of variation in the realization of (non-)palatalized stops that precede the front vowels [i] and [e]. They were asked to pronounce a range of lexemes[39], and the focus on palatalization in the chosen examples was not announced beforehand. While some speakers would consequently palatalize the voiceless [k], resulting in [c] and also the voiceless [g], resulting in [ɟ], others would only realize palatalization on one or the other. In order to analyze the social value of the distributed pattern, ten interlocutors were asked whether "good Rufumbira" would palatalize the two consonant phonemes. The answers, filtered through five sentences that each speaker was asked to produce, were as diverse as the realizations themselves. Some individuals, with different educational backgrounds, pleaded for [c] and [g] while others favored [k] and [ɟ]. A few interlocutors suggested both palatalized [c] and [ɟ] (these tended to be young speakers oriented toward Rwandan hip hop), and even fewer favored a set of non-palatalized [k] and [g] (some elderly men from the adjacent Congo border). Moreover, it was observed that certain speakers would produce a different pattern when reproducing the elicited words a second time. A discussion of these results must take into consideration the corresponding realizations in standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha.

In contrast to Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda always palatalizes stops in both of these surroundings with a complementary distribution of velar stops elsewhere, while Kinyabwisha does not palatalize at all. Examples for all three varieties are listed in Table 3.6. Kinyabwisha has maintained only velar stops, and lacks palatalized velars, which is a common variation in Bantu languages (see Hyman & Moxley 1992). The frequent mixed patterns found in Rufumbira hint at speakers' underlying ideology of speaking "differently".

---

[39] Among the elicited examples were *ikibazo* ('problem'), *ikintu* ('thing'), *igisimba* ('insect'), *igihúgu* ('country'), *ngiye* ('I went'), and *kirapfuye* ('it died').

When assessing the social meaning and indexical value of either palatalized or non-palatalized velars, speakers would localize non-palatalized stops along the Congolese border (Bunagana, the Western periphery of Kisoro District), and full patterns of palatalization toward the Eastern periphery of Kisoro District (where both Rufumbira and Rukiga are spoken). While Kiswahili (as spoken in Eastern DR Congo; see Nassenstein & Bose 2016) has no palatalized stops preceding front vowels, Rukiga does have them (Mpairwe & Kahangi 2013), and – as stated – Kinyarwanda does as well. A mixed pattern therefore creates a distinctive phonological realization which can neither be mistaken for Kinyarwanda, nor for Kinyabwisha, nor as fully adopted from Rukiga. While it is questionable if this realization as such is a fully conscious pattern, its social meaning clearly reveals that a mixed pattern creates distinctiveness, and can therefore be characterized as "good Rufumbira" (in the sense of Joe Haguma, April 2014) regardless of the actual distribution of which consonant phonemes are palatalized and which are not.

Lexeme	Kinyarwanda	Kinyabwisha	Rufumbira	Gloss
kugenda	[kuɟeːndą]	[kugeːndą]	[kuɟeːndą]/[kugeːndą]	'to go'
umugezi	[umuɟezi̧]	[umugezi̧]	[umuɟezi̧]/[umugezi̧]	'river'
gukenyera	[gucéɲera]	[gukéɲera]	[gucéɲera]/[gukéɲera]	'to tie clothes around the waist'
gukeba	[guceßą]	[gukeßą]	[guceßą]/[gukeßą]	'to cut'
umugi	[umuɟí]	[umugí]	[umuɟí]/[umugí]	'town'
igi	[iɟíʰ]	[igí]	[iɟíʰ]/[igí]	'egg'
gukina	[gucina]	[gukina]	[gucina]/[gukina]	'to play'
gukinga	[guciːnga]	[gukiːnga]	[guciːnga]/[gukiːnga]	'to close'

Table 3.6: Palatalization in Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira[40]

Standardized Kinyarwanda also reveals palatalization when preceding an approximant and a back/central vowel, as in *cyane* [caːne] ('very'), *iyco* [ico] (NC7 distal demonstrative) and *icumi* [icumi] ('ten'), and in *jyana* [ɟana] ('take!'), *kujyugunya* [kuɟugunja] ('to throw') and *ikijyonjo* [iciɟonɟo] ('broken earthen pot'), whereas Rufumbira speakers realize these as affricates [tʃaːne], [itʃo], [itʃumi], and as [iʤana], [kuʤugunja], and [iciʒonʤo][41] respectively.

The allophones [g] and [ɟ] and [k] and [c] lead to verbal root alternants in Rufumbira: [-ɟeːnd-] ~ [-geːnd-] ('go'), [-cin-] ~ [-kin-] ('play') and [-ciːng-] ~ [-kiːng-] ('close'). Moreover, the palatalization of C_V^front also affects derivation when causatives and applicatives are formed. The derivational suffixes for causatives are *-ish* and *-esh*, depending upon the stem

---

[40] The Kinyarwanda morphemes are taken from Myers & Crowhurst (2006).

[41] One would expect this to be pronounced as [iciʤonʒo] here, in accordance with the aforementioned words. The realization as [iciʒonʤo] may be a kind of hypercorrection of both consonant phonemes in this case.

vowels (/i/, /a/, /u/ vs. /e/, /o/), while for applicatives they are *-ir-* and *-er-*. They cause palatalization even on verbs which are not palatalized in their original form (due to g/k_V^central), as for instance in *kunuka* [kunuka] ('to smell'), which becomes *kunukira* [kunuciɾa] ('to smell from/for') in its applicative form, and *kuroga* [kuɾoga] ('to bewitch, to poison') which turns into *kurogesha* [kuɾoɟeʃa] ('to cause to bewitch').

3.3.2 Vowel copying

Another feature that occurs in standardized Kinyarwanda but also in Rufumbira is vowel copying. All verbs whose infinitive prefix *gu-/ku-* carry a high tone copy the high tone vowel found in the prefix from the right to the left preceding syllable (see examples 1–3) onto the tense-aspect marker. While the high tone vowel (as in *kúbaka* 'to build') is no longer necessarily found in the inflected form *tu-rú-bak-a* ('we will construct/build'), the copied *-u-* is still present, and also the high tone, whereas the near future prefix *-ra-* usually has a low tone (see examples 1 and 3). This process was found in all JD60 varieties that were analyzed. Historically, this process is explained by Coupez (1980: 584) not as vowel copying but with reference to Proto-Bantu (see also Meeussen 1967). Roots with an initial vowel *-u-,* such as *-úbak-* ('to construct') go back to Proto-Bantu *-jí-,* for instance to *-jíbak-,* which he explains with

> *la voyelle antérieure fermée *i̧ du protobantou offre dans ses réflexes actuels actuels quelques alternances avec ceux de la voyelle postérieure fermée *u̧ sans qu'il soit généralement possible de situer l'époque à laquelle s'est produit le dédoublement du point d'articulation.*
>
> [the closed front vowel *i̧ from Proto-Bantu offers in its actual reflexes some alternation with those of the closed back vowel *u̧ without it being possible to determine the era when the articulatory doubling took place]

Verbs such as *-íc-* ('to kill') and *-úzur-* ('to fill'), where vowel copying occurs, can therefore be traced back to the alternation *-i̧- ~ -u̧-* in Proto-Bantu.

(1) *turúbaka ejo*   tu-*ra-*(ú)bak-a   ejo
     [turúβaka eʒo]   1pl-FUT1-build-FV   tomorrow
     'we will construct tomorrow'

(2) *inzira yúzuye ibyondo* i-n-zira   y-a-*(ú)zur-*ye   i-by-ondo
     [inzira júzuj(e) iβjondo] AUG-cl9-way   3sg-PST1-be.full-PFV AUG-cl8-mud
     'the street is full of mud'

(3) *irúzuzwa*   i-*ra-*(ú)zuz-w-a
     [irúzuzgwa̧]   cl9-FUT1-fill-PASS-FV
     'it will be filled (soon)'

Other verbs with vocalic stems, such as *kóoga* [kóːga] ('to swim'), undergo the same process, which may also be due to the high tone on the prefix *kó-*.

(4)   *bazóoga*   ba-*záa-*óog-a
        [βazóːga]   3pl-FUT2-swim-FV
        'they are going to swim'

Reflexive verbs (with the prefix *-í-* [íː]) also reveal this process of vowel copying, with the reflexive prefix replacing the original vowel of the tense-aspect prefix in the left slot.

(5)   *bazíshura*   ba-*záa-*í-shur-a
        [βazíːʃura]   3pl-FUT2-REFL-pay-FV
        'they are going to pay'

(6)   *tuzíga*   tu-*záa-*í-g-a
        [tuzíːga]   1pl-FUT2-REFL-study-FV
        'we are going to study'

3.3.3 Final devoicing

Final devoicing, as described by Myers & Crowhurst (2006) for Kinyarwanda, also occurs in Rufumbira, but the voicelessness of utterance-final vowels seems to be less significant than in standardized Kinyarwanda. Myers & Crowhurst (ibid.) differentiate between full devoicing [ḁ] and partial devoicing [aʰ], where the vowel can still be traced on spectrograms. Preliminary tests in Rufumbira have revealed that vowels are either fully devoiced (as in example 7), or that devoicing does not take place at all (see Figure 3.1). One example where the final vowel was clearly omitted in Rufumbira is presented in (7).

(7)   *abakobwa bakóraga*   a-ba-kobwa   ba-kór-ag-a
        [aβakobga βakóragạ]   AUG-cl2-girl 3pl-work-IMPV-FV
        '(the) girls usually work'

The following spectrogram is based on the realization of *ntaabwo nsháaka kujya ku (i)shúuri* [ntaːbgo nʃáːka kuʒa ku ʃúːri] ('I don't want to go to school'), which clearly shows that the utterance-final vowel *-i* is not devoiced. In similar tests for Kinyarwanda, the final vowel was either entirely or at least partially omitted (cf. Myers & Crowhurst 2006) and realized as an extra short vowel, as also confirmed by Kinyarwanda speakers. The non-devoicing in Rufumbira seems to be more frequent with high vowels [i]/[u] than with low ones [a].
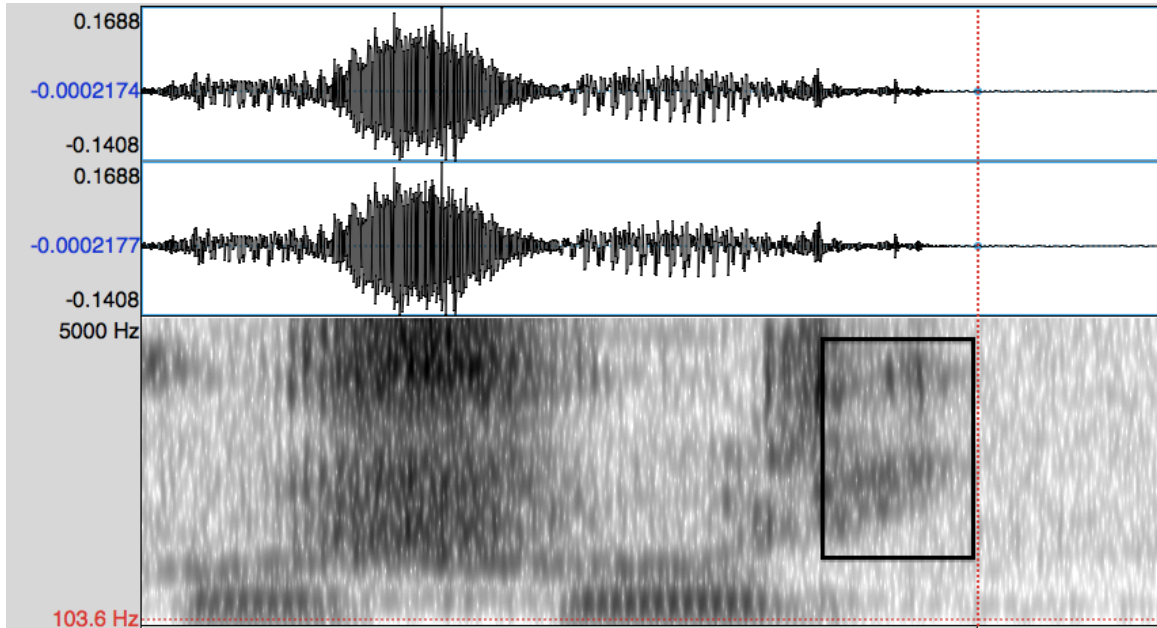
Figure 3.1: Spectrogram of *ku (i)shúuri* with indication of utterance-final *-i*

Moreover, there was a third phenomenon that was observable in Rufumbira, and which could not be ascertained for standardized Kinyarwanda when cross-checking the phonetic data with speakers of the standardized variety. Vowels in utterance-final position following a glottal fricative would not be partially devoiced but lengthened and a fricative added, resulting in a voiceless alveolar fricative [s]; see example (8). The same final vowel was produced by speakers of Kinyamulenge (DR Congo) with a final voiceless palatal fricative [ç].

(8)   *Urí he?*   *u-rí*   *he?*

      [urí heːs]   2sg-be   INTERROG

      'Where are you?'

In both cases, as assumed by speakers of standardized Kinyarwanda, the fricatives may be traced back to an interrogative particle *ese,* potentially derived from the French question marker *est-ce que* which can still occur in clause-initial and clause-final position in Kinyarwanda, but is absent in Rufumbira (and in Kinyamulenge), thus alternating *Ese urí he?* with *Urí h'ese?* ('So, where are you?') as emphatic questions.

3.3.4 Vowel harmony

As has already been shown in 3.3.1, vowel harmony has to be respected in Rufumbira, which becomes evident in the formation of causatives and applicatives. There is no difference between vowel harmony in Rufumbira and in adjacent varieties such as Kinyarwanda (see Myers & Crowhurst 2006) and Kinyabwisha. For both verbal derivations, we find two alternating morphemes -iːʃ- ~ -eːʃ-, and -iɾ- ~ -eɾ-. It is generally known that

[t]he alternant with the high vowel-i:ʃ-/-ir- occurs only when the closest preceding vowel is high [i, u] or low [a] , and the alternant with the mid vowel -e:ʃ-/-er- occurs only when the closest preceding vowel is mid [e, o] (Myers & Crowhurst 2006).[42]

In Table 3.7, examples of the different causative and applicative forms are listed according to the (nearest) decisive vowel in their stem.

Verb	Causative	Applicative	Gloss
gukina [gucina]	*gukinisha* [gucini:ʃa]	*gukinira* [gucinira]	'to play'/'to make sb. play'/'to play for, on be-half of sb.'
kunuka [kunuka]	*kunukisha* [kunuci:ʃa]	*kunukira* [kunucira]	'to smell'/'to make smell'/'to diffuse bad smell to people'
kúbaka [kúβaka]	*kubákisha* [kuβáci:ʃa]	*kubákira* [kuβácira]	'to build/'to make sb. build/'to build for, on be-half of sb.'
kureeba [kure:βa]	*kureebesha* [kure:βe:ʃa]	*kureebera* [kure:βera]	'to look'/'to make look at s.th.'/'to look for, on behalf of sb.'
kuroga [kuro:ga]	*kurogesha* [kuro:ge:ʃa]	*kurogera* [kuro:gera]	'to bewitch'/'to make sb. bewitch'/'to bewitch on behalf of sb.'

Table 3.7: Vowel harmony in Rufumbira

3.3.5 Vowel coalescence and vowel deletion

Vowel coalescence happens when, in a sequence of two morphemes within a word, the first ends with *-a* and the following morpheme begins with a high vowel *-i* or *-u*, resulting in *-a + -i→-e* and *-a + -u→-o*, as for instance in *ma- + -ínshi → ménshi* [me:nʃi] (NC6 'many, much').

Moreover, vowel-final words lose the vowel when followed by vowel-initial words, a process known as vowel deletion. This occurs regularly both in Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira: it seems to be required in Kinyarwanda but vowels can also be fully realized in Rufumbira in most surroundings. Myers & Crowhurst (2006) state for Kinyarwanda that all vowels in word-final position can be deleted in the context of a following initial vowel. Most Rufumbira speakers, however, would agree with the deletion of *(-e)_i-, (-a)_i-, (-u)_i-, (-e)_a-, (-a)_a-, (-u)_a-, (-e)_u, (-a)_u, (-i)_u-*,[43] "when talking fast", as in *ntaabw(o)_arí* ('(s)he is not'), but

---

[43] In the phonetic transcription of each example, this is indicated with round brackets.

would often prefer to add pauses between *-u_u-,* and *-o_i-* (see examples 9–10). This may be due to the fact that these vowel sequences occur less frequently. However, pausing instead of vowel deletion seems to be much more common in Rufumbira (and prone to idiolectal realizations) than in adjacent varieties, also in comparison to Kinyabwisha.

It has to be noted, though, that whenever demonstratives precede the subject, it is not the final vowel of the demonstratives that is deleted but the augment of the noun (*uyu_(u)muntu* 'this human being), for reasons of definiteness.

(9)   *ubu ururimi…*   *ubu*   *u-ru-rimi*
        [uβu uɾuɾími]   now   AUG-cl11-language
        'now the language…'

(10)   *indirimbo irarimbwe*   *i-n-dirimbo*   *i-ra-rimb-w-*ye*
        [indiɾimbo iɾaɾimbge]   AUG-cl9-song   cl9-DJ-sing-PASS-PFV
        'the song was sung'

A gliding process, turning the back vowel of the locative marker /u/ into a bilabial approximant [w] before vowels) also does not occur in Rufumbira. While *mu* regularly changes to *mw'* in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, it remains as *mu* in Rufumbira, and causes the following word-initial vowel to drop (as in *mu (i)shúuri* vs. *mw' ishúuri* 'at school').

The interaction of vowel deletion and palatalization processes is also worth mentioning. As already stated, palatalization of velar stops occurs in Rufumbira before front vowels. When a front vowel is deleted in the context of a hierarchically more dominant central vowel, palatalization is maintained despite the violation of the rule in the changed surrounding. This has been analyzed by Myers & Crowhurst (2006) for Kinyarwanda, and is shown in example (11) for Rufumbira, as realized by some speakers.

(11)   *umuntu ufite ubwenge aríra*   *u-mu-ntu*   *u-fite*   *u-bw-enge*   *a-rír-a*
        [umuntʰ(u) afit(e) ubgéːɲ(e) aɾíɾa]   AUG-cl1-person   3sg-have   AUG-cl14-wisdom   3sgS-cry-FV
        'a wise man cries'

It becomes obvious that "whether a dorsal stop in the configuration /C V_1 # V_2/ is palatal or velar depends on V_1, not V_2, even though it is V_2 that follows the stop in surface pronunciation" (ibid.)[44], which also implies that velar stops can thus occur before front vowels (as opposed to the actual rule in Rufumbira), as shown in example (12).

---

[44] See [http://www.laits.utexas.edu/phonology/kinyarwanda/kin_interaction.html] (accessed 28 January 2016).

(12) *inkokó irí kurya*   *i-n-kokó*   *i-rí*   *ku-rya*
      [inkʰokʰ(ɵ) íri kuɾdja]   AUG-cl9-chicken   cl9-be   INF-eat
      'a chicken is eating'

However, due to the mixed patterns of palatalization, either palatalizing the voiced or the voiceless velar (see above), most speakers tend to avoid vowel deletion in examples (11–12). They stated that pausing after the subject (*umuntu ufite ubwenge* and *inkokó*, respectively) makes the sentence more understandable. Due to the free variation of patalized and non-palatalized stops in Rufumbira (throughout the mixed patterns), general palatalization rules (ɟ/c_V^front) do not necessarily have to be broken/suspended because of vowel deletion, as is the case in Kinyarwanda. Speakers therefore simply add pauses in their speech, where the crucial cases of palatalization of stops before central/back vowels, or velarization before front vowels would be expected; this occurs because of the free distribution patterns of palatalization among most speakers.

3.3.6 Dahl's law

Dahl's law describes a voicing dissimilation process of the first of two voiceless consonants in sequential syllables, which is frequent especially in Eastern Bantu languages. While this process is fully functioning in Kinyarwanda for /p/ and /k/ (see Coupez 1980: 583), it is suspended to some extent in Kinyabwisha, where it is only partially realized. Rufumbira generally makes one exception, whenever infinitive forms in combination with object concordants are concerned (see 13–14).

(13) *basháaka kutubona (*gutubona)*   *ba-sháak-a*   *ku-tu-bona*
      [βaʃáːka kʰutʰuβona]   3plS-want-FV   INF-1plO-see
      'they want to see us'

(14) *nsháaka kukubona (*gukubona)*   *n-sháak-a*   *ku-ku-bona*
      [nʃáːka kʰukʰuβona]   1sgS-want-FV   INF-2sgO-see
      'I want to see you'

The examples provided are considered to be "good Rufumbira" by speakers, but they would not be regarded as correct standardized Kinyarwanda. Speakers from Kigali however stated that in colloquial language use, the same suspension of Dahl's law frequently occurs in Rwanda.

  Several Bafumbira who had spent a considerable amount of time in Kampala, and were exposed to influence from Luganda, would also produce forms as in examples 15a–15b (Dave Mutabazi, March 2014), which were rejected by speakers from Kisoro.

(15a)   *tufite isente*   *tu-fite*   *i-sente*

        [tʰufitʰ(e) ise:nte]   1pl-have   cl9-money

        'we have money'

(15b)   *Tukór(e) umurimo!*   *tu-kór-*é*   *u-mu-rimo*

        [tʰukʰóre umuɾimo]   1pl-work-SUBJ   AUG-cl3-work

        'Let's do the work!'

These are, in contrast, perceived as correct in Kinyabwisha and were repeatedly produced by various speakers. Other Bafumbira would, due to their knowledge of Rukiga, also extend the above-mentioned suspension of Dahl's law in infinitives to progressive constructions as in (16), which were classified by some speakers as being "too much Rukiga", due to the fact that Dahl's law is not realized in Rukiga at all. Kinyarwanda speakers rejected the progressive forms as in (16). It has to be added that in all cases where the phonological rule is suspended, only the voiceless variant was accepted by speakers, never a double voiced alternative (*gugubona).

(16)   *ʔbari kuhínga*   *ba-ri*   *ku-hínga*

        [βaɾi kuhí:ŋa]   3pl-be   INF-dig

        'they are cultivating'

3.4 Prosodic features

3.4.1 Tone

When comparing the prosodic features of Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and standardized Kinyarwanda, it becomes evident that the tonal system does not reveal major differences at first sight. Both speakers' perceptions and a more detailed analysis, however, reveal that there are prosodic features that are distinctive in all three varieties.[45] Prosodic studies on Kinyarwanda have come up with different analyses; while Furere & Rialland (1983, 1985) describe it as a pitch-accent system, Kimenyi first (1978) describes it as a system with two phonemic and four phonetic tones, and later (2002) as a metrical system, while Sibomana (1974: 14) classifies five tone steps with a high, middle high, middle, middle low and low tone. In later accounts, Kimenyi describes Kinyarwanda tonology as "very simple" (2009: 606), although it has for a long time been thought to be extraordinarily complex. He (2009: 606) briefly summarizes the Kinyarwanda tone system as follows (of which most described patterns are also relevant for Rufumbira).

---

[45] The prosodic analysis of JD60 varieties included a set of ten sentences that speakers of all varieties were asked to produce, in order to get a first insight into lexical and morphosyntactic tone and potential deviations. The set included different kinds of clauses (questions, prohibitive clauses, relative clauses, etc.), in order to compare intonation patterns as well.

There is only **one lexical high tone per morpheme**. Some morphemes are toneless. Noun tone patterns differ from verb tone rules. Any noun can have a lexical high tone on any syllable of the stem, except the augment and the prefix. A verb, however, even when it is polysyllabic and has multiple suffixes, can have **a high tone only on the first mora of the first syllable or the first of the second syllable** of the stem. Other syllables are extraprosodic. When high tones are found there, they are stray tones, since they do not participate in tone rules such as the Meeussen rule, Beat Movement, Iambic Reversal, etc. The **first syllable verb high tone assignment is lexical**, whereas **the second syllable high tone assignment is grammatical**. The prosodic domain of tone rules application of both nouns and verbs is the left-most phonological tone and the first mora of the stem first syllable. Tone rules **apply from right to left**, whereas in the majority of languages whose tone rules have been studied, they apply from left to right.

Rufumbira has two tone levels with a high tone and a low tone (HT, LT). While the high tone is usually marked (as in the present study with an acute accent), the low tone usually remains unmarked in the orthography. Short vowels can carry high tones, and in the case of long vowels, high tones are found on either the first or second mora of the lengthened vowel. In this regard, Rufumbira differs from Kinyarwanda, which only allows high tones on the first mora of each respective syllable in verbs (according to Kimenyi 2009, in contrast to Myers 2003), and corresponds with high tone patterns in the Ha language (Harjula 2004). As explained later on, two high tones cannot follow each other, due to Meeussen's rule. Moreover, Myers & Crowhurst (2006)[46] illustrate that "[a] high tone on the first mora yields a high-low falling sequence on the vowel", and "[h]igh tone on the second mora of a long vowel yields a low-high rising tone sequence on the syllable". Tone sandhis can also occur due to word-final vowel deletion or a change in accentuation, which corresponds with Kimenyi's (2002: 84) 'tone spread' and his concept of 'stray tones' (2009). See for instance the Rufumbira example *utwána twánjye* [utkwáːna tkwáːnʤe] ('my small children') vs. *utwaná twe* [utkwaːná tkwe] ('his/her small children'), where the high tone spreads from the monosyllabic possessive to the final syllable of the preceding noun, and also levels the high tone on the preceding syllable, which is realized as low.

Numerous lexemes differ in all three varieties due to contact-induced change, and also to corpus planning, such as for instance the Kinyarwanda *umuhánda* [umuháːnda], Rufumbira *umuhare* [umuhaɾe], and Kinyabwisha *barabara* [βaɾaβaɾa] ('street, road'). The majority of the lexicon, however, is shared by all three varieties, and minimal pairs in terms of tonal patterns often occur; see (17) for Kinyarwanda.

---

[46] See [https://www.laits.utexas.edu/phonology/kinyarwanda/kin_tone.html] (accessed 22 February 2016).

(17)   *inda*   vs.   *indá*

        'stomach'   'louse'

Whenever lexemes do not differ, lexical tones in cognate forms are usually maintained in all three varieties, as revealed in Figure 3.2 for Rufumbira.

Figure 3.2: Lexical tones in *inda* ('stomach') vs. *indá* ('louse')[47]

Most morphosyntactic tones are also maintained, as seen for instance in the following two examples, showing the realization of the (remote/post-hodiernal) future *-záa-* and the near (hodiernal) future *-ra-* as realized in Rufumbira (Figure 3.3), which also exist in Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda. Yet in Kinyarwanda, *-ra-* serves as disjoint marker, and may also express the near future. In Kinyabwisha, it only expresses the near future.

Figure 3.3: Morphological tones on *-záa-* (future tense) and *-ra-* (near future) in Rufumbira

However, there are some alternations in Rufumbira where grammatical tone has been lost. When three examples cited from Kimenyi (2009: 606) were read to speakers, they would emphasize that they could "not spot the difference", since the three tonal differences (see example 18a–c) are not meaningful in Rufumbira. For the first sentence, Rufumbira speakers usually make use of the habitual suffix *–ag(a),* and the low tone therefore becomes superfluous as a marker.

	(Kinyarwanda) (Kimenyi 2009: 606)	(Rufumbira)	
(18a)	*ba-som-a*	*ba-som-ag-a* /	*ba-ra-som-ag-a*
	3pl-read-FV	3pl-read-IMPV-FV	3pl-DJ-read-IMPV-FV
	'they read'		

	(Kinyarwanda) (Kimenyi 2009: 606)	(Rufumbira)	
(18b)	*ba-sóm-a*	*(bo)*	*ba-sóm-a*
	3pl-read-FV	3pl:REL	3pl-read-FV
	'(those) who read'	'(those) who read'	

---

[47] All phonetic images that indicate speakers' pitch were created with Praat (version 5.3.55), [http://www.praat.org].

	(Kinyarwanda) (Kimenyi 2009: 606)		(Rufumbira)				
(18c)	*bá-som-a*		*iyó*	*ba-som-a*	/	*ba-rí*	*gu-soma*
	3pl-read-FV		when	3pl-read-FV		3pl-be	INF-read
	'when they read'		'when they read/are reading'				

While (18a) was accepted as having the correct intonation, (18b) was said to depend upon the context. While Kinyarwanda always expresses relative marking through tonal difference, Rufumbira marks the difference between subject and object relative clauses through the use of a free-standing object relative concord *-o*, and the tonal difference therefore becomes superfluous. Example (18b) was therefore not considered as "wrong" but the high tone comes out at a lower pitch, as measurements attested. The third example (18c) was not considered correct, since a conditional/temporal clause of that kind has to be introduced with the conjunction *iyó* ('if/always when'), and sometimes triggers the progressive aspect in order to express simultaneous actions.[48]

Tone rules in Kinyarwanda (and thus also in adjacent varieties) were thought to be extraordinarily complex because of the omission of lexical tones due to morphosyntactic processes, for instance when tense or aspect markers are used that already carry a high tone.[49] These processes can mainly be explained with tone rules such as Meeussen's rule, and are therefore predictable. The tonal system of Kinyarwanda and also of Rufumbira is therefore simpler than first assumed.

Meeussen's rule is a prominent tonal feature in Rufumbira that is also found in standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha. First labeled as such by Goldsmith (1984), and then by Clements & Goldsmith (1984) in relation to Sharman & Meeussen (1955), it states that two following syllables cannot carry a high tone (HT), and the second of two juxtaposed high tones therefore has to be realized as a low tone (LT) (see also Coupez 1980: 588).

$H \rightarrow L \: / \: H\#\_\_$

The following examples (19a–19b) reveal that two high tones cannot follow immediately after each other, and that the latter must change to a low tone. It has to be noted that in Kinyarwanda, many speakers realize the distal future with a low tone (*-zaa-*), while in Rufumbira high tones were heard.

---

[48] This also becomes evident when comparing the pitch interval in all three varieties in Figures 3.5–3.7, where the realization of the temporal clause *bágiye bavanwa mu (i)mirimo mibí* ('when they are removed from bad work activities') differs in the tonal pattern of the initial verb. It carries a high tone on the subject concord in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha but not in Rufumbira.

[49] Kimenyi (1978: 305) differentiates between "lexical tone keeping tenses", i.e. characterized by the prefixes *-ra-*, *-aa-*, *-ka-* and *-racya-* since the H/L tone of the lexeme is maintained, while the others are labeled "lexical tone neutralizing tenses", i.e. marked with tense-aspect prefixes that "seem to give the same tone to all verbs, regardless of their underlying tones" (ibid.).

(19a)	*uzáamusháaka*	*u-záa-mu-sháak-a*
	[uzáːmuʃáːkạ]	2sg-FUT-3sgO-like-FV
	'you are going to like him/her'	

(19b)	*tuzáashaaka*	*tu-záa-*sháak-a*
	[tuzáːʃaːkạ]	1pl-FUT-like-FV
	'we are going to want/like'	

The prosodic system does not reveal many differences in terms of lexical or morphological tones. High tones in standardized Kinyarwanda keep their high tones in Rufumbira, and low tones are also realized as low tones. The most salient *intandukan(y)o* [intʰaːndukano/ intʰaːndukanjo] ('difference') is based on a different intonation in Rufumbira, as also expressed in the (short) Wikipedia entry on *'Bafumbira'*[50], stating that the only difference that exists "is the accents. Rufumbira has an intonation of Rukiga". Despite the fact that intonational features in Rufumbira are by no means identical with Rukiga, intonational features are highly salient in speakers' perception, due to the perceived difference between speakers in the Rwandan capital and speakers in the peripheral areas, such as in Northern Rwanda, DR Congo and in Bufumbira.

3.4.2 Intonation and pitch contour

Diverging patterns of intonation, generally understood as the study of pitch, voice and contour, are defined by Ladd (2008: 4) as "the use of *suprasegmental* phonetic features to convey 'postlexical' or *sentence-level* pragmatic meanings in a *linguistically structured* way" [author's highlight]. Their social dimension is characterized by the fact that

> speakers **gain control over aspects of speech production** which might at first sight seem automatic, like the gradually declining pitch through the utterance, and use these for **communicative purposes**. (Gussenhoven 2004: 49)

Intonational features have been analyzed for a range of closely related and adjacent varieties in various geographical settings around the world. The earliest works include Bruce (1976) on Stockholm Swedish and Pierrehumbert's (1980) study on the intonation of American English. More recent studies, for instance on Swedish dialects by Gårding (1998), analyzed cross-variational intonation in different closely related dialects, as also (preliminarily) treated in the present section.

In order to compare the different prosodic properties of all three varieties, several sentences spoken by a news presenter in standardized Kinyarwanda were taken, and speakers of Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha were asked to produce the same sentence (which was lexically identical in all three varieties), in order to attest salient differences that could justify speakers'

---

[50] See [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bafumbira] (accessed 20 February 2016).

attitudes and metalinguistic perceptions in terms of 'accent'. The first part of the sentence was *abana bagiye bavanwa mu (i)mirimo mibi bagasubizwa mu (i)shuurí*[51] ('the children who were taken from bad work(places) were then re-entered in school'). The sentence continues, but only this first part was chosen for the analysis. This deserves mentioning because in the sentence-final position downstep would usually be observable. Figure 3.4 shows that downstep is a recurrent feature in Rufumbira, as in all varieties of Rwanda-Rundi, and as also attested by Sibomana (1974) for Kinyarwanda, by Meeussen (1959: 21) for Kirundi and by Harjula (2004) for the closely related Ha.
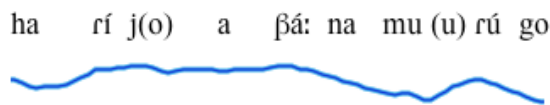
Figure 3.4: Downstep as shown in *Haríyo abána mu urúgo?↓* ('Are there children at home?')
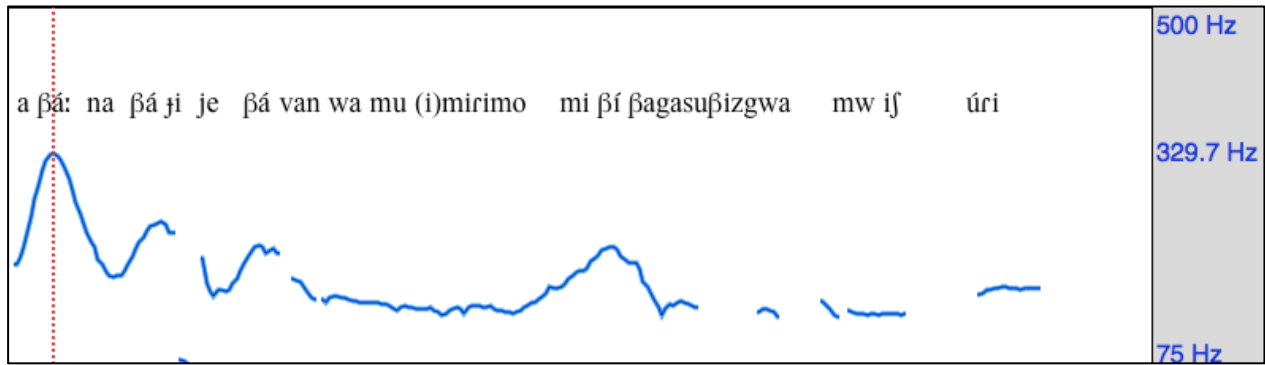
Figure 3.5: The pitch contour of standardized Kinyarwanda
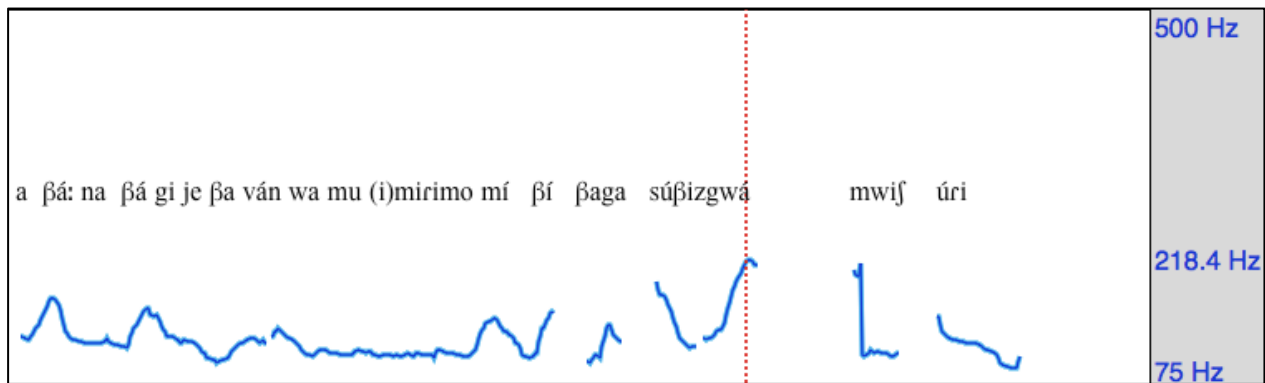
Figure 3.6: The pitch contour of Kinyabwisha

---

[51] The sentence is presented without indications of tone due to the slightly different realization patterns in the three varieties.

a   βáːɲa βa ɟi je   βa van wa mu (i)mirimo mi βí βaga suβizgwa mu   ʃúri

Figure 3.7: The pitch contour of Rufumbira

While there is no reliable data on intonation patterns in Rukiga for comparative analysis, it is clearly visible in the intervals shown that pitch contour is a distinctive feature, especially in Rufumbira, when compared to Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha. While standardized Kinyarwanda (in its "prototypical" form as spoken by a news anchor) reveals a much higher F_0 pitch contour, ranging at an interval of around than 250 Hz (high), Kinyabwisha displays an interval of around 140 Hz (medium), while Rufumbira is spoken "flat", as speakers repeatedly stated when describing its contour, over a stretch of around 90 Hz in the examples analyzed, thus at a compressed range (low). Lower or higher frequencies also have to do with phonation types, and the impact of different realizations of voice, as stated by Gussenhoven (2004: 8), who explains that

> [b]reathy voice induces low pitch (…), more air escapes per opening action than is needed to keep the vibration going, the excess air being used to create friction in the glottal aperture. The combination of friction and vibration must be easier to obtain at lower frequencies. Laryngealized voice may be conducive to high pitch, since the vocal folds need to be stiffened to produce it. However, there is also the converse fact that creaky voice, a form of laryngealization which is produced with slacker vocal folds, is easier to obtain at lower frequencies.

Also speakers themselves explain in relation to the phonological realization and the intonational features of Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda that the different 'voice' becomes a distinguishing mark, which is either referred to as *imvuga* ('accent'), or as *injyana* [indʒaːna] ('tempo, tune'):

> so (laughs) (1.0) aríko umuntu wese ubizi ugasanga arabizi kandi ikirukóra ndavuga::
> special cangwa se:: kurutanya n'urundi (1.0) rurimi N'IMVUGA YARWO.
> umuntu mpagaze n'umunyarwanda tukavuga umuntu arakenga ngo
> ʃuyu n'umufumbira ʃuyu n'umunyarwanda. kuvirira imvuga yo turi kuvugiramó

n'ururimi rurí special, ururimi rwagukujije, n'icyo kintu abantu barukúndira
[βarukúundiɾa]
urasanga tutarí kuvuga <u>injyana</u> *itarimwe*[52]

[So, but any person who knows, you find who knows, and what makes it –I say–
special or different from another language is *its accent.*
A person I stand with who is a Munyarwanda and we talk, a person will know that
this is a Mufumbira and that is a Munyarwanda, depending upon the accent that we speak with.
The language is special, a language that raised you, that's what people love it for;
you see we are not speaking in the same tempo/tune] (Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016)

When comparing most audio recordings in Rufumbira with the ones collected for Kinyarwanda, it can indeed be assumed that 'breathy' realizations of voice contribute to the low-pitched contour in Rufumbira, while "good" Kinyarwanda, as in the standardized variety from Kigali, is often associated with nasalization, and nasalized vowels have an impact on the specific pitch contour, as has been proved in a range of studies. Singhal (2013: 312) analyzed nasalized and non-nasalized vowels in the frequency domain, and states that the pitch period of nasalized vowels (/a/ in his study) reveals a "more cyclical nature", and the "peaks are steeper/taller than the corresponding peaks in non-nasalized /a/". This correlates with the peaks of Kinyarwanda, as has become obvious in several analyses of different sentences.

A different pitch contour can therefore be seen as symbolic as an expression of social affiliation, and as emblematic, especially in a border triangle where intricate differences mark social distinctiveness. Gussenhoven (2004: 81–82) states that different communities usually have different average pitch levels, for both sexes. He points out that American men realize a lower pitch than German men, that Japanese women speak at a higher-pitched level than American women, and that Southern dialects of Dutch, as spoken by Belgian women, are realized at a higher pitch than dialects spoken by Dutch women. Various other studies also describe how pitch contributes to the social construction of Self and Other (see Nassenstein 2014c for the youth language practice Lingala ya Bayankee/Yanké from DR Congo).

Clearly high-pitched high tones, as expressed in Kinyarwanda, are often simply slightly hinted at in Rufumbira, as for instance the high tone in Figure 3.7 in *mu shúuri*, when compared to its realization in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha.

Another distinctive feature that could be attested in the intonational analysis is tempo of speech, which is also classified by Karpf (2006: 42–44) as ranging among the most salient culturally-based differences in intonation, with an emblematic function. Most Bafumbira

---

[52] This example uses diacritics which usually occur in conversational analysis, in order to mark speakers' rise and fall in pitch, stress and pauses when they explain how different Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda actually sound. () marks actions, gestures and noises, (1.) marks a one-second pause, :: stands for lengthening, UPPER CASE marks louder volume, ↑ represents rise in pitch, . represents fall in pitch and <u>injyana</u> marks stress (see Schegloff 2007).

speakers referred to standardized Kinyarwanda from Kigali as having a "very fast spoken accent" in terms of pace, which also became evident in the examples analyzed. While the sentence displayed was spoken within 2.74 seconds by the Kinyarwanda speaking news anchor from Kigali, the Kinyabwisha speaker realized the sentence in normal speech tempo within 5.51 seconds, and the Rufumbira speaker within 3.45 seconds. Despite the fact that other Kinyarwanda speakers, as well as the Bafumbira and the Banyabwisha described the Kinyarwanda sample as "unnaturally fast" and as *"typique pour un journaliste"* [typical of a journalist], there does seem to be a difference in tempo which is perceived as constituting an emblematic difference.

A sociophonological analysis of Rufumbira reveals that distinctive language use, based on underlying 'border thinking', relates both to segmental and supra-segmental phonology, and includes the symbolic use of deviating phonemes, the application and suspension of a range of phonological processes, and the realization of tone and pitch contour. A more detailed phonological analysis of each variety, especially on the un(der)documented Kinyabwisha, may however yield more specific results in the future.

4. "NECESSITY AS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION…"–

ON MORPHOSYNTACTIC DIFFERENTIATION

"What from a distance may look 'all the same' may display a filigrane pattern of distinctive differences when seen under the looking-glass of the social groups directly involved."
(Auer 2007: 13, *Introduction* to *Style and social identities*)

When I discussed contact-induced features with a research participant in April 2014 in Kampala, we tried to establish to what extent Bafumbira would modify, manipulate and alter the morphosyntax of the language in order to sound distinctive, and what motivation would trigger these deliberate choices. My interlocutor at that time, former government official Joe Haguma, emphasized that Bafumbira were often taken for Rwandans, and that this still sometimes occurred nowadays. Ever since Rufumbira was first pushed to be acknowledged as a Ugandan language around 1992, before Kisoro District was formed in 1995, speakers' urge to align themselves linguistically with their recently acknowledged identity as Bafumbira has been increasing, and this led to the Kisoro District Language Board being established.

Soon enough, some speakers began to notice that some of the morphosyntactic features of their language were closer to Kinyarwanda than to Rufumbira as used among people in the streets, as became evident in story collections, hymn books and other publications produced by the board, as well as in the missionary grammar sketch by Sauder (2009) (as stated by Capher Nsabiyumva and others, 2015). Speakers are therefore engaged in a quest for distinctiveness in everyday language use. The former government official Joe Haguma thus concluded his explanations of the reasons for language contact phenomena and linguistic differentiation by adding the common saying "necessity is the mother of invention, that's it", and applying this to the modification processes found in Rufumbira, giving new meanings to old forms and using new forms for old meanings. Favoring local practice over hegemonic formal language, and re-inventing the border linguistically, therefore constitute speakers' 'acts of identity'. Joe Haguma's view of the realization of a linguistic difference as necessary was triggered by the sociopragmatic foundation of postcolonial 'border thinking'. It therefore seems appropriate to begin the morphosyntactic analysis of variation and differentiation with this (slightly adapted) quote of Joe Haguma's, since it embraces all of the esoterogenist and contact-induced strategies in the ideological creation of a difference.

This chapter introduces the morphological forms and syntactic structures of Rufumbira, and focuses on the use of emblematic deviations that create identity and contribute to the distinctiveness of Rufumbira, in comparison with standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha across the borders. The first section analyzes the most salient differences that are found in the **nominal morphology** (4.1), while the second section (4.2) deals with the **verbal**

morphology, and fine-grained deviations in the tense-aspect system, negation, the use of copulas and so on, while the third section (4.3) summarizes the most **salient syntactic structures** employed by speakers of Rufumbira in contrast to adjacent varieties.

The present chapter is not an exhaustive morphosyntactic sketch of the language (as found for instance in the preliminary work of Sauder 2009) but aims to discuss the most emblematic morphological and syntactic contact-induced means of differentiation that are at speakers' disposal. Socially motivated change is the result of speakers' 'border thinking' and is based on speakers' broad repertoires. Speakers' knowledge of the corresponding forms in Kinyarwanda (and to some extent also Kinyabwisha) and their variant choices, mainly influenced by Rukiga and Luganda, lead to linguistic change in the creation process of Rufumbira.

4.1 The nominal morphology

Rufumbira is an agglutinating Bantu language, and nouns are, just as in related languages, organized in pairs according to a morphosemantic noun class system. Most modifiers, except demonstratives and some quantifiers, follow the head noun, and have to show concordance with the head noun prefix. There are a couple of emblematic features that relate to the nominal morphology which are perceived as "typical" of Rufumbira by speakers, and which mark speakers' social identity when using them. They stand in contrast to more standardized features in Kinyarwanda, and will be analyzed in the following as processes of 'esoterogeny' and as localist strategies and examples of deliberate change. In addition to diverging noun classes, especially in terms of evaluative morphology such as **diminutive, augmentative and pejorative encodings** (4.1.1), **locatives** are discussed (4.1.2), **personal pronouns, demonstratives and possessives** are analyzed (4.1.3) according to their divergence from standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, and the **numeral system** (4.1.4) and **quantifiers** (4.1.5) are examined. All of the latter are discussed with a focus on meaningful differentiation, by looking at language contact phenomena such as esoterogeny (as introduced in Chapter 2), speakers' choices in cases of deliberate language change (Thomason 1999, 2007), and general morphosyntactic divergence due to grammatical borrowing.

4.1.1 On evaluative morphology: The cute, the bad and the ugly in Rufumbira

The noun class system of Rufumbira comprises sixteen noun classes (see also Sauder 2009), just as Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 2002) and Kinyabwisha do, with an optional realization of noun class 20 (*-gu-*), and with a remnant locative *i-* that can be traced back to noun class 23, which is otherwise no longer actively used. As most prefixes correspond to those found in the adjacent varieties, it is mainly the semantic content that differs, as shown in the following. The list of singular and plural noun classes is found in Table 4.1, showing both word-initial augments (*u-*) and the specific noun class prefix (*-mu-*), with the next column containing examples for the noun class in question. Major deviations from Kinyarwanda and

Kinyabwisha are discussed in the following paragraphs. Noun class 20 and remnant noun class 23 are marked in brackets as their occurrence is rare.

NC	AUG/NCP		Example	Semantic content
1	*u-*	*-mu-*	*umuntu* ('human being') *umwáana* ('child')	human beings, professions, personified concepts
1a	∅	∅	*dáata* ('father')	human beings, loanwords
2	*a-*	*-ba-*	*abantu* ('people') *abána* ('children') *abadáata* ('fathers')	human beings, professions, personified concepts (plural to NC1-1a)
3	*u-*	*-mu-*	*umupaka* ('border')	all other nouns with initial *umu-*
4	*i-*	*-mi-*	*imipaka* ('borders')	all other nouns with *imi-* (plural to NC3)
5	*i-*	∅/*-ri-*	*ijoro* ('evening') *iryinyo* ('tooth')	body parts, nouns without NCP/initial *iri-*
6	*a-*	*-ma-*	*amajoro* ('evenings') *amenyo* ('teeth') *amata* ('milk') *amaazi* ('water') *amazu* ('houses') *amágu* ('homesteads') *amabóko* ('arm, hand')	all nouns with initial *ama-*, mass nouns (pluralia tanta) etc. (plurals to NC5, 9, 11, 15)
7	*i-*	*-gi/ki-*	*ikintu* ('thing') *ikigabo* ('huge man')	concrete concepts, tools, augmentative/ameliorative
8	*i-*	*-bi-*	*ibintu* ('things') *ibigabo* ('huge men') *ibikopo* ('huge cups')	concrete concepts, tools, augmentatives/amelioratives (plurals to NC7, rarely to NC11 augmentatives)
9	*i-*	∅/*-N-*	*inka* ('cow') *inzu* ('house')	animals, words with initial *N-*, loanwords
10	*i-*	∅/*-N-*	*inka* ('cows') *intoki* ('fingers') *imbavu* ('rips')	animals, words with initial *N-*, loanwords (plurals to NC9, 11)
11	*u-*	*-ru-*	*urusénda* ('chili') *urúgo* ('homestead') *urutoki* ('finger') *urubavu* ('rip') *uruzúngu* ('English') *urukopu* ('big unhandy cup') *urúzu* ('big ugly house')	words with *uru-*, singulatives, body parts, long concepts, languages, augmentatives/pejoratives (plurals to NC9, class shift from various other NC)

12	a-	-ga/ka-	agatabo ('small book')	diminutive (ameliorative or pejorative)
			akána ('small child')	
13	u-	-du/tu-	utwána ('small children')	diminutive plural (plural to NC12)
14	u-	-bu-	ubuzima ('life')	abstract concepts, nouns with initial *ubu-*,
			ubwóko ('ethnic group')	diminutive plural (plural to NC12)
			ubutabo ('small books')	
			ubwana ('small children')	
15	u-	-gu/ku-	ukúboko ('arm, hand')	body parts, deverbalized nouns
			kwíga ('learning')	
16	a-	-ha-	ahantu ('place')	places, localities (no plural)
(20)	u-	-gu-	ugusimu ('large/neg. phone')	augmentatives/pejoratives on lexemes borrowed from English/Luganda
(23)		i-	i Kabare ('in/to Kabale')	place names, directions (rare)

Table 4.1: The noun class system of Rufumbira

When taking a closer look at Table 4.1, it becomes obvious that Rufumbira reveals specific features that are not found in other JD60 varieties. Most classes are formed along the same lines, and semantic concepts are grouped in similar ways in the noun classes of Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira; however, speakers' reference to small, large, positive or negative concepts, where divergent nominal morphology is used, are still to be discussed in more detail.

The general noun class pairing does not reveal many differences from Kinyabwisha or standardized Kinyarwanda (see Figure 4.1), and mainly diverges in the pairing of singular and plural classes, as for instance in classes 12-13 and 12-14. Most other pairings correlate with the nominal morphology of the adjacent varieties. However, the locative remnant of noun class 23 (*i*) is more common in the other two varieties, whereas noun class 20 (*gu-*) exists in neither Kinyabwisha nor Kinyarwanda.
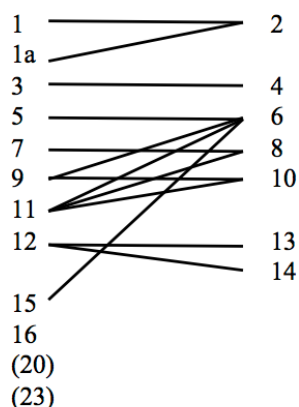
Figure 4.1: Noun class pairing in Rufumbira

Some nouns are classified in different noun classes in Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha. Different morphological class markers also hint at different semantic encodings, depending on how speakers classify nouns in the specific language. While a noun is realized as *amabánde* [amaβáːnde] ('roof') in Kinyabwisha, it is *imibánde* [imiβáːnde] in Rufumbira, thus alternating between noun class 6 and noun class 4. This occurs frequently, and is mainly influenced by diverging noun class affiliations in either Congo Swahili, as spoken among Banyabwisha, or Rukiga and Luganda as spoken among Bafumbira. It becomes obvious that while these differences in noun class classification are morphological variations and are contact-induced, others reveal associative-semantic differences. These let speakers value, reject or criticize concepts in very different ways. Very often, this relates to so-called evaluative noun classes, such as for instance *agatabu* ('a small book'), where a shift from noun class 7 (*igitabo* 'book') to class 12 occurred. This shift to class 12, for instance, is a recurrent phenomenon in many Bantu languages, and can also be observed for Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha.

There has been a recent interest in evaluative morphology, with a broad range of studies that include cross-linguistic overviews (see Körtvélyessy 2015, Grandi & Körtvélyessy 2015, Orozco 2016), while the Bantu perspective includes for instance Shona (Déchaine, Girard, Mudzingwa & Wiltschko 2015) and Zulu (van der Spuy & Mjiyako 2015), expanding the early work carried out for Swahili (Herms 1989). The general concept of evaluatives is traced back by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015: 1) to Scalise (1984), who established the category for Italian, and distinguished between six criteria for evaluative morphosyntax. Often, evaluative morphology such as diminutive and augmentative prefixes in Bantu languages is considered to be a kind of "expressive morphology" (Carstairs- McCarthy 1992: 107, cited by Grandi & Körtvélyessy 2015), or sometimes a so-called "third morphology" beyond inflection and derivation (see Scalise 1984); it can be located at the morphological-pragmatic interface.

➤ *Diminutive forms in the singular*
The most salient differences between Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira therefore relate to diminutives, augmentatives, pejoratives and amelioratives. While all Rwanda-Rundi varieties differ to some extent in this regard (cf. Meeussen 1959, Harjula 2004, among others), the distinction between Kinyarwanda (cf. Kimenyi 2002: 14-17), Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira is perceived as a meaningful difference that speakers are aware of. Noun class prefix 12 *aka-/ aga-* is a common diminutive feature of Interlacustrine Bantu languages and "is attested everywhere" (Bastin 2003: 503), while the formation of diminutives and augmentatives is generally characterized by prefixation in these languages, as is also the case in other Bantu languages.

In Rufumbira, noun class 12 (*ka-*) expresses diminutives, in most cases without any pejorative connotation. In a few instances, it can carry a negative meaning, when speakers talk about human beings, as *akagabo* ('a small/malnourished/unserious man') or *akagoré*

('small/unserious woman'). Other than that, concepts in noun class 12 are usually either 'small' or 'cute', i.e. ameliorative (20), but cannot be ugly, skinny or of minor quality in Rufumbira unless a (grown) human being is referred to. In both other languages, however, noun class 12 can either express an ameliorative or a pejorative, as expressed by a Kinyabwisha speaker: *"Quand quelque chose commence avec ka-, c'est n'est pas automatiquement mauvais parce que ça peut aussi être mignon mais en premier instant on penserait au négatif"* [when something begins with *ka-*, it is not always negative since it can also be cute, yet at first one thinks of something negative] (Paulin Baraka Bose, 2016); see also (22a).

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>(Rufumbira)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>(20)</td><td>*akána kagiye ku (i)shúuri*</td><td>*a-ka-ána*</td><td>*ka-*gend-*ye*</td><td>*ku*</td><td>*i-shúuri*</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[aká:na kaɟije ku ʃúːri]</td><td>AUG-cl12-child</td><td>cl12-go-PFV</td><td>LOC</td><td>AUG-cl9.school</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>'the small (cute) child went to school'</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>(21)</td><td>*ukabaha agasente gake*[53]</td><td>*u-ka-ba-h-a*</td><td>*a-ga-sente*</td><td>*ga-ke*</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[ukaβaha agaseːnte gace]</td><td>2sg-CONS-3plO-give-FV</td><td>AUG-cl12-money</td><td>cl12-small</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>'then you give them a little money'</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

While the Kinyabwisha prefix *ka-* has an immanent connotation of depreciation (22a), as is also the case in Kivu Swahili (22b), a language spoken by all Banyabwisha, Rufumbira nouns often require qualitative adjectives that express whether *ka-* is pejorative ('ugly') or ameliorative ('cute') (23a-b). The unmarked reading would be an ameliorative one, making a concept smaller and "cuter" at the same time (23a), while the marked reading (through qualitative adjectives) would be a pejorative one (23b). In Kinyabwisha, the opposite is the case, and the immanent association is in the first place more negative than positive.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>(Kinyabwisha)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>(22a)</td><td>*Réeba akazu ke!*</td><td>*réeb-a*</td><td>*a-ka-zu*</td><td>*ke*</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[réːβa akazu ke]</td><td>look-IMP</td><td>AUG-cl12-house</td><td>cl12:POSS3sg</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>'Look at his/her small (poor) house!'</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>(Kivu Swahili)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>(22b)</td><td>*Angaliya kanyumba kake!*</td><td>*angaliy-a*</td><td>*ka-nyumba*</td><td>*ka-ake*</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>'Look at his/her small (poor) house!'</td><td>look-IMP</td><td>cl12-house</td><td>cl12-POSS3sg</td></tr>
</table>

---

[53] This sentence, taken from a recorded text by an elderly speaker, was rejected by younger speakers as being Kinyarwanda data. They suggested substituting the finite verb *ukabaha* with the direct imperative *bahe* ('give them!').

(Rufumbira)

(23a)	*afite akazu (keza)*		*a-fite*	*a-ka-zu*	*(ka-íiza)*
	[afite akazu kéːza]		3sg-have	AUG-cl12-house	cl12-nice
	'(s)he has a small nice house'				

(23b)	*afite akazu kabí*		*a-fite*	*a-ka-zu*	*ka-bí*
	[afite akazu kaβí]		3sg-have	AUG-cl12-house	cl12-bad
	'(s)he has a small poor house/hut'				

Kimenyi (2002) describes what he refers to as 'derivational classifiers' in standardized Kinyarwanda, namely the noun class prefixes 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14, which he also labels "expressive classes" (ibid., p. 14), "showing the attitude and feelings of the speaker: likes, dislikes". Relating to the diminutive prefix of noun class 12, he states that "*-ka-* (plural marker 13, *-tu-*, or 14, *-bu-*), as a derivational marker also has an expressive or diminutive function" (p. 14-15). It is interesting though that *-ka-* can either take an entirely positive, or a negative connotation, depending upon the context, while the smallness in size is optional (24-25). This variability is found neither in Rufumbira nor in Kinyabwisha, as already discussed above.

(Kinyarwanda) (Kimenyi 2002: 17)

(24)   *umugoré > akagoré*
　　　 'attractive woman, disgusting woman or small woman'

(25)   *umukoóbwa > agakoóbwa*
　　　 'attractive girl, disgusting girl or small girl'

As well as the different singular encodings for diminutives, augmentatives and evaluative plural classes also reveal some differences, as discussed in the following.

► *Diminutives in the plural*

In standardized Kinyarwanda, noun class 12 (*-ka-*) can either have its plural in noun class 13 (*-tu-*) or noun class 14 (*-bu-*) (see Kimenyi 2002: 17). This is an arrangement which deviates from that of several other Interlacustrine languages, since "[g]ender 12/13, the most attested Bantu diminutive, is present in JE25, JE30, JD60, and JD50" (Bastin 2003: 512). This means that, for Kinyarwanda, the expressive function of *-ka-* as a marker for 'attractive', 'disgusting' or 'small' things, is realized as *-tu-* or *-bu-* in the plural. The interchangeable plural prefixes may be due to a similar diminutive usage of both classes in a range of languages, since both denote larger numbers of small concepts. The rather abstract concepts often associated with noun class 14, and the negative associations with nouns in class 13, as found in numerous Bantu languages, do not play a central role here.

While the Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira forms look alike, the semantic associations are different: In Rufumbira, the prefix of noun class 12 (-*ka*-) forms its plural either in noun class 13 (-*tu*-) or 14 (-*bu*-), which constitutes a free variation. According to speakers, there is no semantic difference depending on which noun class is used, since both denote "pretty, nice, but small" concepts "not in a bad sense" (Capher Nsabiyumva, May 2016). In Luganda, diminutives are formed in noun class 12 in the singular (*akana* 'small child') and in noun class 14 in the plural (*obwana* 'small children'; see Crabtree 1923), which surely has an impact on the realization of equivalent concepts in Rufumbira which are also in noun class 14. While diminutive Rufumbira words can stand in either class in the plural (26a-26b), loanwords from Luganda would, when used as diminutives, rather stand in noun class 14, as is also the case in Luganda. The same applies to Rukiga loanwords, as well.

	(Rufumbira)		
(26a)	*Duhe udukopu!*	*du-h-e*	*u-du-kopu*
	[duhe udukopu]	1plO-give-IMP	AUG-cl13-cup
	'Give us some small cups!'		

(26b)	*Duhe ubukopu!*	*du-h-e*	*u-bu-kopu*
	[duhe uβukopu]	1plO-give-IMP	AUG-cl14-cup
	'Give us some small cups!'		

The Kinyabwisha system is characterized by a semantic distinction between the plural classes (13-14) which is related to speakers' knowledge and use of Kivu Swahili, the local variety of Kiswahili. In Kivu Swahili, noun class 13 groups concepts that are always pejoratives, while noun class 14 groups concepts that are small but not viewed pejoratively (27a). Both are plural markers to singular class 12 (*ka*-), and therefore function as context-bound variants, a feature that Kinyabwisha speakers also realize in their speech behavior (see 27a-d). In Kinyabwisha, this general distinction is also predominant, yet with a slight variation. Instead of only grouping pejoratives in noun class 13, concepts that are *"étonnant et attractive"*, thus surprisingly positive, are also included, as explained by speakers.

	(Kivu Swahili)				
(27a)	*biko na tumika ku tushamba*	*ba-iko*	*na*	*tumika*	*ku*	*tu-shamba*
	'they are working on the unorganized bad/surprisingly fertile fields'	3pl-COP	COM	work	LOC	cl13-field

	(Kinyabwisha)				
(27b)	*barí gukóra mu uturima*	*ba-rí*	*gu-kóra*	*mu*	*u-tu-rima*
	[βarí gukóra mu turima]	3pl-be	INF-work	LOC	AUG-cl13-field
	'they are working on the unorganized bad/surprisingly fertile fields'				

(27c) *biko na tumika ku bushamba*   ba-iko   na   tumika   ku   bu-shamba

'they are working on the small fields'   3pl-COP COM   work   LOC   cl14-field

(Kinyabwisha)

(27d) *barí gukóra mu uburima*   ba-rí   gu-kóra   mu   u-bu-rima

[βarí gukóra mu βurima]   3pl-be   INF-work LOC   AUG-cl14-field

'they are working on the small fields'

When Kinyabwisha speakers were confronted with several Rufumbira examples (such as 28) and were asked how they would evaluate the utterance and which stance in interaction they would ascribe to the speaker, they assumed the noun class 12 examples (-*ka*-) had the connotation of small and potentially negative concepts, in clear contrast to the noun class 14 plural (-*bu*-) which had a surprisingly positive connotation (in contrast to the pejorative noun class 13 -*tu*-), whereas Bafumbira simply emphasized the smallness of concepts (see 28). To Kinyabwisha speakers, the use of a noun class 14 plural marker marks contrastive focus on a semantic level.

(Rufumbira)

(28) *barí inyuma y'ubwana butánu*   ba-rí   inyuma   ya   u-bu-ána   bu-tánu

[βarí iŋjuma jubgáːna βutánu]   3pl-be behind   CONN AUG-cl14-child cl14-five

'they are behind five small children'

When asked about a potential pejorative reading, Bafumbira would explain that the noun class 14 agreement could potentially take a pejorative connotation only if speaker and hearer see the referent mentioned in example (28), since the pejorative state of the referent (here for instance, malnourished/poor children) would be clearly visible and thus undebatable, and therefore not subject to expressions of personal stance. The same would apply to noun class 13 agreement, too. If the object/person of reference cannot be seen by the conversational partners, the adjective *bubí* ('bad'), or *tubí* respectively, would always have to be added in order to make the statement understood as pejorative.

➤ *Augmentatives and pejoratives*

Pejoratives are bound to augmentatives in Rufumbira, which means that a concept that is perceived as low in quality is automatically assumed to be large in size, and thus expressed with the noun class prefix -*ru*- of class 11. While in canonical noun class systems class 11 is often said to group concepts that are long in shape, various Interlacustrine Bantu languages, as well as varieties of Swahili, have augmentatives in this class, increasing size but not necessarily length (see Nassenstein & Bose 2016, Bose & Nassenstein 2016).

Speakers explained that they would rarely shift nouns to this class since to do so would evoke negative feelings for the hearer, and automatically "sound bad". The plural is formed in class eight (*bi-*) with no pejorative connotation, due to the coincidence of the augmentative plural and the augmentative+pejorative plural in this class (comprising the plurals to noun class 7 and noun class 20 as well). One example of the evaluative use of the noun class prefix *-ru-* is presented in (29).

(29)	*urusimu rwawe ni runini*	*u-ru-simu*	*rwawe*	*ni*	*ru-nini*
	[uɾusimu rgaːʍe ni ɾunini]	AUG-cl11-phone	cl11:POSS2sg	COP	cl11-big
	'your big ugly phone is enormous [and old]'				

While noun class 11 usually has a negative connotation throughout, noun class 7 can also, in certain cases, reveal a pejorative evaluative meaning (see 30). While Kimenyi (2002: 15) lists as a noun class 7 concept *ikigoré*, glossed as 'attractive woman, disgusting woman or big woman', the Rufumbira reading would in the first place be 'big *and* attractive woman', or depending upon the context, possibly 'big *and* ugly woman'. Unlike Kinyarwanda, both qualities have to be paired when shifting a noun to class 7.

(30)	*igisimu cawe ni kinini*	*i-gi-simu*	*cawe*	*ni*	*ki-nini*
	[iɟisimu tʃaːʍe ni cinini]	AUG-cl7-phone	cl7:POSS2sg	COP	cl7-big
	'your big nice (/ugly) phone is enormous in size'				

Speakers explained in relation to example (30) that "usually it is good but if we know each other very well, it can mean something bad" (Capher Nsabiyumva, April 2016). After some confusion, the patterns began to make sense: the choice as to whether noun class 9 (unmarked), noun class 7 (-*ki-*) or noun class 11 (-*ru-*) is preferred by speakers depends upon the hearer-speaker relationship and is bound to patterns of politeness. The same evaluative morphology cannot be used in all cases. This means, for augmentative classes:

Noun class	Example	Semantic association	Hearer-speaker-Relationship
9 (unmarked)	*isimu yawe ni nini/ntoya*	'your phone is large/big'	Hearer and speaker do not know each other well, adjectives are needed when referring to the referent's size (no face-threating acts/FTA)
7	*igisimu cawe ni kinini*	'your phone is large/big (and potentially bulky/ unwieldy)'	Hearer and speaker know each other but they are not close (slight FTA)
11	*urusimu rwawe ni runini*	'your phone is large/big (and ugly/an old model)'	Hearer and speaker know each other well, criticism can be uttered freely (FTA)

Table 4.2: Hearer-speaker relationships and different semantic encodings of augmentatives

In cases where hearer and speaker are not acquainted with each other and do not have a close relationship, the use of noun class 11 morphology would assume that "the speaker has bias on the hearer, that he is trying to undermine the hearer's phone", as explained by a Rufumbira interlocutor. Kinyarwanda does not make the same distinction and, according to Kimenyi (2002: 15-17), noun class 7 (*-ki-*) and noun class 11 (*-ru-*) are semantically identical. However, the more common augmentative in Kinyarwanda would be formed in noun class 7 (31a), and rarely in class 11 (31b), despite their identical encoding.

(Kinyarwanda) (slightly adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 16-17)

(31a) *Ufite igiterefone?*   u-fite   i-gi-terefone
      'Do you have a nice/ugly/big phone?'   2sg-have   AUG-cl7-phone

(31b) *Ufite uruterefone?*   u-fite   u-ru-terefone
      'Do you have a nice/ugly/big phone?'   2sg-have   AUG-cl11-phone

Apart from the pejorative connotation of noun class 11, Kimenyi (2002: 15) also states that in Kinyarwanda "[c]lass 6, *-ma-*, when used as derivational morpheme shows the speaker's indignation", listing the examples *igitabo* ('books'), which becomes *amatabo* ('worthless books'), or *umugoré* ('woman') which turns into *amagoré* ('worthless woman') in noun class 6. This derogatory reading is impossible in Rufumbira, where nouns cannot be shifted into the *-ma-* class, as speakers explained. The function of the depreciative noun class 6 is taken over by classes 11 and 20, with slightly different connotations. In Kinyabwisha, the shift to noun class 6 is not possible either. As stated by speakers, a similar derogatory reading is expressed with reduplication patterns in Kinyabwisha (32-33).

(Kinyabwisha)

(32) *umusóre → umusoresóre*   u-mu-sóre   u-mu-sore-sóre
     'young man' → 'worthless young man'   AUG-cl1-young.man   AUG-cl1-young.man-young-man

(33) *abána → byanána*   a-ba-ána   by-án-ana
     'children → 'worthless children'   AUG-cl2-child   cl8-child-child

Kimenyi also explains that noun class 10 can be used in order to express either augmentative or pejorative connotations (34-35) for Kinyarwanda. In Kinyabwisha, this possibility does not exist, since the designated nouns only incorporate an augmentative reading which is not pejorative, as explained by a speaker who classified the Kinyarwanda examples (34-35) as *"géants, grands mais pas négatifs"* [huge, large but not negative]. In Rufumbira, this connotation is also not present, and noun class 10 can only be used as an augmentative (see 36). Noun class 10 here serves as a plural class to noun class 11 (*-ru-*), but without any pejorative reading. As

can be seen in the examples, noun class 10 is thus only seen as an augmentative class, and both the *-ru-* augmentative and its plural in class 11 were described by speakers as "being used more among young people" than among older speakers, especially with the connotation of 'muscular, huge guys'.

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 16)

(34) *abáana → inzáana*   *a-ba-áana*   *i-nz-áana*
'children' → 'bad children'   AUG-cl2-child   AUG-cl10-child

(35) *abasóre → insóre*   *a-ba-soré*   *i-n-sóre*
'young men' → 'bad young men' AUG-cl2-young.man   AUG-cl10-young.man

(Rufumbira)

(36) *abasóre → insóre* (pl. to *urusóre,* NC11)   *a-ba-sóre*   *i-n-sóre*
'young men' → 'muscular huge guys'   AUG-cl2-young.man   AUG-cl10-young.man

When augmentatives without pejorative connotation are intended, Rufumbira speakers make use of noun class 7 (*-ki-*), with the plural formed in noun class 8 (*bi-*). Speakers explained that the prefix *-ki-* would increase an object's size but usually not change its quality. In Kinyabwisha and standardized Kinyarwanda, augmentatives are also formed in classes 7-8.

Apart from concepts that combine augmentative and pejorative connotations, noun class 11 also includes language names such as *Urufumbira* ('Rufumbira language'), *Uruganda* ('Luganda language') or *Uruzúngu* ('English', or 'language of Europeans') (37a-37b).[54] All of the latter would be listed in noun class 7 in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, but show this emblematic difference only in Rufumbira (see 37c). This has to do with the extrinsic habit of referring to the Bafumbira's language as *Urunyarwanda/Olunyarwanda* ('Kinyarwanda language' with prefixed *uru-*) in Luganda, and also in Bantu languages of Western Uganda, where language names are commonly listed in noun class 11 (see 37d). Until the official recognition of Rufumbira as a "language of Uganda", it was mostly seen as the northernmost variety of Kinyarwanda, accidentally spoken on Ugandan territory. The pejorative (and stigmatizing) label of the Bafumbira as "the ones who speak Lunyarwanda/Runyarwanda" has therefore been a common Ugandan view. This stigmatizing label has been adapted by Bafumbira, and

---

[54] As has become evident, older speakers sometimes refer to *Igifumbira* as a 'Rufumbira way of speaking' in metalinguistic discourse (see Joe Haguma's sentences on pages 2 and 55). In (endolingual) communication among Bafumbira this label was not attested, or only when I worked with one older interlocutor alone. This could be explained in terms of speakers' normative assumption that the European researcher is more acquainted with the (colonial) Kinyarwanda-like label *Igifumbira* and the common view that language names have to be in noun class 7 *(-ki-/-gi-)* in correct and standardized language (as has been prescriptively stated in old Kinyarwanda grammars).

while the noun class prefix *olu-/uru-* was maintained to refer to their language, they began to call it 'Rufumbira'. Without the Luganda or Rukiga influence, one would expect an intrinsic self-designation as **Ikifumbira*, in accordance with language names in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha[55]. The adaptation of the language name to the usage found in Ugandan languages, despite the initial exclusion/marginalization that speakers were facing, indicates their strong desire for distinctiveness from Congolese and Rwandans.

(Rufumbira)

(37a) *icyo bíta 'coup' mu uruzúngu*

[ico βíːtʰa ku mu ɾuzúːŋgu]

icyo	ba-ít-a	'coup'	mu	u-ru-zúngu
cl7:DEM	3pl-call-FV	coup	LOC	AUG-cl11-European

'what is called a 'coup' in English'

(37b) *urufumbira n'ururimi rwivanzemó*

[uɾufumbiɾa nuɾuɾími rgʌivanzemó]

u-ru-fumbira	ni	u-ru-rimi	ru-*ívang-*ye=mó
AUG-cl11-Fumbira	COP	AUG-cl11-language	cl11-mix-PFV=ENCL

'Rufumbira is a mixed language'

(Kinyabwisha)

(37c) *muri Bugande bavuga igifumbira*

[muɾi βugande βavug(a) ikifumbiɾa]

muri	Bu-gande	ba-vug-a	i-gi-fumbira
LOC	cl14-Uganda	3pl-speak-FV	AUG-cl7-Fumbira

'in Uganda they speak Rufumbira'

(Luganda)

(37d) *simanyi olufumbira*

'I don't speak Rufumbira'

si-many-i	o-lu-fumbira
NEG:1sg-know-NEG	AUG-cl11-Fumbira

The fact of marking language names, and thus apparent linguistic entities, with a different noun class prefix (*uru-* vs. *iki-*), reinforces its emblematicity through the power of a name, as also explained in more detail for speakers' first names (in Section 5.1). Naming languages differently reveals a different metalinguistic discourse, and a critical view on established (colonial) labels, often based on Western missionary grammars, such as for instance those by Hurel (1911, 1959). This can be seen as postcolonial strategy, and has to do with mimesis: a pejorative label (*Olunyarwanda*), as used among Baganda people to designate something "Rwandan" spoken in the border area on Ugandan territory, is mimetically re-invented and re-established as a positive label of linguistic differentiation, as delimiting the name from Rwanda and Congo. This is border thinking in its most original form, and is reminiscent of

---

[55] *Urunyarwanda* as a label for Kinyarwanda was, apart from its use among Ugandans, also a recurrent term in early prescriptive attempts at describing Kinyarwanda (see Hurel 1911). The common prefix for languages is however *-ki-/-gi-*, as is also the case in Kinyabwisha, whereby Rufumbira is labeled *Igifumbira*, and sometimes also as *Igikiga* (i.e. 'Rukiga'). This is a strategy of marking Rufumbira as a completely different language, and increasing the distinctiveness of Kinyabwisha.

the creative use of Spanglish in identity building processes among speakers along the Mexican-American border (see Anzaldúa 2012). Defamatory and deprecatory naming practices and their mimetic use as positive expressions of reflexivity, for instance as swearing practices, are a recurrent phenomenon in various African settings, and can be understood as a strategy of "Othering of the Other", as will be analyzed in more detail elsewhere (see also Storch & Nassenstein forthcoming).

Differences in classification also become more obvious when we take a look at the prefix of noun class 20 *-gu-*, which is not used in Kinyarwanda but occurs in Rufumbira when things are depreciated or devalued. Historically, Bantu noun class 20 is not reconstructed for Proto-Bantu as **ku-* but for Meinhof's Ur-Bantu as **-γu* and for Welmer's PB as **-γo* (see Katamba 2003: 104). As explained by Storch (2011: 65) in more detail, the prefix can also be reconstructed for Proto-Benue-Congo as **gu-*, while this rare noun class is attested for fewer languages than others, and was initially labeled as *"Schmähklasse"* ('contemptuous/vituperative class') by Meinhof (1948). While it is for instance diffused among Tanzanian languages such as Hehe (speakers from Iringa) and Nyakyusa (speakers from Mbeya, Brühwiler p.c.), it is also found in Uganda among Luganda, Lusoga and Rutooro speakers, as becomes evident in Map 4.1 (taken from Storch 2011: 178). With time, it has also been adopted by speakers of some Swahili dialects, such as for instance in parts of Uganda (due to influence from the Ugandan languages mentioned) or Tanzania.
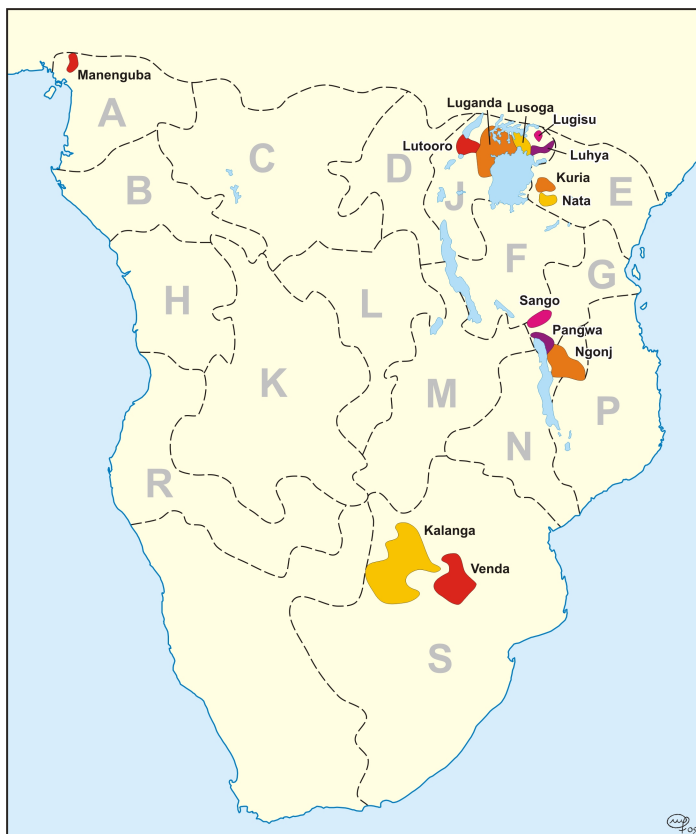
Map 4.1: The distribution of noun class prefix 20 (*gu-*) in Bantu (Storch 2011: 178)

According to Maho (1999, cited by Storch 2011), patterns of wider distribution can be attested for the -*gu*-class. Storch (2011: 177-179) states that there are remnant patterns in Tiv as well as in Southern Bantoid and Northern Jukunoid languages, and that "in the speech register where this functional pattern survives, words that denote potentially dangerous concepts are found to belong into the *gu class" (ibid., p. 66). In Northern Jukunoid languages, this originally belonged to a speech register of priests in ritual contact with non-Jukunoid communities, which served as a kind of secret language.

The *gu*- that is found in Ugandan languages such as Luganda, Lusoga and Rutooro, and, through speakers' multilingual repertoires, also in other languages, also reveals an emblematic semantic specification, since it is not found westwards of the border in languages of DR Congo or Rwanda. Although it is not used in ritualized language nor necessarily related to witchcraft discourse, its usage signals to the conversational partner that the speaker has spent time in Uganda, or that (s)he is Ugandan. This highlights, among other emblematic features, Ugandans' distinctive way of speaking, especially in the border triangle, where meaningful variation serves as a strong identity marker.

Noun class 20 therefore also occurs in Bafumbira's speech, although it is rarely used, and is mainly due to speakers' knowledge of Rukiga and Luganda, and of Ugandan English. While it is a common morphological feature in Luganda (Crabtree 1923, Ashton et al. 1954) and Rukiga (Ssentanda & Asiimwe 2015), it also occurs in Ugandan English (Nassenstein 2016b) and in translanguaging practices of Ugandan English and Luganda (see 38a-39a). When speakers were explicitly asked if Rufumbira has a noun class 20 (-*gu*-), they would usually reject the feature as not existing in their language. This noun class prefix is therefore not considered to be a genuine feature of Rufumbira, despite its frequent occurrence in recorded texts and elicited sentences.

However, because of their broad repertoires and the fluid structural movement of features that spread from one language to another, especially if they are considered to be semantically prominent, Rufumbira speakers do make use of the prefix. They tend to make use of the full expressive range of evaluative morphology in endolingual communication (among themselves), or when a 'definition' of themselves as Bafumbira toward a researcher, a non-initiated listener or a potential source of Othering is not given. They may equally produce the feature when providing longer text fragments for recordings, but if explicitly asked if the *gu*-class occurs in Rufumbira, they may reject it. This has to do with the projections of research ideologies of Northern researchers more than with the actual noun class system of Rufumbira. When I first compared the evaluative morphology extracted from texts with speakers' indications in qualitative interviews, the apparent discrepancy did not satisfy me since I did not include speakers' different contextual realizations, depending whether they were interacting with other Bafumbira, or producing recorded data in my presence.

The following examples demonstrate how the prefix *gu-* has entered Rufumbira through Ugandan English. This is restricted to specific cases where the intricate semantic context triggers Rufumbira speakers to use the same prefix that they are acquainted with in Ugandan English, and from now on also in Rufumbira. Despite the fact that they are aware of using it, they would not necessarily consider it as being part of Rufumbira. It becomes obvious that there is a semantic change from Ugandan English to Rufumbira, since noun class 20 can also group things that are 'big and beautiful', as shown in (38b) and (39b). In contrast, the use of noun class 11 here would trigger much more negative associations (39c).

	(Ugandan English/Luganda)		
(38a)	*they gave me an ogusimu*		
	'they gave me a big (inconvenient) phone'		

	(Rufumbira)		
(38b)	*bampaye ugusimu*	*ba-m-h-*ye*	*u-gu-simu*
	[βampaje ogusimu]	3pl-1sgO-give-PFV	AUG-cl20-phone
	'they gave me a big (+nice/ugly) phone'		

	(Ugandan English)		
(39a)	*See that gu-girl!*		
	'Look at that big/unshapely girl!'		

	(Rufumbira)			
(39b)	*Réeba guríiya ugukobwa!*	*réeb-a*	*gu-ríiya*	*u-gu-kobwa*
	[ré:βa gurí:ja gukobga]	look-IMP	cl20-DEM	AUG-cl20-girl
	'Look at that big (+beautiful/ugly) girl!'			

(39c)	*Réeba ruríiya urukobwa shaa!*	*réeb-a*	*ru-ríiya*	*u-ru-kobwa*	*shaa*
	[ré:βa rurí:ja rukobga ʃa:]	look-IMP	cl11-DEM	AUG-cl11-girl	EXCL
	'Hah, look at that big ugly girl!'				

Interestingly, the plural which is formed in noun class 22 (*-ga-*)[56] is neither used in Ugandan English, nor in Rufumbira. If speakers had borrowed augmentative-pejorative class 20 from Luganda, they may also have borrowed the plural prefix *-ga-*; however, this is not the case. This strengthens the hypothesis that this structural borrowing occurred through Ugandan

---

[56] Surprisingly, Bastin (2003) lists for Luganda a noun class pairing *ogu-/aga-* that she analyzes as noun classes 20-26, instead of 20-22, which corresponds with the canonical view of class 20 and its plural (see also Ashton 1954). It is indeed true that noun class agreement shows *ga-* in Luganda as having nominal modifiers and subject markers, but the noun class prefix is always *-ma-*; it should not be confused with the class prefix *-ga-* in 22.

English. The Rufumbira *-gu-* in noun class 20 forms its plural in class 8 (*-bi-*) just like the singular noun classes 7 (*-ki-*) and 11 (*-ru-*). This explains the semantically divergent concepts that are combined in noun class 8 (*-bi-*) (40).

(40) *Réeba ibisimu bye!*   *réeb-a   i-bi-simu   bye*
      [ɾéːβa iβisimu βje]   look-IMP   AUG-cl8-phone   cl8:POSS3sg
      'Look at his big (+good/bad) phones!'

► *On esoterogeny*

Different noun class pairings, especially for diminutives and augmentatives, mark distinctive language behavior, and are very emblematic in terms of meaningful differences in a border area. In the sociolinguistic chapter (Chapter 2), the concept of 'esoterogeny' has already been introduced, and will be discussed on a morphological basis against the background of speakers' divergent patterns of evaluative morphology.

When comparing the use of expressive morphology in all three varieties, it seems that a clear distinction of pejoratives from non-pejoratives, especially when paired with diminutive or augmentative associations, is almost impossible. There is always a specific range of interpretation, at least in Rufumbira and standardized Kinyarwanda, which allows speakers for example to associate either a negative or a positive connotation with the prefix of noun class 7 *-ki-*. While the semantic content of the noun classes in Rufumbira is to some extent bound to contact-induced patterns in speakers' repertoires (semantic-structural re-categorization), the patterns are relatively fluid. As already stated, the pejorative prefix *-ru-* (noun class 11) is increasingly used among younger speakers, while elders are not using it whenever it can be avoided. Young speakers, however, always use it with a pejorative connotation, unlike Banyarwanda who classify it as augmentative, and as potentially having a positive connotation (Kimenyi 2002: 16). The use of noun class 20 *-gu-* also constitutes a frequent strategy of differentiation, as already mentioned above.

These may serve as good examples for 'esoterogeny', the conscious and motivated strategy to speak differently from one's closest neighbors. The concept was first discussed by Thurston (1987) for languages of New Britain and later by Golla (2000), and in more detail by Hill (2005) for languages like Cupeño in California, who also summarizes it in a volume on pragmatics (2009: 430–432).[57] Ross (2003: 181) also discusses esoterogeny for Pacific languages, which has contributed to the diffusion of this label in discussing processes of language change. He refers to Andersen's (1988) work on Germanic languages and patterns of sound change, which, according to Ross (2003: 181), occurs because "in a relatively small, closed community, there is nothing to stop this", while the closed nature of such communities

---

[57] I am particularly grateful to Gerrit J. Dimmendaal for his efforts to trace the origins of concepts such as 'esoterogeny'.

is a "result of either geographical or sociopolitical isolation", which has similarities with the "bordered" isolation of Bafumbira in Uganda. While Ross (ibid.) reports that in Andersen's work these changes mostly occur as 'background changes', he refers to Thurston's (1987) work as a novelty since "speakers in a closed community may, so to speak, grab hold of them as emblems of their community and of its perceived separateness from other communities speaking related lects" (Ross 2003: 181). Finally, Dimmendaal has extended the concept and has discussed it in great detail for Nuba Mountain communities (Sudan) (see Dimmendaal 2009, 2011, 2015).

The esoterogenist strategies that are employed by Bafumbira, depending on their multilingual repertoires and morphological inventories, can be related to Blommaert's (2005) definition of 'creative practice', which he explains as speakers' reply to already established inequalities and hegemonies, especially in terms of borders. This is a direct link to Mignolo's (2012) decolonial approach to border thinking, since

> [c]reative practice, then, is something that has to be situated *in the borderline zone of existing hegemonies*. It develops within hegemonies while it attempts to alter them, and so may eventually effectively alter them by shifting the borders and by **creating new (contrasting) forms of consciousness; it produces 'supplements' to what is already in the 'archive',** so to speak. (Blommaert 2005: 106)

As well as evaluative morphology in the noun phrase, esoterogeny also affects plural marking strategies. Because speakers are aware of the phonological realization of French, they know that the plural allomorphs -*es, -s,* etc. are mute, as in *les amis* [lezamiː] ('the friends'). When French words are incorporated into Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha utterances, plural suffixes are usually omitted, and plurality is simply expressed with noun class prefixes, as in *amaconcert(s)* ('concerts') (41).

	(Kinyarwanda/Kinyabwisha)				
(41)	*amaconcert(s) ya orchestre Impala*	*a-ma-concert(s)*	*ya*	*orchestre*	*Impala*
	[amakɔseːr ja orkɛstrə imᵖhara]	AUG-cl6-concert	cl6:CONN	cl9.orchestra	I.
	'the concerts of the group Impala'				

In contrast, Bafumbira who emphasize the use of English as a resource for meaningful divergence clearly pronounce plural suffixes "the English way", with a phonetic realization of the plural endings, as in *chances* (see 42). This is not an obligatory realization, as can be seen in the example, since the speaker corrects himself. The plural agreement on the possessive modifier alone would be sufficient to mark it as a plural concept, and further marking is therefore morphologically superfluous. Loanwords are therefore often explicitly marked as English ones, i.e. Ugandan ones, in contrast to French, i.e. Rwando-Congolese ones. This often occurs

in cases when the English and French words look or sound alike, and may therefore be perceived as the same word to a non-initiated listener.[58]

	(Rufumbira)					
(42)	*chance zanyu nangwa chances zanyu*	*chance*	*zanyu*	*nangwa*	*chances*	*zanyu*
	[t͡ʃɛnts zanju naŋɡʌa t͡ʃɛntsəs zanju]	cl10.chance	cl10:POSS2pl	or	cl10.chances	cl10:POSS2pl
	'your chances, or your chance*s*'					

However, English plural suffixes are not always marked, and are often rejected when in sentence-final position, as shown in (43).

	(Rufumbira)		
(43)	*Duhe beer! (*beers)*	*du-h-e*	*beer*
	[duhe biːə]	1plO-give-IMP	cl10.beer
	'Give us (some) beer(s)!'		

In all of the above-mentioned cases, esoterogeny can also be understood as 'acts of identity' (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985, Auer 2007), which serve as indexical signs of differentiation that speakers can easily perceive, adopt and use as expressive semiotic signs in interaction.

However, this does not mean that these patterns of linguistic identity become stable variants that are always reproduced. They are still prone to variation, to conscious rejection by speakers for various reasons, and to idiolectal variation. For Rufumbira, this includes recurrent elderly speakers' realization of apparent Kinyarwanda forms due to the prestige that was projected onto Kinyarwanda through standardization processes in colonial times. Moreover, young speakers may copy features from Kinyarwanda as the language of Rwandan hip hop and fashion, and may therefore oppose esoterogenist tendencies on an idiolectal level. The process of language change is frequent, but not at all mandatory. Rufumbira is a flexible concept, and esoterogenist realizations are just one aspect of it. Ross (2003: 182), referring to Thurston (1987), describes the concept of esoterogeny as "a reaction *against* other lects", which can also be a temporary or idiolectal one, as occurs among Rufumbira speakers. The analysis of evaluative morphology in Rufumbira in contrast to Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha shows that a set of intricate differences may constitute a different system of expressive morphology, despite an apparently identical noun class system at first sight. The encodings of different evaluative readings are to some extent due to borrowing or to predominant patterns in speakers' repertoires that reflect their multilingual resources and surrounding multilingual landscapes.

---

[58] It should be noted that this example stems from a text sent by an older speaker who talked about advice given to young Bafumbira, and the full sentence read *Ntimwonone chance zanyu nangwa chances zanyu!* ('Do not spoil your chances!').

Furthermore, esoterogeny is definitely not the only criterion that has to be considered when looking at processes of language change in the border area, since not all changes in the morphosyntax of the language are ideologically motivated. Divergence caused by arbitrary language change can, however, when required by speakers, be used emblematically and reinforced for reasons of sociocultural differentiation among neighbors (see for instance Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.5).

4.1.2 On locative markers

Apart from evaluative morphology and plural marking, locatives in Rufumbira also diverge from standardized Kinyarwanda. The standardized variety across the border uses two pairs of locatives (equivalent to noun classes 17 and 18), *ku* and *kuri* ('at, in, around') and *mu* and *muri* ('in, inside'). While both pairs are used in complimentary distribution in Kinyarwanda, this does not apply to Rufumbira. The locatives *mu* and *ku* are more often employed than the longer versions *muri* and *kuri*, which occur in combination with country names (*muri*) or place names or business names such as restaurants (*kuri*) in Kinyarwanda, and as short forms in all other cases (44a-44b). Rufumbira speakers prefer instead the shorter versions throughout (45a-45b), and so do Kinyabwisha speakers (46). Unlike other morphological realizations, both Bafumbira and Banyabwisha mark the variants *kuri* and *muri* as "typical Rwandan realizations". In her grammar sketch of Rufumbira, Sauder (2009: 28) explains the occurrence of both longer locatives as being bound to demonstratives that follow the locatives; this was confirmed by the speakers I worked with (see also example 63). The use of longer locatives "when a proper noun follows" (Sauder 2009: 29) or with years was rejected by speakers (for instance as in **muri Busanza,* 'in Busanza'; **muri 2008,* 'in 2008', see ibid.).

	(Kinyarwanda)				
(44a)	*hano muri Bugande*	*hano*	*muri*	*Bu-gande*	
	[hano muɾi βugande]	here	LOC	cl14-Uganda	
	'here in Uganda' (uttered by a Rwandan visitor to Kampala/Uganda)				
	(Kinyarwanda)				
(44b)	*kuri Sundowner's*	*kuri*	*Sundowner's*		
	[kuɾi S.]	LOC	S.		
	'at the bar/restaurant Sundowner's (Kigali)'				
	(Rufumbira)				
(45a)	*ntaabwo tujyaga mu Congo*	*ntaabwo*	*tu-jy-ag-a*	*mu*	*Congo*
	[ntʰaːbgo tuɟaga mu Koːŋgo]	NEG	1pl-go-IMPV-FV	LOC	C.
	'we do not go to Congo'				
(45b)	*ndi ku Muhabura*	*n-*rí*	*ku*	*Muhabura*	
	[ndi ku Muhaβuɾa]	1sg-be	LOC	M.	
	'I am at Muhabura (a local bar)'				

(Kinyabwisha)

(46) *narí nícaye mu urusengero*   *n-a-rí*   *n-í-*cara-*ye*   *mu*   *u-ru-sengero*
[narí níːʧaje mu ɾuseːŋgeɾo]   1sg-PST-be   1pl-REFL-sit-FV   LOC   AUG-cl11-church
'I had already sat down in church'

Speakers explained this giving phonaesthetic reasons, saying "*mu* sounds better, *ngiye mu France* [I go to France], *ku* sounds better in Rufumbira" (Joe Haguma, April 2014). The rare forms *kuri* and *muri* were explained by Rufumbira speakers as locative + copula (-*rí*) forms, which would be superfluous in Rufumbira since the locative function would be clear.

    This does not seem to result from contact with Rukiga, since the latter makes a distinction between a shorter and a longer realization in different contexts (47-48). While Rufumbira has no locative equivalent to noun class 16 (*ha-*) in prepositional position but employs forms that are equivalent to noun classes 17-18, Rukiga uses *aha* ('here in/at', noun class 16) and *omu* ('in/inside', noun class 18). Both can also occur as *ahari* and *omuri*, most probably due for reasons of definiteness, and are translated as 'existence within' (*omuri*) and 'existence at' (*ahari*); see Mpairwe & Kahangi (2013: 87).

(Rukiga) (Asiimwe 2014: 146)

(47) *a-ba-gyenyi baataaha omu nju*   *a-ba-gyenyi*   *ba-aa-taah-a*   *o-mu*   *n-ju*
'(the) visitors have entered in/at the house'   IV-2-guest   2-PST-enter-FV   IV-18.in   9-house

(Mpairwe & Kahangi 2013: 87)

(48) *ntuura omuri Kashari*   *n-tuur-a*   *o-mu-ri*   *Kashari*
'I reside in Kashari'   1sg-reside-FV   AUG-LOC-be   K.

It can therefore rather be assumed that speakers know how their neighbors construct locatives, but prefer a simplified pattern. They stated that whenever *muri* or *kuri* are used, they know that the speaker is probably from Rwanda. In all three varieties, subject agreement is expressed with noun class 16 *ha-*, without any differences, as also explained by Bastin (2003: 521), who describes this as a "tendency to reduce concords. Class 16 agreement tends to replace those of classes 17 and 18".

    Moreover, the remnant *i* of locative class 23 (cf. Katamba 2003: 109)[59], which is a common feature in Kinyarwanda (49a), is reduced in Rufumbira and occurs very rarely since it is usually omitted without being substituted by any other locative. The same applies to Kinyabwisha (49b), where it has also largely been lost. While it is predominantly used with

---

[59] According to Meeussen, this prefix *i* is classified as noun class 24 (see Katamba 2003: 104).

city names in standardized Kinyarwanda, its omission therefore marks a speaker as "not being Rwandan", and as speaking a language different from (standardized) Kinyarwanda.[60]

	(Kinyarwanda)			
(49a)	*Ngiye iKigali*	*n-*gend-*ye*	*i*	*Kigali*
	[nɟije i cigaɾi]	1sg-go-PFV	cl23	K.
	'I (recently) went to Kigali'			

	(Rufumbira/Kinyabwisha)		
(49b)	*Ngiye Kigali*	*n-*gend-*ye*	*Kigali*
	[nɟije cigaɾi]	1sg-go-PFV	K.
	'I (recently) went to Kigali'		

4.1.3 Absolute pronouns, demonstratives, and possessives

The major difference in the use of absolute pronouns consists of the alternating forms of the first and second person singular, which are realized as *njyewe* [nɟéːʍe] (1st person singular) and *weho* [ʍeho] (2nd person singular); in Kinyabwisha they are realized as [ndʒéːʍe] and [ʍeho], while Kinyarwanda uses the shorter *njye* [nɟe] and *wowe* [ʍoʍe]. Neither of the absolute pronouns is used by speakers from Kisoro District, since especially the second person singular pronoun is already prominent in its usage in Rwanda, and in popular Rwandan love songs where the deictic scale of 'me–you' plays a significant role and is included in the song title. Songs like *Ni wowe gusa* ('It's only you'), by the Ugandan-Rwandan duo Lilian Mbabazi and Kitoko (2012), are also played in Kisoro's pubs, and speakers therefore try to abstain from using these pronouns when speaking Rufumbira in order to be distinctive (see examples 50 and 51a-b). When asked, they pointed out that *wowe* "is usually used by Banyarwanda, we don't like using it" (Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016). The third person absolute pronoun *we*, the first person plural *twebwe* [tkwebge], the second person *mwebwe* [ŋebge] and the third person plural *bo* [βo] do not differ from Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha.

	(Rufumbira)	
(50)	*njyewe!*	*njyewe!*
	[nɟéːʍe]	1sg
	'it is me/that's me!'	

(51a)	*nje nawe*	*njée*	*na-we*
	[nɟéː naːʍe]	1sg	COM-2sg
	'you and me'		

<hr>

[60] Sauder (2009: 30) explains that it is still in usage among Bafumbira but is not mandatory. Because she must have worked mainly with elderly speakers, such occurrences can be explained as acts of convergence with standardized Kinyarwanda.

(Kinyabwisha)

(51a) *weho ni ɲjyewe*   *weho   ni   ɲjyewe*

      [ʍeho ni ndʒéːʍe]   2sg   and   1sg

      'you and me'

Demonstrative determiners are realized slightly different in most JD60 varieties, especially in relation to the number of deictic indicative distinctions. While Kinyamulenge reveals six different realizations (the maximum number), retaining archaic features that have existed in the Hauts-Plâteaux (DR Congo) since the mid-19th century when they presumably moved there from Rwanda (Vlassenroot 2002), Kinyabwisha reveals a fourfold distinction (which seems to be the minimum number found among these varieties). Rufumbira speakers make use of five different demonstratives, which are listed in Table 4.3, and will be discussed in more detail in the following. All deviant forms that are found neither in Kinyarwanda nor in Kinyabwisha are marked in bold. The deictic distinctions between demonstratives in Rufumbira can be summarized as follows:

> ➤ Demonstrative 1 is used when referring to objects or people near to the speaker, visible and still present during the time of speaking.
> ➤ Demonstrative 2 refers to visible objects/people who are slightly further away from the speaker but still present during the speech act.
> ➤ Demonstrative 3 is used when referents are visible but at the boundary of the visual field, clearly further away from the speaker than the referents of demonstratives 1 and 2.
> ➤ Demonstrative 4 refers to anything that used to be in sight and is no longer visible, but that has already been addressed in discourse prior to the moment of speaking ('that one in question').
> ➤ Demonstrative 5 is used when referring to non-visible objects/people who are (potentially) in a different location (which is not absolutely certain) or generally distant from the speaker and speech act.

Deictic differences in referring to objects are common among dialects or closely related varieties (cf. for instance coastal Swahili varieties vs. varieties of Swahili from Eastern DR Congo), and are usually well known to speakers, who are aware of such differences. The same is the case in Rufumbira, where speakers know that Banyarwanda and Banyabwisha do not use certain demonstratives, or that the Banyamulenge employ more complex distinctions. 'Sociolinguistic knowledge' of (other) variants becomes a central idea in speakers' 'border thinking', as discussed by Staum (2008: 28) as one of the core concepts of "the relationships between locally defined categories and groups and linguistic variation [which] suggests a meaningful relationship between speakers and the types of linguistic variants they produce". Speakers may not be conscious at every moment of their (deviant) linguistic realizations, but they

do recognize social categories that are bound to specific ways of realizing linguistic forms and structures, i.e. that a 'Kinyarwanda representation', a 'Kinyabwisha representation' and their own 'Rufumbira representation' still convey different social meanings.

Noun class	DEM1	DEM2	DEM3	DEM4	DEM5
1	uyu	uwo	uno	wa	uríiya
2	aba	abo	bano	ba	baríiya
3[61]	uyu	uwo	uno	wa	uríiya
4	iyi (*izi*)	iyo (*izo*)	ino (*zino*)	ya (*za*)	iríiya (*ziríiya*)
5	iri	iryo	rino	rya	*riríiya*
6	aya (*aga*)	ayo (*ago*)	ano	ya (*ga*)	aríiya
7	iki	*icyo*	kino	*ca*	kiríiya
8	ibi	ibyo	bino	bya	biríiya
9	iyi	iyo	ino	ya	iríiya
10	izi	izo	zino	za	ziríiya
11	uru	*urwo*	runo	rwa	ruríiya
12	aka	ako	kano	ka	karíiya
13	utu	utwo	tuno	twa	turíiya
14	ubu	ubwo	buno	bwa	buríiya
15	uku	uko	kuno	kwa	kuríiya
16	aha	aho	hano	ha	haríiya
(20)	*ugu*	---	---	---	*guríiya*

Table 4.3: Demonstrative determiners in Rufumbira

Relating to the less common divergent forms of noun class 4, e.g. as in *ziríiya imiti* ('those drugs'), speakers commented that the forms are used but a hearer may assume "that the one does not know good Rufumbira, some people say *izi*, it does not sound so good" (as explained by the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016), see (52). While these forms are recurrent in Kinyabwisha due to language contact with Kivu Swahili, to which demonstratives of noun class 4 reveal similar forms, standardized Kinyarwanda only allows the former (*iyi* etc.). Different variants used by the same speaker (*iyi, izi*) demonstrate that stylistic variation is common in Rufumbira, due to the manifold linguistic influences on speakers' fluid repertoires. As long as realizations associated with Kinyabwisha or Kinyarwanda do not outweigh those understood as belonging under the linguistic label 'Rufumbira', such variation is not an issue.

---

[61] While noun class 3 agreement reveals salient differences in modifiers and subject concords in Rufumbira, due to contact with the two Bantu languages Luganda and Rukiga, demonstratives are not affected, according to speakers. Expected variants such as *guríiya* for the distal demonstrative 5 do not occur, maybe due to homophony with the augmentative-pejorative noun class 20.

(52) *izo imiríma*   *i-zo*   *i-mi-ríma*
      [izo (i)miríma]   AUG-DEM2   AUG-cl4-field
      'those fields'

Noun class 5 differs from the neighboring languages in the realization of the distal *riríiya ijoro* ('that (far) night'), which would be realized as *iríiya ijoro* in Kinyabwisha due to a reduction of the general agreement patterns of that noun class.

Moreover, demonstratives also show influences from Rukiga and Luganda, as also happens with other modifiers like connectives and possessives, as well as subject concords on the verb (see 4.2). Example (53) reveals the use of a Rukiga demonstrative *ago* (noun class 6) instead of the common determiner *ayo*, which would be the expected form (as is found in both other varieties). Although the use of Rukiga demonstratives in class 6 is not common among all speakers, since "it is not good… who don't know Rufumbira, or who grew up alone, *Urufumbira rupfuye* [broken Rufumbira], or because of Rukiga, where they actually use *aga, ago*" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016). As still to be analyzed, the agreement patterns of noun class 6 appear to be highly controversial among speakers, since the use of Rukiga agreement is either (mostly when judging variants in conversations with non-speakers beyond one's community of practice) characterized by negative attitudes (see above), or seems to be ideologically motivated by language accommodation and meaningful divergence from other varieties (see 4.2.1).

(53) *nk'ago amabya nangwa imboro*   *nka* *a-go*   *a-ma-bya*   *nangwa* *i-m-boro*
      [nk'ago (a)maβja nang(a) imboɾo]   like   AUG-DEM2   AUG-cl6-testicle or   AUG-cl9-penis
      'like those testicles or the penis' (explaining a common proverb)

The major difference in all demonstrative determiners of class 7 concerns their pronunciation, as already shown in the phonological overview. While, in Kinyarwanda, all of the determiners are realized with a palatal stop [c], Rufumbira speakers make use of the alveopalatal affricate [tʃ] when realizing demonstratives 2 and 4 (54).

(54) *ca ikintu cyo twabonye*   *ca*   *i-ki-ntu*   *cyo*   *tu-a-bon-ye*
      [tʃa cintʰu tʃo tkʌaβonje]   cl7:DEM4   AUG-cl7-thing   cl7:REL   1pl-PST1-see-PFV
      'that thing (in question) that we saw'

Noun class 20 also reveals two demonstrative determiners that are neither found in Rwanda nor in Congo. Instead of realizing the full set of four determiners, the most common ones are demonstrative 1 *ugu* (proximal deixis, near speaker) and demonstrative 5 *guríiya* (with distal deixis, far from speaker) (55). As already pointed out in the analysis of evaluative morphology, the determiners are not realized by all speakers with equal frequency.

(55)   *guríiya ugusimu*   *gu-ríiya*   *u-gu-simu*

       [guríːja gusimu]   cl20-DEM5   AUG-cl20-phone

       'that large phone (we talked about, or that is somewhere else)'

As will be explained in more detail when looking at the verb morphology and syntax of Rufumbira, the borrowing of morphological forms and syntactic structures from other Ugandan languages such as Rukiga and Luganda has an emblematic value, and can to some extent be explained in terms of the high frequency of use of lexical items and morphological forms from both languages among Bafumbira on the Ugandan side of the border (Sections 4.2-4.3).

       Possessive determiners only deviate in noun classes 3 (1ˢᵗ person singular: *wanjye/gwanjye*) and 6 (*yanjye/ganjye*), two free variants that are both realized by speakers, and that have again emerged through contact with Rukiga and Luganda (56).

(56)   *amavuta ganjye/yanjye*   *a-ma-vuta*   *ga-anjye/yanjye*

       [amavuta gaːnʤe/jaːnʤe]   AUG-cl6-oil   cl6-POSS1sg

       'my oil/petrol'

They are however used less often than the equivalent deviating subject concords in these noun classes, which have taken an indexical ideological function (see Section 4.1). An exception in the paradigm of possessive determiners with impersonal possessors is noun class 4, where Kinyabwisha speakers listed an abstract form *za_o*, while Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira only allow a (more regular) equivalent *ya_o*. Connectives are used in the same way, and the same variants occur (see 57). Because they have the same formation rules as possessive determiners (-*a*/-*anjye, -acu* etc.), connectives will not be dealt with extensively. Differences in connectives were (again) either described as a form of 'defective language', or as "emblematic when you cross [the borders], people do use it to make a difference in speech", as pointed out by a Mufumbira.

(57)   *amata g'/y' abána*   *a-ma-ta*   *ga/ya*   *a-ba-ána*

       [amata g'aβáːna]   AUG-cl6-milk   cl6:CONN   AUG-cl2-child

       'the children's milk'

4.1.4 The numeral system: Salient differences

Counting and systems of numeration differ greatly across Bantu languages, and only the first five numerals can be reconstructed for Proto-Bantu as a former quinary system; this allows for a lot of variation from one language to another, while nominal agreement patterns either do not occur at all in some languages or occur only partially (see Meeussen 1967, Zerbian & Krifka 2008). It is rare, however, for closely related languages to vary in their rules for the formation of tens and hundreds.

In Rufumbira, numerals are mostly realized as in Kinyarwanda, with a few differences. There are however some major differences between the numeral system found in Rufumbira and the data collected on Kinyabwisha in Eastern DR Congo. The tens and hundreds reveal a contrastive shift – while the common designations for 'one hundred', 'two hundred' etc. are used for 'ten', 'twenty' etc. accordingly, the 'tens' are used to refer to 'hundreds' in Kinyabwisha. This is usually perceived as confusing by Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda speakers since they associate other numerals with these forms. When a Rufumbira speaker looked at my fieldnotes from Congo and noticed the different numeral system, he told me about the apparent mistake he had found "(…) *magana tatu* [noted as '30'] that is 300 – how can it happen? Did people get confused?" (as expressed by the interlocutor Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016) (58a-58b).

Banyabwisha know about the different realizations in Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda, and stated that this semantic change must have occurred long ago since only elderly people (in their eighties and nineties) remember how the numerals were formed according to the Rwandan system. No contact-related evidence for this variation could be found for Kinyabwisha, though. A Munyabwisha summarized the divergent formation of numerals as follows:

"Dix, c'est *cumi*, le même, mais quarante *mirongwine*, trente *mirongwitatu*, ça c'est le normal de Kinyarwanda, **mais en Kinyabwisha ça veut signifier quatre cents, trois cents**. Mon grand-père ne va pas commettre cette erreur, il est né au Rwanda, il connait ça, mais une autre personne peut-être va croire il y a une erreur dans ça … Même moi, quand j'étais au Rwanda, on m'a dit *magana abiri,* deux cents, mais j'ai dit *magana abiri* c'est vingt, *magana tatu* trente! Mais ils m'ont dit 'non, ça c'est trois cents!'."

['Ten, that's *cumi*, the same, but forty *mirongwine*, thirty *mirongwitatu,* that's the normal one in Kinyarwanda, **but in Kinyabwisha that means four hundred, three hundred**. My grandfather won't commit that mistake, he was born in Rwanda, he knows that, but another person could believe there is a mistake in that … But me, when I was in Rwanda, they told me *magana abiri,* two hundred, but I said *magana abiri* that's twenty, *magana tatu* thirty! But they told me 'no, that's three hundred!'.']
(Paulin Baraka Bose, May 2016)

		(Kinyabwisha)			
(58a)	*abána amagana itatu*		*a-ba-ána*	*a-magana*	*i-tatu*
	[aβáːna magana tatu]		AUG-cl2-child	AUG-tens	AUG-three
	'thirty children'				

		(Kinyarwanda/Rufumbira)			
(58b)	*abána amagana itatu*		*a-ba-ána*	*a-magana*	*i-tatu*
	[aβáːna magana tatu]		AUG-cl2-child	AUG-hundred	AUG-three
	'three hundred children'				

Another feature which is uniquely found in Rufumbira out of all three varieties is the occurrence of a term *umutwaro* ('10,000') with the plural form *imitwaro*. This is a borrowing from Luganda, and is a prominent feature in most Bantu languages from Western Uganda, such as Nyakore-Kiga and Tooro-Nyoro. Etymologically, it derives from a word *omutwalo* 'bale' (of cloth, among other things) (Crabtree 1923: 216), which came to be used for amounts of money. In Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, the same numeral would be expressed with *ibihumbi (i)cumi* (59a-59b).

(Rufumbira)

(59a) *tuibárira ku imitwaro icumi*

[tujiβarira ku mitkʌaro ʧumi]

'we count it at 100,000 Ugandan shillings'

tu-i-bár-ir-a	ku	i-mi-twaro	icumi
1pl-cl9O-count-APPL-FV	LOC	AUG-cl4-ten.thousand	ten

(Kinyarwanda)

(59b) *mfite amafaranga ibihumbi icumi gusa*

[mfit(e) amafaraŋga iβihumbi cumi gusa]

'I only have ten thousand francs'

mfite	a-ma-faranga	i-bi-humbi	icumi	gusa
1sg-have	AUG-cl6-money	AUG-cl8-thousand	ten	only

In Rufumbira, *imitwaro* was initially useful in money transactions with the Baganda agents in Kisoro in colonial times. When the Baganda administrators left, the numeral remained. Different currencies therefore have an impact on numeral systems, reflecting patterns of high frequency in use. Nowadays the '10,000' has turned into a distinctive marker of Ugandan identity, since all three communities know that the construction is a purely Ugandan one, with Baganda traders coming on buses from Kampala to Goma in Congo, to Kigali in Rwanda and moving throughout Uganda. This numeral has therefore implicitly entered non-Luganda speakers repertoires, although it may not be actively used by them. The Banyabwisha and Banyarwanda who were interviewed in the course of the study knew that this was a typical *"construction ougandaise"* [Ugandan construction], and therefore also an esoterogenist feature.

Another (minor) feature concerns the realization of noun class 3 agreement, which is usually realized as *umwe* [umŋge], and as *gumwe* [gumŋge] by some Rufumbira speakers. This happens in analogy to the subject marker *gu-* for noun class three as a borrowing from the Ugandan language Rukiga, as discussed in more detail in Section 4.2.1. The use of *gumwe* marks a meaningful difference, since it is absent in both other varieties, and seldom employed by Ugandans (it is never obligatory). Both *umwe* and *gumwe* are used by Rufumbira speakers, depending upon the context of the interaction, and on whether they wish to emphasize their identity or not.

(Rufumbira)

(60)   *imiti icumi na gumwe*   *i-mi-ti*   *i-cumi*   *na*   *gu-mwe*

        [imiti itʃumi na gumŋge]   AUG-cl4-drug AUG-ten and cl3-one

        'eleven drugs'

When referring to the hours of the day, Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira also reveal some differences. Kinyarwanda is more influenced by the Swahili system, and makes use of *isaaha sita* ('12 o'clock'), *isaaha tisa* ('3 o'clock') and *isaaha kumi* ('4 o'clock').[62] While the numeral 'ten' is realized as *cumi* [cumi], when referring to '10 o'clock' the numeral is realized with a velar stop [k]. Most Bafumbira know and understand these forms, when uttered by a Rwandan (as became evident when they were presented to Rufumbira speakers), but would not reproduce them as they are not 'the Rufumbira way of speaking'.

4.1.5 On quantification

Most quantifiers are identical in Rufumbira, standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, including the universal quantifiers *-óse* ('all') and *buri* ('every, each'), which precede the head. The only difference worth mentioning is the form of the unspecified quantifier, which is commonly expressed as *ku* in Kinyabwisha (61), and to minor extent also in Kinyarwanda (62), but is realized as *kuri* plus demonstrative determiner in Rufumbira (63).

(Kinyabwisha)

(61)   *Mpereza ku amatunda/amafaranga!*   *m-perez-a*   *ku*   *a-ma-tunda/a-ma-faranga*

     [mpereza ku matunda/mafaranga]   1sg-hand-IMP QUANT AUG-cl6-fruits/AUG-cl6-money

     'Give me some fruits/money!'

(Kinyabwisha/Kinyarwanda)

(62)   *Mfasha ku ibitekerezo!*   *m-fash-a*   *ku*   *i-bi-tekerezo*

     [mfaʃa ku βitekerezo/βitecerezo]   1sg-hand-IMP QUANT AUG-cl8-thought

     'Help me with some ideas!'

(Rufumbira)

(63)   *Mpereza kuri ayo amatunda*   *m-perez-a*   *kuri* *a-yo*   *a-ma-tunda*

     [mpʰereza kuɾajo matunda]   1sg-hand-IMP QUANT AUG-DEM2 AUG-cl6-fruits

     'Give me some fruits!'

---

[62] The Swahili system of counting hours, which is used throughout East Africa and also in Eastern DR Congo, begins with 6 a.m. as the first hour of the day. Six o'clock then denotes 12 a.m./p.m., nine o'clock stands for 3 a.m./p.m. and ten o'clock for 4 a.m./p.m.

In some cases, the unspecified quantifier is completely omitted, usually when liquids are concerned, as in example (64). *Kuri iyo* would rarely be used here, and was rejected by speakers as not "sounding good".

(Rufumbira)

(64)   *Mpereza beer!*   m-perez-a   ∅   beer
       [mpereza biːə]   1sg-hand-IMP   QUANT   cl9.beer
       'Give me some beer!'

4.2 On verbal morphology

The following sections deal with the morphology of the verb phrase, treating the most salient features that differentiate the Rufumbira verb from realizations found in adjacent varieties. **Subject and object concords** (4.2.1) reveal some emblematic differences from Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, and **negation patterns** also show some variation (resembling Kinyabwisha morphology) (4.2.2). While a superficial view of Rufumbira may classify the **TAM system** (4.2.3) as very close to the Kinyarwanda system, a more detailed analysis allows us to focus on salient differences that speakers perceive as meaningful. Forms of the **copula** (4.2.4) also diverge from forms found in the other varieties, and **modal verbs** show some differences too (4.2.5). While most **verbal derivations** are constructed in analogy with Kinyarwanda, others reveal periphrastic patterns in Rufumbira, which are found less often in Kinyabwisha and which are practically absent in the standardized variety of Kinyarwanda (4.2.6). The chapter also treats the **adaptation of English verbs** in Rufumbira (4.2.7) and concludes with a range of critical comments on **linguistic relativity** and border thinking.

Methodologically, data on the verbal morphology of Rufumbira was collected through elicitation (of a set of 600 sentences, which were also recorded for all closely related varieties) and through the recording of texts. Moreover, Kinyarwanda texts were discussed with speakers of Rufumbira in order to detect salient differences, and joint fieldwork sessions with one Mufumbira and one Munyabwisha were organized in 2013. While this seemed at first to be a promising field method, it mainly led to conflicts and unfruitful discussions on "correct" language use. Speakers of both varieties tried to provide divergent examples and realize the maximum possible number of salient differences, rather than speaking as they would with fellow Bafumbira or Banyabwisha. The Munyabwisha would then judge the Mufumbira's deviations as *"trop influencé par Rukiga"* [too much influence from Rukiga] and would blame his interlocutor for having spent too much time in Kabale (the Rukiga-speaking center). The Mufumbira would in most cases not protest, but simply comment upon the Kinyabwisha realizations with "in Rufumbira, this cannot be said". It seemed that because of the amount of variation in Rufumbira speakers were more tolerant toward other realizations, whereas Kinyabwisha speakers quickly rejected deviant forms as "wrong".

These observations were helpful, however, in relating Rufumbira grammar to the theoretical framework of this study; variation in verbal morphology is therefore discussed as speakers' expression of 'border thinking'. Tense and aspect markers are also found to some extent in Eastern DR Congo and Northwestern Rwanda, and thus constitute non-standard forms that are spread across various JD60 varieties of the broader region. Others, however, have emerged as a consequence of speakers' knowledge (and use) of Rukiga as spoken in Kabale, and Luganda as spoken in the Ugandan capital Kampala. As already discussed with regard to nominal morphology, the colonial borders around Kisoro challenge speakers' communicative repertoires, as they constantly enrich and elaborate a variety perceived as "good Rufumbira" by redefining the morphological choices that are at their disposal. This includes the strategies of turning substandard forms into standard forms (such as for instance the habitual aspect marker -*ag*-), of choosing forms contrastively against the educational and hegemonic background of Kinyarwanda corpus planning (e.g. by rejecting pre-initial complex negation), and of consciously incorporating Rukiga and Luganda morphology as grammatical enrichment in a process of esoterogeny.

Similar strategies have been reported for a range of settings worldwide, and Dimmendaal (2011: 360) describes 'localist strategies' (based on Hill 2001, applied to Mexican languages) for languages in the Nuba mountains such as Tima. Localist strategies, as explained by Dimmendaal, mean that "the speaker decides to select a particular kind of person as his or her model, and (s)he will try to sound as much like that particular kind of person" (ibid.). While Hill (2001) uses the contrast between 'localist strategies' and 'distributed strategies' for one and the same community, Dimmendaal (2011) extends this analysis to inter-community orientation. The model is reminiscent of Giles & Smith' (1979) communication accommodation theory, and can easily be applied to Bafumbira's morphosyntactic realizations in contrast to adjacent varieties, since speakers orient themselves in relation to the distinctive 'ways of speaking' of others. When their speech is mistaken for Kinyarwanda, either by outsiders or by fellow Ugandans, they immediately rectify this assumption. Moreover, emblematicity again plays an essential role in the divergence of Rufumbira's verbal morphology, while, just as for the Tima in Sudan, to Bafumbira "language clearly functions as an important emblematic feature of their ethnic identity, setting them apart from neighbouring groups" (Dimmendaal 2011: 359).

Altogether, the set of distinctive features in the verbal morphology that can be attested for Rufumbira have to do with the "rapid change" in tense and aspect systems of Bantu languages in contrast to other language families, as described by Nurse (2008: 25). He further states that "[structures, categories, morphology and morphemes] are constantly changing, so when discussing the differences between Bantu dialects, much less languages, linguists have to include features at the verbal level". This explains the structural divergences that can be attested for all three closely related languages, i.e. Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha,

on all morphological and syntactic levels. As will be discussed in the present analysis, more variation is found in the verbal morphology in all three varieties Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha than in the realization of nominal forms.

4.2.1 Deviating subject and object concords

Subject concords stand in verb-initial position and define who or what carries out an action. Object concords are prefixed to the verb root after the subject marker and tense-aspect marker, and can also be prefixed to infinitives. The reflexive prefix (-*í-*) always follows the subject marker, and precedes tense-aspect markers and the verb root. While reflexives do not reveal any differences from standardized Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha and constitute a stable prefix, specific subject and object concords deviate from the prefixes found in both varieties across the borders, predominantly due to language contact in Rufumbira with the Bantu languages Rukiga and Luganda.

The highlighted prefixes in Table 4.1 show salient differences in terms of subject markers. In most cases, there is free variation between the two available prefixes in Rufumbira. The deviating form is not necessarily the "correct" or "better" alternative, as speakers are prone to alternating between the two possibilities. This indicates the fact that when no contrast is needed, both are correct and are frequently used (with neither being considered as "ungrammatical"). When differentiation is needed (as a form of dialectal distinction), the deviating form is used, and in a specific way "constructed" or filled with meaning. This contrastive construction principle serves as the general driving force behind deviations found in Rufumbira, and can be extended to the entire morphological frame of the language. Distinctive subject concords in Rufumbira reveal a high degree of markedness due to their frequent use in interaction, and they are usually perceived as indexical markers of a speaker's background, trajectories and 'style'.

NC		PRS SC		PAST SC[63]		Example	Gloss
1	1st	*n/m-*	*du/tu-*	*na-*	*twa-*	*umuntu yágiye*	'the person went (long ago)'
	2nd	*u- a-*	*mu-*	*wa-*	*mwa-*		
	3rd		*ba-*	*ya-*	*ba-*		
2		*ba-*		*ba-*		*abána bakóraga*	'the children usually work'
3		*u-/**gu-***		***gwa-**/wa-*		*umwáka ushize/*	'last year [the year just passed]'
						*umwáka **gu**shize*	
4		*i-*		*ya-*		*imiti yaraguye*	'the drugs fell (long ago)'
5		*ri-*		*rwa-*		*itaka rwaraguzwe*	'the sand was bought (long ago)'
6		***ga-**/i-*		***ga-**/ya-*		*amata yábayehó/*	'the milk was here (recently)'

---

[63] The same subject concords also apply when verbs with vocalic roots and reflexive verbs with the reflexive prefix -*íí*- occur.

114

7	*ki-*	*cya-/**ca-***[64]	*amata **gá**bayehó*	
			*ikintu **cya**rapfuye/*	'the thing broke (long ago)'
			*ikintu **ca**rapfuye*	
8	*bi-*	*bya-*	*ibyokurya biri haríiya*	'the food is over there'
9	*i-*	*ya-*	*inká yábayemó*	'the cow was inside (recently)'
10	*zi-*	*za-*	*inká zábayemó*	'the cows were inside (recently)'
11	*ru-*	*rwa-*	*urúuzi rwarazúye*	'the river was full/overflowing'
12	*ka-*	*ka-*	*akána karambonye*	'the small child saw me'
13	*tu-*	*twa-*	*tutwána twaragiye*	'the misbehaving children went'
14	*bu-*	*bwa-*	*ubuzima bwarashize*	'the life ended (long ago)'
15	*ku-*	*kwa-*	*ukuboko kwavunitse*	'the arm was broken'
16	*ha-*	*ha-*	*ahantu hábaye héeza*	'the place was nice'

Table 4.4: Subject concords in Rufumbira (with deviations in bold)

The subject marker of noun class three (*gu-*) is particularly perceived as emblematic since Kinyarwanda speakers and elderly Rufumbira speakers usually realize it as *u-*. The subject concord *gu-* has entered Rufumbira (65a-65b) through language contact with Luganda (see 60c), the language of the capital Kampala, and is increasingly seen as a variant to the common subject marker *u-*. This can be explained in terms of the high frequency of specific subject markers in daily interaction, of Bafumbira's contact with ethnic Baganda, and of many speakers' migration from Kisoro to Kampala and back. It is however neither approved by Sauder (2009: 195) nor by the Kisoro District Language Board (p.c., 2014) since it is not seen as "good" Rufumbira (in most contexts). While the same pronominal form also exists in Rukiga-Runyankore (see Ssentanda & Asiimwe 2015) (65d), it is more likely to have entered Rufumbira through contact with Luganda, since speakers often refer to it as being common among speakers who have lived in or passed through Kampala, the Luganda-speaking capital. Equally, the connective *gwa* (vs. *wa* in standardized speech) for noun class 3 is at times used by Bafumbira. This also has an impact on the realization of possessive determiners, which change to *gwanjye* (instead of *wanjye*, noun class three determiner for the 1st person singular). The following examples illustrate the use of deviating subject concords in noun class three.

    (Rufumbira)

(65a)   *umubíri gurambabaza*   *u-mu-bíri*   *gu-ra-m-babaz-a*

          [umuβíri guramβaβaza]   AUG-cl3-body   cl3-DJ-1sgO-hurt-FV

          'my body hurts'

---

[64] The phonetic realization would be [ca] for the Kinyarwanda variant ＜cya-＞ and [ʧa] for the deviating Rufumbira variant ＜ca-＞.

(Rufumbira)

(65b) | *umúnsi gwashize* | | *u-mu-únsi* | *gu-a-*shir-*ye* |
| | [umúːnsi guʃize] | | AUG cl3-day | cl3-PST1-pass-PFV |
| | 'the day (just) passed' | | | |

(Luganda) (adapted from Crabtree 1923: 29)

(65c) | *omuti gugude* | | *o-mu-ti* | *gu-gude* |
| | 'the tree fell' | | AUG-cl3-tree | cl3-fall.PFV |

(Rukiga) (adapted from Rubongoya 1999: 176)

(65d) | *muti nigwo gugwire* | | *mu-ti* | *ni-gwo* | *gu-gwire* |
| | 'it is the tree that has fallen down' | | cl3-tree | COP-REL | cl3-fall.PFV |

There is however a difference between endolingual and exolingual speech events (see Porquier 1984), i.e. whether speakers of a given group only interact among each other or also with individuals beyond their group. The social meaning of both concords takes on a different connotation when used endolingually or exolingually. In endolingual communication, both are valued as suitable choices, and may be (accidental) indices of a speaker's trajectory, e.g. of having spent a considerable length of time in Kampala, exposed to a Luganda-speaking environment. When used in exolingual communication with a speaker of Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha, Luganda, or any other language, the use of either *u-* (the "standard") vs. *gu-* (the marked choice) becomes emblematic.

In endolingual communication, i.e. among speakers of Rufumbira, both forms are used interchangeably and occur in free variation, without necessarily stigmatizing the speaker in question. The choice of form cannot be predicted, and follows no particular pattern in the recorded texts. However, when speakers communicate exolingually, i.e. with interlocutors who are non-speakers of Rufumbira or have a different linguistic background, Bafumbira usually try to rectify their speech, audio recordings and written materials, and change *gu-* to *u-*,[65] since it is considered to be "Kampala speech" (Joe Haguma, March 2014). Otherwise, they can emphasize the use of *gu-* as a variant that equates to their identity as Bafumbira, in contrast to Rwandans, Congolese or educational elites who prefer the standardized Kinyarwanda form. While "Kampala speech" is perceived as a sign of lack of competence, as the language of "spoilt" third-generation Bafumbira who grew up in the capital, and as a stylish indexical feature of better-off Bafumbira, the deliberate production of the same feature can also be perceived as a positive feature of ethno-regional consciousness, and as a promotion of Rufumbira language (through emphasis on its contrastive features), as also stated by the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva (March 2016).

---

[65] The same also applies to *ya-* vs. *ga-* and *cya-* vs. *ca-*.

The realization of divergent morphology thus reveals a dialectic pragmatic representation. In a specific context, the use of the noun class three subject concord *gu-* represents different underlying ideologies, i.e. either an ideology of urbanity with language interference ("Kampala speech"), or an ideology of marking a Ugandan way of speaking through ethno-regional esoterogeny[66]. This psychologizing interpretation helps to explain inconsistencies in Rufumbira grammar, and shows how flexible speakers' communicative repertoires are (not only among Bafumbira).

As well as noun class three, the subject marker of noun class six is also affected by contact-induced variation, and reveals a second concord *ga-* alongside the common prefix *ya-* (66a). Again, the same subject marker is found in both Luganda (66b) and in Rukiga (66c). At times, the connective *ga* is also used instead of *ya* (see Section 4.1), and the possessive determiner *ganjye* [ganʤe] may be used instead of the common *yanjye*.

	(Rufumbira)				
(66a)	*amatáma g' umugabo garabyimbye*	*a-ma-táma*	*ga*	*u-mu-gabo*	*ga-ra-byimb-ye*
	[amatʰáma g(a) umugaβo garaβjimβje]	AUG-cl6-cheek	cl6:CONN	AUG-cl1-man	cl6-DJ-swell-PFV
	'the man's cheeks are swollen'				

	(Luganda)[67]				
(66b)	*amaaso go gankuba ng'omuggo*	*a-ma-aso*	*go*	*ga-n-kub-a*	*ng' o-mu-ggo*
	'your eyes will beat me like a stick'	AUG-cl6-eye	cl6:POSS2sg	cl6-1sgO-beat-FV	like AUG-cl3-stick

	(Rukiga) (Asiimwe 2014: 168)		
(66c)	*amate gabuzire*	*a-ma-te*	*ga-buz-ire*
	'milk is scarce: there is a scarcity of milk (these days)'	IV-6-milk	6-lost-PAST

One interlocutor, however, commented that "it's mostly kids, *ga-*, who use it, later when they grow up, they change" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016). While it can at times be used interchangeably in speech as a subject concord, it is less often employed as an overall subject agreement marker with demonstratives, possessives etc. When preceding the head noun as a demonstrative in the initial position of the noun phrase, *aga* is usually avoided because it coincides with a Rukiga augmentative-pejorative prefix of noun class 22 (*aga-*) (cf. Ssentanda & Asiimwe 2015[68]). Other Rufumbira speakers might ask their interlocutor: "Why are you

---

[66] The concept of esoterogeny, a core principle in the realization of linguistic distinctiveness, was further discussed in Section 4.1.

[67] This Luganda example is taken from the Ugandan musicians Radio & Weasel's popular hit song *Amaaso* (2014).

[68] See [http://typecraft.org/tc2wiki/A_comparative_analysis_of_Runyankore-Rukiga_and_Luganda_

using that *ga-*? Maybe because you don't know Rufumbira, or you did not study culture?" (Capher Nsabiyumva; see examples 67-68). The variation in noun class 3 *gu-* is less problematic since it does not evoke any negative associations, despite the fact that it reveals similarities with the prefix of noun class 20 (*ogu-*) in Rukiga, which is the singular form of noun class 22 (*aga-*) (see also Section 4.1 on evaluative noun morphology in Rufumbira). That apparent difference in the semantics of noun class three and noun class six subject agreement was commented on with the observation that "*omuti gwáguye* [the drug that fell, noun class three] ... that one is fine ... but *amata gaguye* [the milk that fell; noun class six] is not!" since it could be conceptualized as a 'large amount of milk of bad quantity' if perceived as augmentative-pejorative. If a speaker knows that his/her interlocutor knows Rukiga, the noun class 6 agreement *ga-* may become ambiguous, and sound negative. If the speaker knows that the interlocutor's knowledge of Rukiga is limited, and may assume (s)he is using *ga-* as a 'localist strategy' because others do so, it may be less ambiguous.

	(Rukiga)				
(67)	*agasheija gariye omu katare*	*a-ga-sheija*	*ga-riye*	*omu*	*ka-tare*
	'the big, ugly (coarse) men went to the market'	AUG-cl6-man	cl22-go.PFV	LOC	cl12-market

	(Rufumbira)		
(68)	*aga amazu*	*a-ga*	*a-ma-zu*
	[aga (a)mazu]	AUG-DEM1	AUG-cl6-house
	'these houses'/ 'these large unsightly houses'		

Both deviant subject markers are reconstructed for Proto-Bantu as *gu-* and *gá-* (see Schadeberg 2003: 149), and therefore constitute the more archaic morphological forms. They seem to have disappeared in languages of Bantu JD but are maintained in some JE languages (such as Luganda). Due to their occurrence not only in Luganda but also Rukiga-Runyankore, Rufumbira speakers are acquainted with the use of these agreement patterns in their repertoires. Making use of them as emblematic choices therefore does not require major conversion processes. A similarly emblematic subject marker in adjacent Kinyabwisha (DR Congo) would be the noun class 4 marker *zi-*, which has entered Kinyabwisha through Kivu Swahili, where noun class four contains this agreement marker.

A third variation in Rufumbira, which is found in the agreement patterns of subject concords, concerns a phonological variation. As stated in Chapter 3, some palatalized stops are realized as alveo-palatal affricates in Rufumbira. This also concerns the subject marker of

pronominal_agreement] (accessed 8 April 2016).

noun class seven *gi-/ki-* [ɟi/ci], which is realized as *cy(a)-* [c(a)] before vowel-initial stems or vocalic tense-aspect prefixes in the recent and remote past tense. In Rufumbira, however, *cya-* is sometimes written as *ca-* and realized with an alveo-palatal affricate [tʃa] instead of the palatal stop (see example 69).[69] Since it is restricted to phonology, this deviation in Rufumbira subject agreement is perceived as less meaningful than for instance the use of the prefixes *gu-* and *ga-*. It also occurs in many nouns, for example in Kinyarwanda *icyáha* vs. Rufumbira *ic(y)áha* ('sin'). Concerning its orthographic realization, one research participant commented "<c-y> is okay, <c-a> is also okay, even for Banyarwanda it's okay like that, it's only about the tongue" (Capher Nsabiyumva, April 2016). Speakers notice the differences in pronunciation but do not explicitly address them since they can simply be understood as free variations of the same phoneme.

(Rufumbira)

(69)   *careebekaga nk'umuziro*   ki-a-reeb-ek-ag-a   nk'   u-mu-ziro

        [tʃaréːβekaga nk'umuziɾo]   cl7-PST1-look-STAT-IMPV-FV   like   AUG-cl3-taboo

        'and it was seen like a taboo'

Object concords (as listed by Sauder 2009: 90) deviate less often from their Kinyarwanda equivalents (Kimenyi 2002), and in most cases the unmarked prefix is chosen by speakers. This means that the variants *-wu-/-u-* are usually employed as concords of class three, instead of the marked choice *-gu-*, as is the case in Luganda or Rukiga. For noun class six, the most common realization of the object concord is a prefixed *-ya-* instead of the marked choice *-ga-*. This can be explained with the fact that morphological variation is more salient when occupying the first slot, thus standing verb-initially and determining the subject. Moreover, subject concords have a higher frequency than object concords, and more frequent forms are placed higher in the borrowing hierarchy than less frequent forms (cf. Matras 2009). Subject concords are more prominent than object concords, and word-initial variants are iconic representations: if the first slot, or the first prefix, deviates, the entire word deviates from the established corresponding term. If the third or fourth affix deviates, the salience in deviation is less iconic and less demarcating.

4.2.2 On negation

While negation is a complex system of negative subject concords in Kinyarwanda, and also in other varieties such as Kirundi (Meeussen 1959) and Kinyamulenge (own fieldnotes), it has lost some of its complexity in Rufumbira.

---

[69] In analogy with this observation, demonstratives and the relative object concord also frequently reveal /tʃ/ where /c/ would otherwise be expected, based on Kinyarwanda. For some lexemes, speakers have thus adapted their orthographic representation, as in the free variations *cyane* and *cane.*

In general, there are two different negation markers, which occur in complementary distribution. The negation marker *ntaabwo* [ntaabgo] is found in main clauses, questions, and whenever clauses of coordination are constructed (which corresponds with Nurse's (2008: 23) "primary" negation marker), while the negative prefix -*ta-/-da-* is used in relative clauses, clauses of subordination, when following verbs that express wishes and requests and negative imperatives (the "secondary" negation marker). While this general complementary distribution is found across all JD60 varieties (see Nurse & Muzale 1999, Kimenyi 2002, Meeussen 1959), the main difference concerns the form of negation in main clauses. While Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kinyamulenge and Giha reveal the two negative clitic elements *si-* (1st person singular) and *nti-* (for all others; see Kimenyi 2002: 217) in pre-initial position (as described by Meeussen 1959, and by Nurse 2008: 32), Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha no longer make a difference and employ one free-standing negation marker for all subject concords and noun classes (see 70-71). This is the most commonly employed negation marker in Rufumbira.

(70) *ntaabwo nzi gutéeka ubúro*   *ntaabwo n-*ménya[70] gu-téeka   u-bu-úro*
      [ntʰaːbgo nzi gutʰéːk(a) uβuβúro]   NEG   1sg-know   INF-cook   AUG-cl14-millet
      'I cannot/don't know how to cook millet'

(71) *ntaabwo yambaraga impéta*   *ntaabwo a-ambar-ag-a   i-mpéta*
      [ntʰaːbgo yambaɾag(a) impʰeta]   NEG   3sg-wear-IMPV-FV AUG-cl9.ring
      '(s)he does not (/never) wear a ring'

There are however some elderly speakers of Rufumbira above the age of 70 or 80 who still tend to realize both the free-standing invariable negation marker and at times also the pre-initial 1st singular *si-* and *nt(i)'-*, which were rejected by younger speakers as "being too much Kinyarwanda … we don't use the *si-si-si-*, because if you say that, there is no difference with a Munyarwanda" (see examples 72-73).

This negation type is discussed in Sauder's (2009) sketch on Rufumbira and presented as the correct Rufumbira forms. Younger speakers, when asked about this striking divergence between an elderly educational elite and all other Rufumbira speakers, explained that "these people usually have that accent, I don't know why, but in Rufumbira it is *ntaabwo*. Most of them [of the educational elite] try to change it into that [pre-initial markers]" (Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016). This shows that a few older speakers, some of whom are part of the Kisoro District Language Board, seem to favor a realization close to Kinyarwanda, while most other speakers realize one mostly invariable negation marker. However, while the shortened pre-initial negation markers rarely occurred in the recorded Rufumbira data (see examples 72-

---

[70] While the infinitive is *kuménya* ('to know'), the present tense requires suppletive forms (*nzi, uzi* etc.)

73), they are entirely absent in Kinyabwisha, where only one free-standing negative marker is in use.

(72) *ntibagushiremó ubwíringire*   nti=ba-gu-shir-e=mó   u-bw-íringire
      [ntʰiβaguʃirem(o) ubgírinɟire]   NEG=3pl-2sgO-put-SBJ=ENCL   AUG-cl14-trust
      'they may no(t/ longer) put trust in you'

(73) *ndatsinda aríko sinátsinda cyane*   n-*ra-tsind-a   aríko   si=n-á-tsind-a   cyane
      [ndatsind(a) aríko sinátsinda tʃáːne]   1sg-DJ-defeat-FV   but   NEG-1sg-PST2-defeat-FV   very
      'I passed but I did not pass very well'

The Rufumbira negation marker *ntaabwo*, which occurs in main clauses, consists of the negative prefix **(n)ka/*(n)t(a)-* (see Nurse 2008) and a substitutive/relative *-bwo*. In an earlier account of Kinyarwanda, Kimenyi (1979: 186) also describes *nta* as the negative equivalent ('there is not') of *hari* ('there is'), having "no restrictions" on what types of nouns it actually negates, but treating it initially as a free-standing and negative existential copula. This correlates with Güldemann's (1999: 566) analysis of negation strategies in Bantu, which states that "in some languages we can reconstruct or even synchronically observe the genesis of pre-initial negation: It is achieved by preposing a negative copula to a finite predicate". He lists, for instance, a negative particle *nte* in Kuria, with the meaning "it is not that", and the negative copula/pre-initial particle *si* in Nyanja (ibid., p.567), concluding that "a language's negative copula and preinitial negator are homophonous or at least phonetically similar" (p.568). If we therefore classify the Rufumbira *ntaa-* (in *ntaabwo*) as a former negative copula or "negative existential" (Kimenyi 1979), at times also called an "exclusive marker" (Meeussen 1959), and see it as a free-standing negator in its origins, where did its dependent component *-bwo* emerge from?

While the free-standing *nt/ndaabwo* is not mentioned by most Kinyarwanda specialists (Botne 1983, Kimenyi 2002, Zeller 2008), it is listed by a user Bayingana (2011) in an open-source Kinyarwanda manual on the Harvard University server ELIAS[71] as a free variation to the pre-initial *nti-* in standardized Kinyarwanda. One of the examples given is the negated sentence *ntabwo nshaka kujya imuhira* ('I do not want to go home'), which contrasts with Kimenyi (2002) and others' shortened pre-initial negation marker. The dependent component *-bwo* coincides with the substitutive form of noun class 14. As has been shown in the preceding sections, noun class 14 usually contains abstract concepts and plural diminutives, but can at times also have a temporal meaning.

There is indeed an emphatic Kinyarwanda negative adverbial *ntaa-bwo* ('never'), which is compounded in analogy with *ntaa-cyó* ('nothing', noun class 7), *ntaa-wé* ('nobody',

---

[71] See [http://elias.fas.harvard.edu/units/beginning-kinyarwanda/unit-5-guciririkanya-no-guhaha-negotiation-and-shopping/grammar-types] (accessed 20 March 2016).

noun class 1) (Kimenyi 2002: 218), *ntaa-ko* ('no way/matter', noun class 15) and *ntaa-ho* ('nowhere', noun class 16) (Coupez et al. 2005: 1602-1603). While it carries a connotation of 'never' or 'not in the expected/mentioned time range' in Kinyarwanda (see ibid.), where it usually stands as a free-standing negative response to questions (see ex. 74), it has however lost its temporal semantic emphasis in Rufumbira, while the negation marker has undergone semantic broadening, turning into a general negation marker without temporal emphasis (75).

	(Kinyarwanda) (Coupez et. al 2005: 1602)					
(74)	*Uyu muúnsi urahíinga? - Ntaa bwó.*	*U-yu*	*mu-únsi*	*u-ra-híing-a? -*	*Ntaa*	*bw-ó.*
	'Will you cultivate the field today? - No. (no, never/not at all)'[72]	AUG-cl3:DEM	cl3-day	2sg-PRG-dig-FV	NEG	cl14:SUBST

	(Rufumbira)		
(75)	*ntaabwo bihuuye*	*ntaabwo*	*bi-*huur-*ye*
	[ntʰaːbgo βihuːje]	NEG	cl8-meet-PFV
	'they (the things) are different (lit.: did not meet)'		

This can to some extent be related to the Jespersen cycles of negation, as analyzed by Devos & van der Auwera (2013: 6), who give the example of the French *ne,* later reinforced with *ne…pas* and then later colloquially used as shortened *pas.* While Jespersen cycles are usually associated with double or triple negation, they can here be related to Rufumbira through the fact that the pre-initial Kinyarwanda *nt(aa)* is reinforced with the use of a semantically stronger substitutive *-bwo,* which actually expresses a temporal 'never' or 'not at all'. This then undergoes semantic broadening, or, as expressed by Jespersen (1917: 4, cited by Devos & van der Auwera 2013:206), "the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word", and then afterwards subjected to the same process again, which has not yet occurred in Rufumbira (i.e., shortening the negation marker again).

This is, however, more emblematic and complete in macro languages such as Kikongo, with two or three negators (see de Kind et al. 2013). Despite the fact that Jespersen cycles of negation are much more prominent and clearly recognizable in other languages, the development of the Rufumbira negation marker can be explained as a semantic process. When a temporal connotation of 'never' is expressed in Rufumbira, this is done with the negator *ntaabwo* and the imperfective/habitual suffix *-ag-* on the inflected verb (cf. ex. 71).

In Kinyabwisha, the equivalent *nda(a)bwo* [ndaːbgo] is used, while Kinyamulenge, Giha and other varieties use alternating pre-initial forms (1st sg. *si-* vs. other persons/classes *nti/a-*). When Kinyarwanda speakers were asked if *ntaabwo* was grammatically acceptable as

---

[72] Translation from French provided by the present author.

a negation marker when preceding an inflected verb, one answered "it is like a negation in broken English, people use it but it does not sound good, it is the broken English and the other one [*nt-*] is the better one" (as explained by Grace 'Mama', February 2016).

The other negative marker, as employed in relative or cleft clauses (see 76), or when used in want-statements with *gusháaka* ('to want, to like') (77), is no different in Rufumbira than in Kinyarwanda. While the "primary" negative is more emblematic, the "secondary" does not necessarily have to differ from that of surrounding languages. Moreover, it is described as the older form that can more clearly be traced back to Proto-Bantu (cf. Nurse 2008).

(76) *ikintu kimwe kitazáamva mu umutwe*   *i-ki-ntu*   *ki-mwe*   *ki-ta-záa-m-v-a*   *mu umutwe*
      [icintu ciŋge citazaːmva mu(u)mutkwe]   AUG-cl7-thing cl7-one   cl7-NEG-FUT-1sgO-leave-FV   LOC head
      'one thing that does not leave my head'

(77) *nsháaka utagenda*   *n-sháak-a*   *u-ta-gend-a*
      [nʃáːka utʰaɟeːnda]   1sg-want-FV   2sg-NEG-go-FV
      'I want you not to go/leave'

While Kinyarwanda reveals prefixed negation markers in all cases, in Rufumbira *ntaabwo* is shortened to *nta* when negating nouns or pronouns (see ex. 78-79), or when negative inversion takes place (see Section 4.3).

(78) *ntaa ikibazo*   *ntaa*   *i-ki-bazo*
      [ntaa (i)ciβazo]   NEG   AUG-cl7-problem
      'no problem'

(79) *ntaa icyo*   *ntaa*   *(i)-cyo*
      [ntʰaːt͡ʃo]   NEG   AUG-cl7:DEM2
      'not that one here'

Unlike in Kinyarwanda, the shortened *ntaa* can also still be realized as *ntaabwo* in Rufumbira when negating nouns, which emphasizes that it has indeed turned into a free-standing general negative marker (80). One would usually expect a construction *ibintu ntaabwo biba bihuuye* ('not all things are the same').

(80) *ntaabwo ibintu biba bihuuye*   *ntaabwo*   *i-bi-ntu*   *bi-ba*   *bi-*huur-*ye*
      [ntʰaːbg(o) iβintu βiβa βihuːje]   NEG   AUG-cl8-thing   cl8-be   cl8-meet-PFV
      'not all things are the same (have met)'

The equivalent construction in Kinyarwanda, with an emphasis on the subject ('things'), would expect a shortened form of the negation marker (*nt'-*).

The copula *ni*, which is only used with [+animate] nouns in the 3rd person singular and plural, and with nouns of classes 3-16, is negated with a copula *si* in standardized Kinyarwanda and in many other Bantu languages (see Kimenyi 2002: 135). This negative copula is prone to contact-induced change across the Bantu area and is no longer used in Rufumbira, where it has been replaced by the construction *ntaabw(o) arí* (81). This demonstrates again the multifunctional use of a free-standing negation marker *ntaabwo*. The copula in "secondary negation" type clauses (i.e., the syntactic variation when subordinate clauses are negated) remains the same in Rufumbira; there is no difference from Kinyarwanda (82).

	(Rufumbira)		
(81)	*ntaabwo arí mwíza*	*ntaabwo*	*a-ri*	*mw-íza*
	[ntaabg(o) aɾi ŋgíːza]	NEG	3sg-be	cl1-good
	'(s)he is not nice/good'		

	(Kinyarwanda/Rufumbira) (Kimenyi 1979: 183)					
(82)	*bazi kó uyú mwáana atári mugúfi*	*ba-azi*	*kó uyú*	*mwáana*	*atári*	*mugúfi*
	'they know that this child is not short'	they-know	that this	child	not be	short

4.2.3 Ma(r)king tense and aspect: A complex web of intricate differences

Tense and aspect are well documented in Kinyarwanda and have been subject to numerous studies, such as Sibomana (1974) and Kimenyi (1980, 2002), treated in more detail by Botne (1983, 1987), and to some extent also included in Nurse & Muzale's (1999) overview of Great Lakes Bantu languages. No data on either of the adjacent varieties Rufumbira or Kinyabwisha has so far been discussed, but all three languages reveal a range of intricate differences. This includes contact-induced variation as well as an enlarged set of morphosyntactic variants, for instance when expressing the present progressive aspect. This means that only a closer look at the differences between all three TAM systems can actually reveal speakers' 'localist strategies', or deliberate choices. In the following, the focus lies on divergent realizations; not all tense and aspect categories are affected, and an analysis of the unaffected categories is therefore not included, or only covered to a minor extent when necessary. A general overview of TAM markers in Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha is found in Table 4.2.

Botne (1983) differentiates semantically in his analysis of the tense-aspect system of Kinyarwanda between "simplex" tense and "complex" tense, defining them as a "vector system" (simplex) and a "segmental system" (complex) respectively. The vector system of tense describes a direction to a point of reference, the speech event, such as anterior, posterior, simultaneous etc. The segmental system describes a system of temporal intervals with different

distances to the speech event to which they are "anchored" (ibid., p. 238), ranging from remote past to remote future, and distinguishing, for instance, recent and remote through different temporal segments (marking them with high and low tone respectively; see below). While this theoretical approach to tense and aspect in Kinyarwanda is a good structural tool that has contributed to the semantic study of tense in the documentation of Kinyarwanda, it will not be included in the present description in more detail, the focus rather being on border-thinking and the linguistic differentiation of close varieties.

➤ *The general present*

The general present tense in Rufumbira does not reveal any differences from Kinyarwanda, and is marked with a zero tense prefix. The verb root therefore follows directly after the subject concord, and is followed by a final vowel -*a,* which also expresses indicative mood. While in Kinyarwanda the unmarked present tense form can also express the habitual aspect, this is not the case in Rufumbira (83). In Rufumbira, the general present is relatively rare and marks speech events that do not relate to a specific timeframe. The general present is often used with modal verbs (84), or with static verbs. The general present is also employed when speakers narrate events that are viewed in video clips, in pictures (see 85), or when they refer to event chains in stories or proverbs.

	(Kinyarwanda)			
(83)	*akóra akazi*		*a-kór-a*	*a-kazi*
	[akóɾ(a) akazi]		3sg-work-FV	AUG-cl9.work
	'(s)he (usually) works'			

	(Rufumbira)			
(84)	*nkúnda abána*		*n-kúnd-a*	*a-bána*
	[nkʰúːnd(a) aβáːna]		1sg-love-FV	AUG-child
	'I like children'			

	(Rufumbira)			
(85)	*mbona icyo igisenge*		*m-bon-a*	*icyo*	*i-gi-senge*
	[mβon(a) itʃo (i)ɟisenɟe]		1sg-see-FV	cl7:DEM	AUG-cl7-wall
	'I see (saw) a wall [in a movie]'				

➤ *The habitual aspect*

The habitual aspect, sometimes also labeled 'present imperfective' in Kinyarwanda, describes imperfective actions or events that are ongoing in the background or that are repetitive (see 86-87) and occur regularly. The suffix that expresses the habitual is -*ag-* and is found in numerous languages throughout the Bantu area (see Nurse 2008: 262-263 and Sebasoni 1967

on the use and occurrence of -*ag-), while it is commonly known that "[t]he Final -a(n)ga is often associated with IPFV" (Nurse 2003: 98). Bastin, in her overview of Interlacustrine Bantu (2003: 525-526), notes that "the prefinal [-ag-] is incompatible with the perfect final [...] and marks habitual except in Tembo and Hunde". Nurse & Muzale (1999: 524-525) list -anga or -aga for Great Lakes Bantu, while they state for Kinyarwanda that "Rwanda -aga is restricted to past progressive ('doing something all day/month long') as Rwanda does not seem to distinguish progressive and habitual".

The prefinal -ag- is a recurrent feature in Kinyabwisha (DR Congo), but it is not used as consistently for habituals as it is in Rufumbira; it is quasi absent in standardized Kinyarwanda and Kirundi. Habitual or repetitive events in both of the latter are therefore often specified with temporal adverbials such as *buri (u)munsi* ('everyday') and others. The official variety of Kinyarwanda, as taught in schools, marks the habitual aspect with a zero prefix, which coincides with the general present tense. While more recent studies mention -ag- as a habitual form in Kinyarwanda (see Ngoboka & Zeller 2015), the established Kinyarwanda grammars (Sibomana 1974, Kimenyi 1980, 2002) do not include it at all.

This correlates with Doris Sauder's analysis of Rufumbira (2009: 81-82), which seems to some extent be oriented at standardized Kinyarwanda, and which does not list -ag- but only mentions the unmarked Kinyarwanda habitual. Sauder only mentions a suffix -ag- that expresses "what you habitually did in the past" and is thus suffixed to recent or remote past tense forms; however, it was rejected by speakers in this limited form (own fieldnotes).

Examples (86-87a) demonstrate the use of the habitual in Rufumbira, while (87b) shows an auxiliary construction in Kinyabwisha (DR Congo). While such auxiliary constructions with -*kúnda* ('to love, like') are equally correct in Rufumbira (although they would more often be used in the present tense than the immediate past), they are even more commonly used across the border.

	(Rufumbira)					
(86)	*abagore benshi bakóraga mu imirima*	a-ba-gore	ba-inshi	ba-kór-ag-a	mu i-mi-rima	
	[aβagoɾe βenshi βakóɾaga mu(i)miɾima]	AUG-cl2-woman	cl2-QUANT	cl2-work-IMPV-FV	LOC AUG-cl4-field	
	'many women usually work on the fields'					

	(Rufumbira)			
(87a)	*yambaraga ingufire níni*	a-ambar-ag-a	i-n-gufire	níni
	[jambaɾag(a) ingufiɾe níni]	3sg-wear-IMPV-FV	AUG-cl9-hat	cl9.large
	'(s)he usually wears a large hat'			

	(Kinyabwisha)			
(87b)	*akúnze kwambara ingófero iníni*	a-*kúnd-*ye	kw-ambara	i-n-gófero	iníni
	[akúːnze kwambaɾ(a) ingófeɾo (i)níni]	3sg-love-PFV	INF-wear	AUG-cl9-hat	cl9.large
	'(s)he usually wears a large hat'			

Many speakers of Kinyarwanda know and employ *-ag-* when expressing habitual actions. It is however mostly perceived as a non-standard "up-country" feature, and thus avoided when prestigious language use is intended. This is not unique to Kinyarwanda; in languages such as Kiswahili, too, it is stigmatized as a "non-standard" or "defective" feature.

An additional feature of Rufumbira is the frequent use of applicatives in combination with habitual actions (*-ir*+*aga/-er*+*aga*), which is not found in Kinyarwanda. Speakers would often explain this as something which "was borrowed from Luganda", which then marks a difference between the Kinyarwanda sentence *nsoma ku university* ('I study at a university') and the Rufumbira equivalent *nsomeraga ku university* ('I study at/from a unversity'). It is also possible that this structure has entered Rufumbira through Ugandan English, where the same calqued applicative is also found in expressions such as *to eat from a place, to swim from a lake* or *to study from a university* (cf. Nassenstein 2016b).

► *The present progressive aspect*

The present progressive aspect deviates from the null prefix in standardized Kinyarwanda, where no morphological progressive marker is found (as *-ra-* serves as a disjoint marker). In Rufumbira, the present progressive is expressed periphrastically with a form of *kuba* [kuβa] ('to be') and a following infinitive (see examples 88a-88b). According to Nurse & Muzale (1999: 522), this is a recurrent pattern in Great Lakes Bantu, which "derives from an older or underlying two-word construction 'be (locative) plus verbal noun=infinitive/*-li* + *ku-*'", while they do not list it as a feature of Rwanda-Rundi.

However, this very construction is said to be used in the Northern Rwandan dialect Kirera and also in Kinyabwisha. Moreover, a similar construction is found in Rukiga, where it is used contrastively in participial constructions, while there also exists an 'indicative continuous progressive', according to Turamyomwe (2011: 63). Meanwhile, in Rufumbira, only the equivalent to a 'participial present continuous' in Rukiga is used, to put it in Turamyomwe's terms (see 89). Interestingly, it is glossed as an aspect prefix *-riku-*, while the more canonical view among Bantuists would be to consider it as one element *-ri* with a following infinitive prefix.

(88a)	*akána karí kuréeba hanze*		*a-ka-ána*	*ka-rí*	*ku-réeba*	*hanze*
	[aká:na karí kure:βa hanze]		AUG-cl12-child	cl12-be	INF-look	outside
	'the small child is looking outside'					

(88b)	*barí kunaba mu amazi yashúushe*		*ba-rí*	*ku-naba*	*mu*	*a-ma-azi*	*i-a-*shúush(y)-*ye*
	[βarí kunaβa mu (a)maz(i) aʃú:ʃe]		3pl-be	INF-wash	LOC	AUG-cl6-water	cl6-PST1-heat-PFV
	'they are bathing in hot water'						

(Rukiga) (Turamyomwe 2011: 63)

(89)	*orikugamba ahunane*		o-riku	gamb-a	a-hunan-e
	'let that one who is talking be quiet'		2sg-PARTC	talk-FV	3sg-be.quiet-SBJV

While being considered a non-standard construction in Kinyarwanda, it is considered an emblematic feature of "correct" Rufumbira in Kisoro District. The same is described by Sauder (2009), who first writes the inflected form of *kuba* and the infinitive as one word, and then in a revised form as composed of two words, in accordance with the decisions of the Language Board, although here she calls it "present tense". When comparing this with example (89), the orthographic resemblance with Rukiga becomes obvious.

> Since writing this book, a Language Board approved change was to write the present tense as two words. Therefore, after the verb <u>ri</u>, [author's highlight] when the next verb is the full verb and not a stem, this second verb must be written separately. For example:
> <u>Bari guteguura</u> umurima. "They are preparing a garden."
> Inkoko zoose <u>ziri gukozoza</u>. "All the chickens are clucking." (Sauder 2009: 1)

When used with the passive suffix *-w-*, the periphrastic progressive construction was often rejected by speakers and considered ungrammatical, while they suggested that using *-ra-* would sound better (see 90a-90b). However, it becomes clear in (90b) that *-ra-* is by no means a progressive marker but a disjoint marker here, and speakers' rejection of the construction is based on the fact that a passive state is not perceived as being progressive-continuous, and would trigger a more inchoative immediate past marker (90b).

(90a)	**ikintu kirí gukúndwa*		**i-ki-ntu*	*ki-rí*	*gu-*kúnd-w-a*
	[icintʰu ciri gukúːnzgwa]		AUG-cl7-thing	cl7-be	INF-love-PASS-FV
	'this thing is appreciated'				

(90b)	*ikintu kirakúnzwe*		*i-ki-ntu*	*ki-ra-*kúnd-w-*ye*
	[icintʰu cirakúːnzgwe]		AUG-cl7-thing	cl7-DJ-love-PASS-PFV
	'this thing is appreciated/has recently been appreciated'			

Older speakers confirmed that nowadays the vast majority of Bafumbira would use the complex inflected form (*kuba)* and the infinitive, although there are still a few old people (>80 years) who use the aspect prefix *-ra-* (Joe Haguma, April 2014). In general, however, the prefix *-ra-* does not occur on its own in Rufumbira, although it can stand in a complex construction preceding a second inflected verb with a perfective suffix (see 91) in order to express a strong continuity. Botne (1983: 239) emphasizes that *-ra-* in Kinyarwanda has many functions, besides serving as an aspectual marker, namely in order to express focus, and also – as discussed in the syntactic analyis in Section 4.3 – as a disjoint marker.

(91) *baratinya batinye bumva kandi igisimba*   ba-ra-tiny-a   ba-tiny-*ye ba-umv-a   kandi i-gi-simba
      [βaratinja βatinje βuːmva kand(i) iɟisimba]   3pl-PRG-fear-FV 3pl-fear-PFV 3pl-hear-FV even AUG-cl7-animal
      'they are continously scared hearing even an animal'

Another variation of the common periphrastic progressive (*-rí* + infinitive) which often occurs in Rufumbira makes use of a locative marker *mu* in between the inflected form of *kuba* and the following infinitive (92-93).

(92) *imvura irí mu kugwa*   i-m-vura   i-rí   mu   ku-gwa
      [imvura irí mu kugwa]   AUG-cl9-rain   cl9-be   LOC   INF-fall
      'the rain is (in the state of) falling'

(93) *abagore barí mu guhínga*   a-ba-gore   ba-rí   mu   gu-hínga
      [aβagore baɾi mu guhíːŋga]   AUG-cl2-woman   3pl-be   LOC   INF-cultivate
      'the women are in the process of cultivating'

This form emphasizes the continuity of an imperfective and ongoing event and has entered Rufumbira through speakers' grammatical borrowing from the neighboring Bantu language Rukiga, where a similar emphatic construction exists (94). Apart from 'indicative continuous progressive' vs. 'participial present continuous' constructions in Rukiga, as described by Turamyomye (2011, see above), there is also another way of expressing the progressive by including a locative marker, which

> conforms with Bastin's (1989a) observation who points out that numerous Bantu languages in one way or another derive from the construction /*li* + *mu* + *ku*/ to form progressive. He explains that /li/ is the locative verb 'be', /mu/ is the locative prefix and /ku/ marks the infinitive. Bastin's observation fits well with *ri* + *mu* + *ku* progressive construction in Rukiga where we see the subject prefix coming first and next to it we see the auxiliary verb *ri* being followed immediately by locative marker *mu*. Next to it, we see the infinitive marker *ku* preceding the verb stem and lastly the final vowel. (Turayomye 2011: 87)

      (Rukiga) (Turayomye 2011: 87)
(94) *abakiga barimukukora*   a-ba-kiga   ba-ri-mu-ku-kor-a
      'The Bakiga are working right now.'   IV-cl2-Kiga.people   cl2-AUX-LOC-INF-work-FV

While some Kinyarwanda speakers stated that constructions of this kind were common in (colloquial) Northern dialects within Rwanda, Rufumbira speakers employ this construction in order to mark actions or events that are currently being carried out with an emphasis on the continuity of the action/event, in contrast with more general progressive forms without a locative marker. When speakers were asked whether the use of a *mu*-progressive was a conscious

choice, they would often declare it to be a common Rufumbira construction, which has always existed."[73]

All speakers employing this construction, however, also had at least a basic knowledge of Rukiga. The existence of two progressive forms with a distinction between two states of ongoing events (with/without locative) was described by speakers as "enriching the language", and was possibly seen as being derived from Rukiga (Joe Haguma, April 2014). Due to most speakers' knowledge of Rukiga, several morphosyntactic features are often metatypically copied from one language to the other, "restructur[ing] the grammar of one language on the model of the other wholesale" (Ross 2007: 116); this exceeds single instances of grammatical borrowing since it relates to the entire morphosyntactic type of a language. According to Turamyomye (2011: 88), present progressive constructions differ in Rukiga and Runyankore, despite the close genetic relationship between the two languages. The above-discussed emphatic progressive construction is not available in Runyankore, and is therefore seen as an emblematic feature of Rukiga. The emblematicity of this structure is maintained when copied by Rufumbira speakers through metatypy, since it already incorporates distinctiveness on its own in Rukiga (contrasting with Runyankore).

Both, or even all three (including -ra-) progressive forms can be used in Rufumbira in one sentence when the narrative chain of events underlines an increasingly continuous action (95). This shows that Bafumbira, despite their striving for linguistic distinction, are not at all limited to using only "Rufumbira grammar", but that their broad repertoires also allow mixed patterns of morphosyntactic realizations that are found in Kinyarwanda, Rufumbira and Rukiga.

(95)	*baríruka, barí kwíruka, barí mu kwíruka*	ba-ra-íruk-a	ba-rí kw-íruka,	ba-rí	mu	kw-íruka
	[βaríruka, βarí kʍíruka βarí mu kʍíruka]	3pl-PRG-run-FV	3pl-be INF-run	3pl-be	LOC	INF-run
	'they run, they are running, they are currently running'					

---

[73] Elderly speakers of Kinyabwisha were also aware of this construction, and explained it as *"vraiment être dans l'action"* [being in/within an action], in contrast to the common progressive *"être en train de faire quelque chose"* [right now doing something], when Rufumbira recordings were played to them (Muzee Niyibizi, Rutshuru/DR Congo, September 2014). The use of this emphatic progressive with the locative *mu* could not, however, be ascertained for Kinyabwisha, and did not occur in any of the recordings. This underlines the hypothesis that it entered Rufumbira from Rukiga. Certain Rufumbira-speaking interlocutors, however, commented on this construction that "we do not have this *mu* in Rufumbira, it must be Kinyarwanda" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016), which makes its realization look like a highly idiolectal feature.

➤ *The near future, the distal future and the prospective aspect*

Kinyarwanda, Kirundi and all other JD60 varieties have two future tenses and one prospective aspect which refers to actions or events that are about to begin. The near future is invariable in Rufumbira, standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha, since it can be expressed with the prefix -*ra*- in all three varieties (96-97).

(96)	*turabonana*		*tu-ra-bon-an-a*
	[turaβonana]		1pl-FUT1-see-REC-FV
	'we will (shortly) see each other'		

(97)	*ndaza*		*n-*ra-z-a*
	[ndaza]		1pl-FUT1-come-FV
	'I will come soon'		

The distal future is formed with the invariable prefix -*záa*-/-*zaa*- in all three adjacent varieties (see 98). In Kirundi, Ha and Kinyamulenge, slight variations (including vowel change to -*o*-) occur. There are however specific differences in how the distal future is used in Rufumbira compared to standardized Kinyarwanda, apart from the varying prosody among speakers (most often realized with HT in both varieties; yet, by some speakers with HT in Rufumbira/LT in Kinyarwanda). It seems that the near future tense that is therefore bound to a hodiernal scale in Kinyarwanda, is no longer limited to hodiernal events in Rufumbira. This leads to a more extended usage of the near future -*ra*- in Rufumbira in cases where speakers of standardized Kinyarwanda would employ the distal future -*záa/zaa*-. This relates especially to post-hodiernal events that are going to take place one or two days after the speech act. Example (99a) shows that the post-hodiernal event requires the remote future -*záa*- in Kinyarwanda, while in Rufumbira the near future marker -*ra*- can be employed (99b).

(98)	*inka zizáapfa*		*i-n-ka*	*zi-záa-pf-a*	
	[inkʰa zizáːpɸa]		AUG-cl10-cow	cl10-FUT2-die-FV	
	'the cows are going to die'				

(Kinyarwanda)

(99a)	*abána bazáateeka ibishyimbo*		*a-ba-ána*	*ba-záa-teek-a*	*i-bi-shyimbo*
	[aβáːna βazáːteːk(a) iβiçimbo]		AUG-cl2-child	3pl-FUT2-cook-FV	AUG-cl8-bean
	'the children will cook beans (tomorrow)'				

(Rufumbira)

(99b)	*abána baratéeka ibishyimbo*		*a-ba-ána*	*ba-ra-téek-a*	*i-bi-shyimbo*
	[aβáːna βaɾatʰéːk(a) iβiʃimbo]		AUG-cl2-child	3pl-FUT1-cook-FV	AUG-cl8-bean
	'the children will cook beans (today/tomorrow)'				

However, the prospective aspect is realized differently in all three varieties. It stands in contrast to retrospective aspect, according to Comrie (1976: 64-65), is sometimes called 'proximative', as by Heine (1994), or may as a more general term be referred to as 'inceptive' aspect. In Rufumbira, it is formed with a verb -*enda* [eːnda], not to be confused with the verb stem -*genda* [ɟeːnda] 'to go', although it must have been grammaticalized from this same root, as kind of a 'doublet'.

Coupez et al. (2005: 437) also list a verb root -*eend-* for standardized Kinyarwanda with the meaning "*être sur le point de se produire, d'apparaître*" [to be on the point of happening, of appearing], which fits the grammaticalized function of the prospective. They give the example *ndenda kugenda* ('I am about to go'), which is realized as *nenda kugenda* in Rufumbira, with a different tense-aspect marker on the -*enda* verb form. What may at first sight look like a different application of the 'Ganda Law' or 'Meinhof Law', a phonological rule common to most interlacustrine Bantu languages (cf. Bastin 2003: 511), is actually only a divergent preference for tense-aspect marking, in Kinyarwanda with the progressive -**ra*- and in Rufumbira with the zero-marked simple present (see 100a-100b). Another example of the Rufumbira realization is found in (101).

	(Kinyarwanda) (Coupez et al. 2005: 437)		
(100a)	*ndenda kugenda*	*n-*ra-end-a*	*ku-genda*
	[ndeːnda kuɟeːnda]	1sg-PRG-be.about-FV	INF-go
	'I am about to go'		

	(Rufumbira)		
(100b)	*nenda kugenda*	*n-end-a*	*ku-genda*
	[neːnda kuɟeːnda]	1sg-be.about-FV	INF-go
	'I am about to go'		

(101)	*gisa nicyenda kubafata*	*gi-s-a*	*ni-ki-end-a*	*ku-ba-fata*
	[ɟisa niceːnda kuβafata]	cl7-seem-FV	COND-cl7-be.about-FV	INF-3plO-grab
	'it looks like it is about to grab them'			

In contrast, Kinyabwisha speakers use a perfective form -*giye* of the motion verb -*genda/-jya* ('to go') (102). While Heine's (1994) 'proximative' is mainly described as being derived from verbs that express 'to want', the more general inceptive can be grammaticalized from a range of verbs, but can at times also describe a "state-after-coming-into-being", as well as the more specific "state-just-before or at-its-inception" (Nurse 2008: 162), while no clear account is given for the function of the prospective.

(102) *imvura igiye kugwa* i-m-vura i-*gend-*ye ku-gwa

[imvuɾa igije kugʍa] AUG-cl9-rain cl9-go-PFV INF-fall

'the rain is about to fall'

Apart from the formation of the prospective with the verb -*enda*, there is a more periphrastic possibility of expressing the prospective in Rufumbira with an inflected form of the copula (*kuba*) and the temporal adverbial *bugufi* ('shortly, after a short while'), which is an equivalent strategy to the prefixation of aspect markers (103a-b). In Kinyarwanda, the periphrastic prospective is usually expressed with the local adverbial *hafi* ('near, nearby'), as also noted by Coupez et al. (2005), which is semantically close to the Rufumbira realization; however, it shows that speakers make use of a different adverbial strategy (104). Speakers of Kinyabwisha stated that they did not favor the periphrastic construction, saying "*le mieux c'est 'inga zigiye gupfa' ou par tolerance aussi 'inga zirí hafi gupfa'*" [the best is *inga zigiye gupfa,* or, as a measure of tolerance also *inga zirí hafi gupfa*], which is identical with the Kinyarwanda realization (105).

(Rufumbira)

(103a) *inka zirí bugufi gupfa* i-n-ka zi-rí bu-gufi gu-pfa

[inkʰa ziɾí bugufi gupfa] AUG-cl10-cow cl10-be cl14-short INF-die

'the cows are about to die'

(Rufumbira)

(103b) *inka zirenda gupfa* i-n-ka zi-ra-end-a gu-pfa

[inkʰa ziɾeːnda gupfa] AUG-cl10-cow cl10-FUT1-be.about-FV INF-die

'the cows are about to die'

(Kinyarwanda)

(104) *inka zirí hafi gupfa* i-n-ka zi-rí hafi gu-pfa

[inkʰa ziɾi hafi gupfa] AUG-cl10-cow cl10-be near INF-die

'the cows are about to die'

(Kinyabwisha)

(105) *inga zirí hafi gupfa* i-n-ga zi-rí hafi gu-pfa

[inga ziɾi hafi gupfa] AUG-cl10-cow cl10-be near INF-die

'the cows are about to die'

► *The immediate past, the recent past and the remote past tense*

The immediate past, called the 'perfective present' by Kimenyi (2002: 190), and the 'present perfective' by Ngoboka & Zeller (2015), is frequently used in Kinyarwanda (see Kimenyi 2002; see also Nurse & Muzale 1999: 525-526). In contrast, it is rarely used in Rufumbira.

Morphologically, it uses the present tense subject concords (2ⁿᵈ person singular *u-*, 3ʳᵈ person singular *a-*) and the perfective suffix (*-ye*), which is realized as *-ire* in numerous other Bantu languages. The same applies to Kinyabwisha, where it seems to be at least as scarce as in Rufumbira, and even on the verge of no longer being used at all (own fieldnotes). Examples where the immediate past or perfective present is still in use in Rufumbira are given in (106-107). In most of these rare cases the verb has a present tense meaning. However, when elicited, verb forms in the immediate past were rejected as ungrammatical, as for instance with **mbonye* ('I just saw') or **nkoze* ('I just did'). These were classified as Kinyarwanda forms and therefore as non-existent in Rufumbira. Often when speakers consciously produced these forms, they would tend to add *niho* ('now and there…') which made the construction sound "more like Rufumbira" (107). In general, Bafumbira prefer an auxiliary construction based on the verb *kumara* ('to finish'), which functions as shown in (108-109), expressing an action/event that has just been completed.

(106a) *dusomye mu ishúuri*   *du-som-ye   mu   i-shúuri*
        [dusomje mu (i)ʃúːri]   1pl-study-PFV LOC   AUG-cl9.school
        'we (just) learnt/learn in school…'

(106b) *ngezeyó*   *n-*ger-*ye = yó*
        [nɟezejo]   1sg-arrive-PFV = LOC
        'I have just reached'[74]

(107)   *nihó natánditse gukóra*   *ni = hó   na-tándik-*ye   gu-kóra*
        [nihó nataːnditse gukóra]   then = cl16   1sg-begin-PFV   INF-work
        '[now and there] I just began to work'

(108)   *maze gutándika gukóra*   *(m)-*mar-*ye   gu-tándika   gu-kóra*
        [maze gutʰáːndika gukóra]   1sg-finish-PFV   INF-begin   INF-work
        'I just began to work'

(109)   *umukobwa amaze kujya ku ishúuri*   *u-mu-kobwa   a-*mar-*ye   ku-jya   ku   i-shúuri*
        [umukobga amaze kuʒa ku (i)ʃúːri]   AUG-cl1-girl   3sg-finish-PFV INF-go   LOC   AUG-school
        'the girl just finished (going to) school'

There is a general distinction between a recent past tense and a remote past tense in Rufumbira, based on tonal patterns, with the prefix *-a-* for the recent past tense (110-112) and the prefix *-á-* for the remote past tense (see examples 113-115) The same distinction is found in

---

[74] The equivalent in Kinyarwanda would be *nahageze,* with the locative class (16) prefixed as object marker to the verb root.

Kinyarwanda, while Kinyabwisha reveals more salient differences. Kinyarwanda, however, distinguishes between conjoint and disjoint forms, which are no longer realized in Rufumbira for the recent past tense (cf. 111a vs. 111b). The distinction has only been maintained for the remote past tense, as discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.5. The same tonal difference between recent and remote past tense also exists in forms of the copula (113).

(110) *mu igitondo twahuuye*   *mu*   *i-gi-tondo*   *tu-a-*huur-*ye*
       [mu (i)ɟitondo tkwahuːje]   LOC   AUG-cl7-morning   1pl-PST1-meet-PFV
       'this morning we met'

(111a) *inka zanyoye*   *i-n-ka*   *zi-a-*nyw-*ye*
       [inkʰa zanjoje]   AUG-cl10-cow   cl10-PST1-drink-*PFV
       'the cows recently drank'

(111b) *inka zanyoye amazi*   *i-n-ka*   *zi-a-*nyw-*ye*   *a-ma-zi*
       [inkʰa zanjoj(e) amazi]   AUG-cl10-cow   cl10-PST1-drink-*PFV   AUG-cl6-water
       'the cows recently drank water'

(112) *nasomye igi igitabo uyu umúnsi*   *n-a-som-*ye*   *igi*   *i-gi-tabo*   *uyu*   *u-mu-únsi*
       [nasomje iɟi (i)ɟitaβo uju (u)múːnsi] 1sg-PST1-read-PFV DEM   AUG-cl8-book DEM   AUG-cl3-school
       'I read this book today'

(113) *nárakubonye*   *na-á-ra-ku-bon-ye*
       [narakuβonye]   1sg-PST2-DJ-2sgO-see-PFV
       'I saw you (a long time ago)'

(114a) *bárasomye*   *ba-á-ra-som-ye*
       [βárasomje]   3pl-PST2-DJ-read-PFV
       'they read (long ago)'

(114b) *básomye igitabo*   *ba-á-∅-som-ye*   *i-gi-tabo*
       [βásomj(e) iɟitaβo]   3pl-PST2-CJ-read-PFV   AUG-cl7-book
       'they read a/the book (long ago)'

(115) *imvura yári nyínshi*   *i-m-vura*   *i-á-ri*   *n-ínshi*
       [imvuɾa jári ɲíːnʃi]   AUG-cl9-rain   cl9-PST2-be   cl9-QUANT
       'the rain was a lot/strong (long ago)'

Both past tenses describe actions that are no longer ongoing, with the recent past tense limited to a hodiernal timeframe, and the remote past to a pre-hodiernal timeframe. This means that

the recent past covers actions or events that took place on the same day (as the act of speaking), while the remote past refers to incidents that occurred several days or weeks, or even up to years before. Both can equally take an imperfective pre-final suffix -*ag*-, which has already been discussed as the habitual aspect (116a-b).

In Kinyarwanda, -*ag*- is not considered to be part of the standard language and is not mentioned by Kimenyi (2002, 2009 etc.), although Zeller & Ngoboka (2015) do mention it. Kinyarwanda speakers often avoided past imperfective forms with -*ag*- in favor of past auxiliary forms as in *nari nkúnze kubona uríiya umugabo* (lit.: 'I had liked seeing that man') instead of *nábonaga uríiya umugabo* ('I usually saw that man long ago'), as an example of normative and standardized Kinyarwanda. While the imperfective suffix (the pre-final) -*ag*-, in combination with the unmarked recent past (-*a*-), usually expresses an iterative connotation of a repeated action that has occurred recently, it takes a habitual connotation with the marked remote past (-*á*-), expressing background states.

(116a)	*buri igitondo abakobwa basekaga*		*buri*	*i-gi-tondo*	*a-ba-kobwa*	*ba-a-sek-ag-a*
	[βuri (i)ɉitondo aβakobga βasekaga]		QUANT	AUG-cl7-morning	AUG-cl2-woman	3pl-PST1-laugh-IMPV-FV
	'the women laughed repeatedly these mornings'					

(116b)	*násomaga buri umúnsi*		*n-á-som-ag-a*	*buri*	*u-mu-únsi*	
	[násomaga βuri (u)múːnsi]		1sg-PST2-read-IMPV-FV	QUANT	AUG-cl3-day	
	'I used to read/study everyday (long ago)'					

As becomes evident, both past tenses require a word-final perfective suffix *-*ye* which corresponds with Proto-Bantu *-*ile*. The perfect stems of verbs follow a specific pattern in their formation, as described by Sauder (2009: 101), and do not differ from the equivalent forms in Kinyarwanda:

Rules regarding changes made to verb ending with -ye perfective ending
- one-syllable verb stems and b, m and n take -ye as the perfective ending
- d, r and g change to z
- k changes to ts
- t changes to s (except for -fite "have" and gutwiita "get pregnant")
- s changes to sh (Sauder 2009:101)

The realization of perfective suffixes therefore follows a regular pattern, which does not deviate in either of the closely related varieties. There is however a major difference in tense between Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira, as Rufumbira on a syntactic level does not have all of the conjoint-disjoint markers that are found in Kinyarwanda. The most salient differences between conjoint-disjoint markers in Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda will be discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.5.

Table 4.5 summarizes the tense-aspect system in Rufumbira in contrast with standardized Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha. Most tense-aspect distinctions that are made in all three varieties are included in this paradigmatic overview, including those where there are no differences between the varieties.[75] Conditional forms are not included and will be discussed elsewhere.

In the course of the present study, which also included numerous interviews with Kinyarwanda-speaking and Kinyabwisha-speaking individuals, it became evident that speakers have a vast knowledge of the equivalent tense and aspect forms that are used by their neighbors, due to the emblematic value of differing strategies. It is moreover worth noting that the table below, when shown to speakers who considered themselves to be Bafumbira or Banyabwisha, would evoke feelings of satisfaction due to the apparent evidence that there are major differences between the three language varieties, which is often denied by official authorities that promote standardized Kinyarwanda. Border thinking and linguistic differentiation are often based on strong positive or negative emotions, and this is true again in the range of temporal and aspectual differences, because the speakers' distinctive concepts of identity are at stake.

TAM category	Rufumbira	Kinyarwanda[76]	Kinyabwisha
distal future tense	-záa- (pref.)	-záa- (pref.)	-záa- (pref.)
near future tense	-ra- (pref.)	-ra- (pref.)	-ra- (pref.)
prospective aspect	-enda + INF	-enda + INF	-giye + INF
	-ri + bugufi + INF	-ri + hafi + INF	-ri + hafi + INF
general present tense	∅	∅	∅
present progressive aspect	-ri + INF	∅	-ri + INF
	-ri + mu + INF[77]		
	(-ra-) (pref.)		

---

[75] The present overview is based on Kimenyi (2002) for Kinyarwanda, and my own fieldwork data for Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha. Cross-checking with Kinyarwanda speakers revealed that specific features such as the habitual/imperfective suffix -ag- are common features in spoken Kinyarwanda whereas they are rejected in the standardized written form, as also shown in Kimenyi's analyses (1980, 2002, 2009, among others).

[76] The Kinyarwanda overview that is provided is based on Kimenyi (2002) and for the imperfective aspect also on Zeller & Ngoboka (2015) as the only available source, marked in brackets. As also indicated by Rufumbira speakers, "Banyarwanda avoid -aga" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016).

[77] This form is not to be confused with the similar construction -ri=mó + INF, as in arimó gusoma ('he is inside, studying') in Kinyabwisha, which is not a progressive construction but uses a locative enclitic attached to the auxiliary verb kuba. A progressive equivalent would be arimó aragénda ('he is really/indeed going') or arimó kwígisha ('he is really/indeed studying right now'), which also exists in Kinyarwanda.

habitual aspect	*-ag-*	∅	*-ag-*
	-kúnda + INF		*-kúnda* + INF
persistive aspect	*-cya-* [tʃáː] (pref.)	*-cya-* [cáː] (pref.)	*-cya-* [tʃáː] (pref.)
'no longer' aspect	*-ki*/*gi-* [ci/ɟi] (pref.)	*-ki*/*gi-* [ci/ɟi] (pref.)	*-ki*/*gi-* [ki/gi] (pref.)
immediate past[78]	(∅ + *-ye*)	∅ + *-ye*	(∅ + *-ye*)
	-aze + INF		*-aze* + INF
recent past imperfective	*-a-* + *-aga*	(*-a-* + *-aga*)	*-a-* + *-aga*
recent past perfective	*-a-* + *-ye*	*-a-* + *-ye*	*-a-* + *-ye*
remote past imperfective	*-á-* + *-aga*	(*-á-* + *-aga*)	*-ra-* + *-aga*
remote past perfective	*-á-* + *-ye*	*-á-* + *-ye*	*-ra-* + *-ye*
anterior/pluperfect aspect	*-a-*+*ri* *-a-*+*-ye*	*-a-*+*ra*+*ri* *-a-*+*-ye*	*-a-*+*ri* *-a-*+*-ra-*+*-ye*[79]

Table 4.5: Overview of tense-aspect categories in Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha

4.2.4 The copula and its variants

While the copula *ni* is recurrent in all JD60 varieties, the negative copula *si* only occurs in standardized Kinyarwanda, and is realized differently in Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha, as already discussed. The inflected auxiliary forms of *kuba* ('to be') also deviate to some extent, especially in the past and future tense, as shown in (117a-117b) and (118a-118b).

For the recent past tense, there is an emblematic difference in the realization of the first person singular (Rufumbira *naríndi* vs. Kinyarwanda *nari*) (117) and the first person plural (Rufumbira *twari turi* vs. Kinyarwanda *twari*). In both constructions, Rufumbira requires a doubling of past and present tense markers that give birth to a new form. For the remote past tense there are a few differences again, for example relating to the first person singular (Rufumbira *nárindi* vs. Kinyarwanda *nári*), the third person singular (Rufumbira *yárari* vs. Kinyarwanda *yári*), and the first person plural (Rufumbira *twári turi* vs. Kinyarwanda *twári*), among others; see also Table 4.6. These differences are omitted when forms of 'to have' are expressed, as for instance in *nari mfite imódoka* ('I had a car'), which is realized identically in Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda.

> (Rufumbira)
>
> (117a) *naríndi umwígiisha*   *n-a-ríndi*   *u-mw-ígiisha*
>
>   [naríːnd(i) umíːgiːʃa]   1sg-PST1-be   AUG-cl1-teacher
>
>   'I was a teacher (recently)'

---

[78] Also known and treated as the 'present perfective'.

[79] An example of the anterior or pluperfect would be *twari twakoze akazi/umurimo* ('we had already done the work') in Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda, and *twari twarakoze umurimo* in Kinyabwisha.

(Kinyarwanda)

(117b) *nari umwarimu*   n-a-ri   u-mw-arimu

  [naɾ(i) uɱgaɾimu]   1sg-PST1-be AUG-cl1-teacher2

  'I was a teacher (recently)'

Another remarkable exception is the first person singular distal future *nzáabandi* in Rufumbira in contrast with Kinyarwanda *nzáaba* (118a-118b), revealing the same doubling of the distal future and present tense forms as already shown for the past tense.

(Rufumbira)

(118a) *nzáabandi inshuti yawe*   n-záa-ba-ndi   i-n-shuti   yawe

  [nzáːβand(i) inʃutі̥ jaːʍe]   1sg-FUT2-be-1sg:be AUG-cl9-friend cl9:POSS2sg

  'I am going to be your friend'

(Kinyarwanda)

(118a) *nzáaba inshuti yawe*   n-záa-ba   i-n-shuti   yawe

  [nzáːβ(a) inʃutі̥ jaːʍe]   1sg-FUT2-be   AUG-cl9-friend cl9:POSS2sg

  'I am going to be your friend'

Due to the high frequency of the copula and the equivalent suppletive forms, differences between dialects become highly emblematic, and speakers are aware of divergent realizations. This became evident when Bafumbira were asked to produce Rufumbira forms; they could often also list the Kinyarwanda equivalents at the same time.

  In the paradigmatic overview (Table 4.3), the first and second person singular are usually provided, unless other irregularities occur (as for instance in the past tenses). All of the Rufumbira forms are, unlike the Kinyarwanda forms, negated with a preceding negative marker *ntáabwo*.

Tense	*Rufumbira*	*Kinyarwanda*	*Kinyabwisha*
distal future tense	*nzáabandi* (1ˢᵗ sg)	*nzáaba*	*nzáaba*
	uzáaba (2ⁿᵈ sg) etc.	*uzáaba* etc.	*uzáaba* etc.
general present tense	*ndi* (1ˢᵗ sg)	*ndi*	*ndi*
	uri (2ⁿᵈ sg)	*uri*	*uri*
	ni (3ʳᵈ sg) etc.	*ni* etc.	*ni* etc.
habitual aspect	*mbaga* (1ˢᵗ sg)	∅	*mbaga* (1ˢᵗ sg)
	ubaga (2ⁿᵈ sg) etc.	∅	*ubaga* etc.
immediate past	∅	∅	*nari* (1ˢᵗ sg)
			waruri (2ⁿᵈ sg) etc.
recent past	*naríndi* (1ˢᵗ sg)	*nari*	*nabaye*
	waruri (2ⁿᵈ sg)	*wari*	*wabaye*

	yarari (3rd sg)	*yari*	*yabaye*
	twari turi (1st pl)	*twari*	*twabaye*
	mwari muri (2nd pl)	*mwari*	*mwabaye*
	bari bari (3rd pl)	*bari*	*babaye*
remote past	*nárindi* (1st sg)	*nári*	*narabaye*
	wáruri (2nd sg)	*wári*	*warabaye*
	yárari (3rd sg)	*yári*	*yarabaye*
	twári turi (1st pl)	*twári*	*twarabaye*
	mwári muri (2nd pl)	*mwári*	*mwarabaye*
	bári bari (3rd pl)	*bári*	*barabaye*

Table 4.6: Divergent realizations of *kuba* ('to be') in Rufumbira, Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha

4.2.5 Modality

Modal verbs and the general expression of modality are well documented for Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 2002, among others) and Kirundi, with a focus on the expression of 'possibility' (Bostoen, Mberamihigo & de Schryver 2012), while nothing has been published in relation to Rufumbira. There are slight differences in Rufumbira when comparing modal verbs with both adjacent varieties Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha. Besides the common *gusháaka* ('to want'), *kwífuza* ('to want for oneself, to long to have') can also sometimes be used as a modal verb (119-120).

(119) *nabonye igitabo, nakífuza* | n-a-bon-ye | i-gi-tabo | n-a-ki-ífuz-a
[naβonj(e) iɟitaβo nací:fuza] | 1sg-PST1-see-IMPV-FV | AUG-cl7-book | 1sg-PST1-cl7O-want-FV
'I saw a book, I wanted to have it'

(120) *nífuza kugaruka* | n-a-ífuz-a | ku-garuka
[ní:fuza kugaɾuka] | 1sg-PST1-urge-FV | INF-return
'I longed to return'

In terms of expressing necessity in the area of deontic modality, two strategies are found based on -*gomba* or -*fite* (121a-121b). In Kinyarwanda, *kugomba* ('to demand') is more frequently used, while Bafumbira prefer to use the auxiliary -*fite* ('to have'), and -*gomba* has a connotation of an (unwanted) obligatory request. This correlates with the expression of necessity in Luganda, where a form of 'to have' is also used (see 121c).

(121a) *mfite kugaruka mu urugo* | m-fite | ku-garuka | mu | u-ru-go
[mfite kugaɾuka mu (u)ɾugo] | 1sg-have | INF-return | LOC | AUG-cl11-homestead
'I have to return home'

140

(121b)	*ugomba kubaha abayeyi bawe cyane*		*u-gomb-a*	*ku-baha*	*a-ba-byeyi*	*bawe*	*cyane*
	[ugoːmba kuβah(a)aβaβjeji βaːʍe tʃaːne]		2sg-must-FV	INF-respect	AUG-cl2-parent	POSS2sg	very
	'you have to respect your parents a lot'						

	(Luganda)				
(121c)	*olina kusoma leero*		*o-li-na*	*ku-soma*	*leero*
	'you have to study today'		2sg-be-COM	INF-read	LOC

There is another variant used by elderly speakers, which again is not listed by Coupez et al. (2005) for Kinyarwanda, and which is presented in (122). This structural loan from Swahili (*ni lazima* 'it is a must') is used as an impersonal construction -*tirazima*, which seems to be exclusive to Rufumbira since it does not occur in any other variety across the border. The structural borrowing of a modal auxiliary is interesting as Kiswahili is not among Bafumbira's most attractive languages for the borrowing of lexical or grammatical elements. Kiswahili is often associated with Eastern DR Congo, and its use mostly limited to the border zone (cf. Chapter 2). When speakers use Kiswahili morphology, this shows that their esoterogenist ideologies of differentiation outweigh the possibly negative association with the Swahili language.

(122)	*itirazima itaka riri kuzanwa*		*i-tirazima*	*i-taka*	*ri-ri*	*ku-zan-wa*
	[itʰirazim(a) itʰaka ɽiɽi kuzangʍa]		cl9-be.necessary	AUG-cl5.soil	cl5-be	INF-remove-PASS
	'it is necessary that the soil is removed'					

Possibility is usually expressed with -*shobor*- in Rufumbira, which can also occur as the stative/neutro-passive extension -*shobok*- when something is 'possible' (see also Schadeberg 2003). Apart from this common realization, there is a potential marker -*básh*- with a following infinitive, which is described in more detail by Bostoen, Mberamihigo & de Schryver (2012: 5) for Kirundi, where it also occurs as -*bâsh*-, "and only conveys participant-inherent possibility"; it can originally be traced back to a lexical item 'to be active'. The expression of possibility in Rufumbira does not deviate from the forms found in standardized Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha.

(123a)	*nshobora kwándika umugani*		*n-shobor-a*	*ku-andika*	*u-mu-gani*
	[nʃoβora kwáːndik(a) umugani]		1sg-can-FV	INF-write	AUG-cl3-story
	'I can write a story'				

(123b)	*ntaabwo byashoboka kwámbara impare*		*ntaabwo*	*bi-a-*shobor-ik-a*	*ku-ámbara*	*i-m-pare*
	[ntʰaːbgo βjaʃoβoka kʍámbaɽ(a) impʰaɽe]		NEG	cl8-PST1-can-STAT-FV	INF-wear	AUG-cl9-pants
	'the pants can't be worn/it's impossible..'					

141

(123c)	ndabásha gukóra[80]		n-*ra-básh-a	gu-kóra
	[ndaβáʃa gukóra]		1sg-PRG-can-FV	INF-work
	'I can potentially do it/work'			

4.2.6 On verbal derivation: Periphrastic causative constructions

There is relatively little variation in the derivational morphology when comparing verbal derivations in Rufumbira with those of standardized Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha (cf. Kimenyi 2002: 63-65). Applicatives, neutro-passives, reciprocals and passive forms (cf. Schadeberg 2003) in particular are to a great extent identical with the forms found in the other varieties. Therefore, the discussion of deviating morphology in terms of border thinking focuses on the frequent use of periphrastic causatives in Rufumbira.

Kinyarwanda makes use of a twofold allophonic distinction *-ish-/-esh-* (see Table 3.7) depending on the vowel of the verb root, and also has another causative morpheme *-y-*, which often serves to transform intransitive verbs into transitive ones, and is less productive. This is discussed by the late Alexandre Kimenyi on his website[81]; he also mentions cases of causative doubling of either *-y-* + *-y-*, *-ish-* + *-y-*, or of *-ish-* + *-ish-*. While the two former are phonetically motivated, the latter occurs for syntactic reasons. Kimenyi (n.d.) differentiates on his website between 'direct' and 'indirect' causatives in Kinyarwanda, pointing out that "direct causation implies a direct link between the subject and the causee such as control or resultative event", in contrast to "indirect causation, [which] on the other hand, presupposes an intermediary agent between the subject and the causee" (see 124a-124b).

Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi n.d., direct causation)

(124a)	umugabo arambutsa umugoré urúuzi	umugabo	a-ra-ambut-s-a	umugoré	urúuzi
	'the man is making the woman cross	man	he-PRES-cross-CAUS-ASP	woman	river
	the river'				

Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi n.d., indirect causation)

(124b)	umugabo arambukiisha umugoré urúuzi	umugabo	a-ra-ambuk-iish-a	umugoré	urúuzi
	'the man is having the woman cross	man	he-PRES-cross-CAUS-ASP	woman	river
	the river'				

In Rufumbira, both direct and indirect causation can be expressed periphrastically, which happens mainly for reasons of frequency and morphological simplicity. Instead of choosing between different suffixed allomorphs, speakers tend to employ the verb *gutúma* ('to cause, to send') or *kureka* ('to let'), which then serve as auxiliaries (125-126). In most cases speakers tended to produce the periphrastic realizations in the first place in recording sessions, and rejected complex causatives as used in Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha.

---

[80] As a free variation to example (123c), speakers mentioned *nákora* with a high-toned prefix *-á-*.

[81] See [http://kimenyi.com/causatives-in-kinyarwanda.php] (accessed 13 April 2016).

Periphrastic causative constructions are a widespread phenomenon, and for instance very popular among Luganda speakers, where causatives are often expressed with the verb *okuleka* ('to let'); see example (126c). Despite its common use in spoken language, the periphrastic construction is not mentioned as an acceptable causative by Crabtree (1923) nor by Ashton et al. (1954) in their Luganda grammars. Kinyabwisha causatives, in contrast, are in most cases realized morphologically, as is also the case in Kinyarwanda, and rarely periphrastically (see 127). This marks a meaningful stylistic difference, which is perceived as emblematic.

(125a) *batumye nsomera igitabo abána* ba-tum-ye n-som-er-a i-gi-tabo a-ba-ána
[βatumje nsomeɾ(a) iɟitaβ(o) aβáːna] 3pl-send-PFV 1sg-read-APPL-FV AUG-cl7-book AUG-cl2-child
'they made me read the book to the children'

(125b) **bánsomesheje igitabo ku abána* ba-á-n-som-esh-*ye i-gi-tabo ku a-ba-ána
'they made me read the book to the children' 3pl-PST2-1sgO-read-CAUS-PFV AUG-cl7-book LOC AUG-cl2-child

(126a) *Kukí yatumye turindira hanze?* kukí a-a-tum-ye tu-rind-ir-a hanze
[kucí jatumje tuɾindiɾa hanze] why 3sg-PST1-send-PFV 1pl-wait-APPL-FV outside
'Why did (s)he let us wait outside?'

(126b) *Kukí yaretse turindira hanze?* kukí a-a-*rek-*ye tu-rind-ir-a hanze
[kucí jareːtse tuɾindiɾa hanze] why 3sg-PST1-let-PFV 1pl-wait-APPL-FV outside
'Why did (s)he let us wait outside?'

(Luganda)
(126c) *Lwaki atuleka tulinde waberu?* lwaki a-tu-lek-a tu-lind-e waberu
'Why did (s)he make us wait outside?' why 3sg-1plO-let-FV 1pl-wait-SUBJ outside

(Kinyabwisha)
(127) *Kubeera iki yaradurindirije hanze?* kubeera iki a-a-ra-du-rind-ir-*ish-*ye hanze
[kuβeːɾ(a)iki jaɾaduɾindiɾiʒe hanze] due.to what 3sg-PST-PST2-1plO-wait-APPL-CAUS-PFV out
'Why did (s)he make us wait outside?'

4.2.7 Lexical borrowing of English verbs

When English words enter Rufumbira, they undergo a specific kind of loanword adaption that is recurrent in Luganda and also found in numerous African youth language practices. Infinitives are adapted to the canonical Rufumbira syllable structure (CV(N)CV), and suffixed with *-inga*. Initially, this is derived from the English gerund (*-ing*), and may have entered languages such as Luganda from English progressive constructions. First established in colloquial or urban Luganda and popularized through songs like *"Fitting(a)"* by Radio & Weasel (released in 2012, see example 128), *-inga* spread from Luganda to Western Ugandan Bantu languages of group JE, and was eventually also adopted by Rufumbira speakers. It is nowadays no longer

restricted to speakers of the Luganda-based youth language practice Luyaaye (see Namyalo 2015), but can be found in various (Bantu) languages of Uganda. Moreover, it is nowadays increasingly used by Rwandan and Burundian youth, and has therefore become a component of the youth language practices Imvugo y'Umuhanda (Kigali, Rwanda) and Kirundi Slang (Bujumbura, Burundi, see Nassenstein 2017).

(Luganda)[82]

(128) *tufittinga, tumatchinga, tumixinga*   *tu-fittinga,*   *tu-matchinga,*   *tu-mixinga*
'we are compatible with each other, we   1pl-be.compatible   1pl-match   1pl-mingle
match each other, we mingle'

In Rufumbira, *-inga* is considered a typical Ugandan feature even though it is often described by speakers as "slang", "corrupted Rufumbira", and often referred to as being among "new words that were created" (Joe Haguma, March 2014). Example (129) shows the incorporation of the English verb *socialize,* and (130) shows that the imperfective suffix *-ag-* can actually follow the English *-ing(a).*

(Rufumbira)

(129) *ntibakúnze gusocializinga nabo*   *nti=ba-*kúnd-*ye*   *gu-socializinga*   *na-bo*
[ntʰiβakúːnze gusoʃəlaizɪŋga naβo]   NEG=3pl-love-PFV   INF-socialize   COM-3pl
'they did not want to socialize with them'

(130) *yaphotographingaga abantu*   *a-a-photographing-ag-a*   *a-ba-ntu*
[jafotografiŋgag(a) aβantu]   3sg-PST1-take.picture-IMPV-FV   AUG-cl2-person
'(s)he used to take pictures of people'

While verb formation with the gerund *-ing* seems to be becoming increasingly popular in Kinyarwanda, too, especially as part of the sociolinguistic translanguaging practice 'Kinyafranglais' (Kinyarwanda+English+French), it is still more common in the popular culture of Uganda, and can thus be seen as a contrastive feature of Rufumbira. Older speakers would classify it as an informal and incorrect style in Rufumbira, while younger speakers see no problem in using it (as stated by various speakers).

4.2.8 How to interpret different representations of time and TAM categorization?

The analysis of tense and aspect in Rufumbira raises the question of whether Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira speakers have, due to the divergence of morphological distinctions of remoteness, aspectual realization and the different underlying temporal reference, "cognitively dissociated temporal worlds" (Botne & Kershner 2008: 145). Rufumbira speakers mark their

---

[82] This example is extracted from Radio & Weasel's hit song "*Fittinga*".

tense and aspect distinctions with morphology which is acquired through esoterogenist strategies from Rukiga and Luganda, such as for instance the locative progressive *kuba + mu +* INF, which only exists in non-standard forms of Kinyarwanda but not in "school Kinyarwanda", and refers to rather informal ways of speaking. The official variety from Kigali prescribes the use of a progressive prefix *-ra-*, which is used both for the near future and as a disjoint marker for various tenses.

When assessing the question of whether intricate differences in the TAM systems of Kinyarwanda, Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha therefore represent different cognitive models of temporal cognition, this has to be denied. Linguistic relativism, i.e. the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Whorf 1956), which suggests that speakers of different languages think differently, and that their linguistic realizations are therefore representative of different worldviews, has been subject to numerous debates over the years. This theory has been adapted, extended and to some extent modified in various studies, such as by Brown & Lenneberg (1954), Malotki (1983), Pinker (1994), and Fishman's (1960) 'Whorfianism of the third kind'. Scholars such as Boroditsky (2011) have extended the concept of linguistic relativism, while the latter has significantly contributed to the psychology of time in relation to language, since "how people conceptualize time appears to depend on how the languages they speak tend to talk about time" (ibid., p. 338-339). Similarly, Botne & Kershner (2008) also analyze tense/aspect systems in terms of speakers' cognitive space, while offering a more structural approach to the organization of tense and aspect systems.

Among the most critical voices is McWhorter (2014), who limits the scope of linguistic relativism, and concludes in his analysis that "a connection between language and thought does exist", but that "language's effect on thought is distinctly subtle and, overall, minor" (ibid., p.xiv), and who calls the overall simplistic relationship between a language's structure and its speakers' thoughts "utterly incoherent, and even dangerous" (p. xviii). For the present case of Rufumbira, a hypothesis of that kind does not neatly apply to the linguistic reality, since the morphological realization of Rufumbira appears to be a fluid continuum, and by no means a fixed entity that has existed as such for centuries. It rather constitutes a morphosyntactic process that speakers shape through various forms of language contact, triggered by a specific postcolonial "uncoupling of languaging" (Mignolo 2002: 223), and giving rise to new and creative forms of languaging on the Ugandan side of the former colonial borders.

Thus, instead of explaining different linguistic realizations in standardized Kinyarwanda, Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha with a different cultural lens through which speakers see the world, differences in verbal morphology have to be explained against a theoretical background of border thinking. Thought here is less dependent on language, one of the main tenets of linguistic relativity, but is rather dependent on sociopolitical systems such as colonialism, imperialism and systems of inequality, which then motivates speakers to restructure the (verbal) morphology of their language(s) according to their social needs for distinction, identity

construction and postcolonial relocation. While cultural notions of time and temporality are relatively close among all three communities on all sides of the border, and conceptualizations of time do not seem to differ a great deal, the borders constitute colonial constructs that serve both as spatial demarcation lines and mark mental maps; they are also temporal demarcation lines due to their postcolonial reconstitution as borders of identity and as shields from conflict, from prescriptive language ideologies, and from the potential dangers of local identity constructions.

Because speakers of Rufumbira are aware of how tense and aspect distinctions are realized in Kinyarwanda (more than in Kinyabwisha), and because of their acquaintance with contact-induced features in Rufumbira, the borders remain permeable yet stable spatio-temporal lines of distinction, which have an impact on language structures because they frame, restrict and favor the use of specific morphemes or syntactic structures through a motivation to "speak differently". The strong influence of the borders on lexical, phonological and morphosyntactic choices will be discussed in more detail in the theoretical background to this study (Chapter 6). Border thinking, deliberate change and localist strategies go hand in hand when analyzing the morphology of Rufumbira from a variationist angle, since speakers question the established hegemonic correlations between imperialist policy and language use. As expressed by Mignolo (2002: 219), "theoretical models dealing with languages have been built in complicity with colonial expansion"; this is now deconstructed and relocated by Rufumbira speakers in various ways. While border thinking triggers variation and differences on a philosophical and postcolonial level as an underlying motivation, variation as found in Rufumbira can also be explained with Thomason's (1999, 2007) theoretical concept of deliberate change, paired with localist strategies.

Thomason (1999: 22) claims that "the effects of speakers' choices are not always trivial" in language variation, and can indeed affect a language's entire structure, whereas the chance of a deliberate change turning into a permanent realization of the speech community is "a matter of social and linguistic probability" (p. 23). In Rufumbira, sets of deliberate changes due to speakers' border thinking do shape the language, and are due to postcolonial ideologies of linguistic differentiation, altering identity and language practice from a decolonial perspective. This is a major "lens" through which speakers of Rufumbira actually see the world, and it has an impact on language structure, on reorganizing and restructuring colonial metadiscourse, and on pushing language change. Linguistic relativity therefore plays no role in tense-aspect variation.

Thomason's perspective on deliberate change in language correlates with what we find in Rufumbira: speakers display their own identity in the border triangle by carefully choosing morphology which contributes to a set of salient features. These appear to be distinctive enough to turn Bafumbira's language practice into an emblematic footprint of critical Otherness.

4.3 Syntactic differentiation in Rufumbira

In general, Rufumbira is a language with a fairly strict SVO word order. Constituents, either core or peripheral, cannot move freely as in other Bantu languages with a more dynamic syntax, such as Kinyarwanda. In this section, the most salient syntactic features of Rufumbira will be discussed contrastively with the predominant features found in standardized Kinyarwanda as described by Kimenyi (1980, 2002) and Ngoboka & Zeller (2015)[83]. To some extent the syntax is also compared to Kinyabwisha (DR Congo), as both languages share a range of structures that are not found in Kinyarwanda. The focus lies on the construction of **relative clauses** (4.3.1), **subject-object inversion** (4.3.2), the characteristics of **multiple direct objects, adjunct objectivization** and **locative inversion** (4.3.3), **negative contrastive topicalization** (4.3.4) and **conjoint-disjoint tense-aspect marking** (4.3.5). As will be shown, Rufumbira has a strict syntactic order, and therein differs from standardized Kinyarwanda. There are other components of Rufumbira syntax, such as in-situ wh-questions, or the syntactic construction of comparatives (and semantic superlatives) and conditional clauses, that may deviate from Kinyarwanda to some extent, but without revealing salient contact-induced features or convergence; these are therefore not explicitly treated in this section (see Kimenyi 2002, Sauder 2009).

Syntactic variation can, together with phonological and morphological changes and lexical choices, be seen as a pool of emblematic differences that mark speakers' linguistic awareness and the production of a divergent linguistic Self. This has been described for various scenarios worldwide, and basic patterns of variation in syntax based on a need for sociolinguistic differentiation are also discussed by Sankoff (1989: 150), stating that "most variationist work also involves data of an extralinguistic nature […] with other types of analysis – sociological, ethnographic, historical, and critical – in order to understand the processes of linguistic differentiation at the community level". He explains syntactic variation as "the communicative intentions of a speaker at the moment in discourse where more than one referentially or functionally equivalent structure is accessible" (ibid., p.157). The social and emblematic value of syntactic variants are discussed by Jourdan (2007: 39) for language use in the Solomon Islands, where young speakers put their own syntactic "imprint on the language", and also for speakers of Kisangani Swahili (DR Congo), who adapt the syntactic realization of the language according to their social orientation, either focusing on the Swahili-speaking East of the country or the Lingala-speaking West (Nassenstein 2015b). Syntactic variability can therefore be subject to speakers' ideologies, and can also stand as speakers' expression of differentiation.

---

[83] Unfortunately, the syntactic analysis of Kinyarwanda by Nkusi (1995) was not accessible to the present author. However, the most salient syntactic features are also discussed by Sibomana (1974) and Kimenyi (1980, 2002).

Most of the studies carried out hitherto do not include any notion of 'border-thinking' as a potential reason for variationist language behavior, but this actually has to be seen as one crucial factor in processes of linguistic differentiation in Rufumbira. Syntactic realizations in a border triangle where difference marks identity have an emblematic value, just as some phonological and morphological realizations do. When speakers use morphosyntax associated with Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha, the community's feeling of unity and differentiation may be put at risk. A stricter word order in Rufumbira than in standardized Kinyarwanda therefore marks speakers' ideology of differentiation, and may be a metatypical process, where one syntactic frame is copied onto another of the speaker's languages, due to the convergent over-lap in his/her mind (based on structures found in other Ugandan Bantu languages such as Rukiga or Luganda). Rufumbira speakers can predict how Kinyarwanda syntax works, and are aware of the fact that it *is* less configurational than Rufumbira, but they choose a more configurational (and less flexible) structure. This is a conscious process of reinforcement of a form of *ausbau*, in Kloss' (1967) terms, which is carried out by speakers based on the close relatedness to the (politically) dominant Kinyarwanda.

While Kinyarwanda is systematically standardized, "shaped or reshaped, molded or remolded " (ibid., p.29) as a form of institutional *ausbau* or corpus planning, Rufumbira is "shaped" through speakers' use of the language in interaction, by making use of their multi-lingual repertoires, onto which ideologies of differentiation are projected. The fact that they do not employ the institutionalized corpus planning that took place in Kinyarwanda marks distinctiveness in speech. This describes the opposite process of Bafumbira's morphological processing of a difference; as has been shown in Sections 4.1-4.2, contact-induced morpho-logical contact and esoterogenist strategies, as well as open choices or free variations, i.e. expanded repertoires, contribute to the morphological marking of a difference. In contrast with these, the syntactic strategies of differentiation are based on rejecting the variability and lack of structural rigidity found in the standardized variety of Kinyarwanda.

Sauder (2009: 1) describes in her Rufumbira sketch how "a problem arises though when you mix grammar from neighbouring languages with your own. Then people say you no longer speak 'pure' Rufumbira". Despite this claim, a considerable amount of Sauder's (2009) morphosyntactic description was contested by speakers (according to my own field-notes), who described her Rufumbira data as "being more Kinyarwanda than Rufumbira". The definition of which syntactic phenomenon is pure Rufumbira, and which construction type resembles Kinyarwanda, depends upon the speakers in question. While elderly speakers in their late 70s or 80s, and also the Rufumbira Language Board, seem to favor syntactic struc-tures (and morphological forms) that are to some extent closer to Kinyarwanda, speakers up to the age of 60 or 65 who have different educational backgrounds favor realizations that mark a difference, revealing a high degree of salience for syntactic structures as markers of differ-entiation. These will be discussed in Sections 4.3.1–4.3.5.

Sankoff (1989: 154), however, also argues that the analysis of speakers' intentions when producing deviating forms or structures reveals immanent problems due to "*a posteriori* artifacts of linguistic introspection or afterthoughts inspired by linguistic norms", and thus by the critical role of the researcher in a postcolonial setting. In the border triangle of DR Congo, speakers are prone to over-emphasizing their distinctive syntactic structures due to the fact that they have knowledge of the less rigid and more variable word order in standardized Kinyarwanda, as taught in schools and prescribed by educational elites.

It is, however, worth noting that not all divergent structures in Rufumbira are conscious decisions that are taken in the moment of speaking, in order to differentiate oneself from Kinyarwanda. The syntactic frame of the language is rather an agreement among speakers who tend to realize a more rigid word order than speakers of (standardized) Kinyarwanda. This agreement is to some extent based on predominant structures in the community and may at times be pushed by leaders of linguistic change, who speak Rukiga and Rufumbira, or Luganda and Rufumbira, and project certain structures onto their language when differentiation becomes a crucial endeavor in processes of identity building. Gerritsen & Stein (1992a) edited a range of papers that deal with phenomena of syntactic change, and state that internal, i.e. synchronic, changes are rather well studied, while external, i.e. social and sociolinguistic, factors of syntactic change are generally an understudied phenomenon, although it has increasingly attracted attention since the early days of sociolinguistics in the 1960s. In their introduction, Gerritsen & Stein explain syntactic change as a form of 'reanalysis' that happens over time, when speakers are exposed to impact from several languages, and "produce so many structurally ambiguous surface structures that the language learner acquiring the language constructs a deep structure different from that of the speaker" (ibid., p.4), based on a generative model of syntactic change (referring to Traugott 1973). It can be assumed that Rufumbira syntax underwent both synchronic changes, due to its location on the northernmost periphery of JD60 varieties, and also social changes, e.g. due to divergent developments from the standardization processes in Kinyarwanda[84], as well as to language contact and processes of diachronic syntactic restructuring.

Moreover, word order variation contributes to the definition of context and meaning, and therefore has a pragmatic value. What is generally referred to as 'information structure' in Bantu languages relates to clear pragmatic assumptions of the speaker toward the hearer (and vice versa), and deals with 'focus' as "less predictable or disputed elements of the sentence" (Bearth 2003: 130) and with 'topic' as "specific elements relating the sentence to the preceding discourse" (ibid.). Word-order change, which may occur as a contact-induced or synchronic phenomenon, therefore always has to do with pragmatics, and with meaning-

---

[84] Gerritsen & Stein (1992b: 11) also indicate that standardization processes in language accelerate syntactic change, as becomes evident when comparing Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira.

making in context. This is why syntactic divergence between formal Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira is of sociolinguistic, structural *and* pragmatic interest.

Divergent syntactic structures are therefore not only indications of linguistic change but bear a highly emblematic social function, in the present study based on distinctiveness and ideological differentiation as a form of 'border thinking'. Syntactic variation, whether due to 'borrowing' of single features (such as discourse markers, modal particles etc.), to entire syntactic frames that are restructured through metatypy (cf. Ross 2007), or to free variations in syntactic structure, take over a stylistic function. This means that divergence of word order and structure can be explained with Eckert's (2012) thoughts on 'style' as the push factors of social meaning, and as the expression of communicative freedom and a range of choices. As already mentioned, elderly people often prefer the more standardized Kinyarwanda forms and structures, while most younger and middle-aged speakers mainly produce the "Rufumbira style".

Seen from a stylistic angle, speakers can still choose, redefine and include the competing non-Rufumbira grammar, when this is suitable in the specific communicative situation. Leikola (2014: 5) observed among Manjo speakers in Ethiopia that "even when speakers operate within a repertoire associated with them, they can use the linguistic resources in creative ways using the old meanings for making new meanings", as is also the case with Rufumbira speakers. As stated by the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva, some younger male speakers in the border zone may employ phonological and morphosyntactic properties that are usually associated with Kinyarwanda, not with Rufumbira, when aiming to impress their girlfriends. Most Rufumbira speakers therefore *know* about the Kinyarwanda equivalent, and can play with the meaningful syntactic difference when needed. This also corresponds with Bakhtin's (1981) view on style in interaction, steadily redefined and never uniform, and on the 'argument between languages' or the 'argument between styles of language' as the dialogized hybrid. Gerritsen & Stein (1992b: 11) therefore claim what also applies to stylistic variation in Rufumbira syntax, that "[t]he question of different syntactic styles as part of different social and communicational codes and styles seems to be a central one for the study of syntactic change". This is further discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Relative concords and relative clauses

The most salient difference between Rufumbira and standardized Kinyarwanda lies in the fact that speakers of the latter employ relative concords neither for subject nor for object relative clauses (see ex. 136). Kimenyi (2002: 33) describes this as the "lack of relative pronouns". Rufumbira, however, does require the use of congruent relative concords in object relative clauses. While all speakers usually produced them in spoken interaction, a few older speakers stated that their use was voluntarily and not required; the potential ambiguity, however, would often make people use them, creating a contrast with Kinyarwanda at the same time. Sauder

(2009: 62) describes object relative markers as optional concords in Rufumbira, "which can be said or omitted just like English ones"[85]. It can be assumed that Sauder's observation is based on the dichotomic realization of her predominantly elderly research assistants[86] with a high social status, on the one hand, who must have favored the ambiguous Kinyarwanda relative marking, and of younger speakers, who usually favor the use of object concords, on the other, as described in the following. While semantic ambiguity is common in Kinyarwanda (see ex. 136), Rufumbira prevents this by using specific concords that correspond with the subject of the main clause. Subject relative clauses are – just as in Kinyarwanda – prosodically marked with a high tone on the subject marker of the inflected verb.

NC	Subject relative clause	Object relative clause	Gloss
1	umuntu wáguye…	umuntu **wo** nabonye…	'the person who fell'/'the person I saw'
2	abantu báguye…	abantu **bo** nabonye…	'the people who fell'/'the people I saw'
3	umuti (g)wáguye	umuti **wo** nabonye	'the drug that fell'/'the drug I saw'
4	imiti yáguye	imiti **yo** nabonye	'the drugs that fell'/'the drugs I saw'
5	itaka ryáguye	itaka **ryo** nabonye	'the sand that fell'/'the sand I saw'
6	amata yáguye[87]	amata **yo** nabonye	'the milk that fell'/'the milk I saw'
7	ikintu cyáguye	ikintu **co** nabonye	'the thing that fell'/'the thing I saw'
8	ibintu byáguye	ibintu **byo** nabonye	'the things that fell'/'the things I saw'
9	inka yáguye	inka **yo** nabonye	'the cow that fell'/'the cow I saw'
10	inka záguye	inka **zo** nabonye	'the cows that fell'/'the cows I saw'
11	urusénda rwáguye	urusénda **rwo** nabonye	'the pepper that fell'/'the pepper I saw'
12	akána káguye	akána **ko** nabonye	'the sm. child that fell'/'the sm. child I saw'
13	utwána twáguye	utwána **two** nabonye	'the bad children that fell'/'(...) I saw'
14	ubwáto bwáguye	ubwáto **bwo** nabonye	'the boat that fell'/'the boat I saw'
15	ukuboko kwáguye	ukuboko **kwo** nabonye	'the arm that fell'/'the arm I saw'
16	ahantu háguye	ahantu **(ho)** nabonye	'the place that fell'/'the place I saw'

Table 4.7: The construction of subject and object relative clauses in Rufumbira

Examples (131-132) further demonstrate the use of object relative concords and their agreement with the subject of the main clause.

---

[85] However, in a paradigmatic overview of Rufumbira agreement, Sauder (2009: 195) lists the object concords.

[86] In a pre-study carried out in late 2011 in Kisoro, some of Doris Sauder's research participants were approached and interviewed. Due to their more conservative realization of Rufumbira, which contrasted with most speakers' daily language practices in many ways, other interlocutors were contacted and asked to participate in the field research that was carried out in the following years.

[87] The free variation of the subject marker *ga-* occurs less often here than that of noun class three *gwa-*. This has been explained in Section 4.2 in more detail.

(131)	*umugabo wo bítaga Clever*	*u-mu-gabo*	*wo*	*ba-ít-ag-a*	*Clever*
	[umugaβo ʍo: βíːtaga kaɾaveɾ]	AUG-cl1-man	cl1:REL	3plS-call-IMPV-FV	C.
	'a man they called Clever'				

(132)	*imirimo yo mukóra*	*i-mi-rimo*	*yo*	*mu-kór-a*
	[imiɾimo yo mukʰóra]	AUG-cl4-work	cl4:REL	2plS-work-FV
	'duties that you (pl.) do/carry out'			

Similar constructions exist in Luganda, which, alongside Rukiga, is one of the languages whose syntactic frame and morphological forms contribute to syntactic change in Rufumbira, making the language more distinctive and at the same time more divergent from standardized Kinyarwanda. In Luganda, the relative marker differs depending on whether a subject or object relative clause is expressed: if the subject is relativized, the relative marker is just a "harmonizing initial vowel" [a form of augment] (Pak 2007: 2), while in object relative clauses a noun-class marker in agreement with the head noun is required (see examples 133-134). While the object concord looks familiar when considering Rufumbira examples, its position is different, since it is always prefixed to the inflected verb in the relative clause.

(Luganda, subj. RC) (Ashton et al. 1954: 136, quoted by Pak 2007: 2)

(133)	*ekikopo ekigudde kyatise*	*ekikopo*	*e-ki-gu-dde*	*ky-atis-e*
	'the cup that fell down is broken'	VII.cup	REL-VII-fall-PERF	VII-be.cracked-PERF

(Luganda, obj. RC) (Ashton et al. 1954: 136, quoted by Pak 2007: 2)

(134)	*emikeeka abawala gyebaaluka tegigasa*	*emikeeka*	*abawala*	*gye-ba-a-luka*	*te-gi-gasa*
	'the mats that the girls plaited are not suitable'	IV.mat	II.girl	IV.REL-II-PST-plait	NEG-IV-be.of.use

The use of object relative concords is a disambiguation strategy, and may be due to contact-induced change as a metatypy from Luganda. In contrast with the Rufumbira distinction between subject and object relative clauses, the semantic ambiguity in Kimenyi's (2002: 33) data was rejected by Rufumbira speakers, and example (135) was commented upon with the statement "no, this is not okay in Rufumbira. In Kinyarwanda it is… in Rufumbira, we need *byo*, *ibitabo byo* [the books that; obj. RC]" (as explained by the barkeeper Allan Musekura, November 2015). Relating to ambiguity, Kimenyi (ibid.) also notes that often "it is not possible out of context to tell whether the antecedent is the subject or the object", as illustrated in example (136).

(Kinyarwanda, obj. RC) (Kimenyi 2002: 33)

(135)	*dore ibitabo abáana basomá*		*dore*	*ibitabo*	*abáana*	*ba-som-á*
	'these are the books that the children are reading'		look	books	children	they-read-ASP

(136) *dore abagabo abagoré baátweeretse*   *dore*   *abagabo*   *abagoré*   *ba-á-tw-eerets-e*

'here are the men that the women showed us'   look   men   women   they-PST-us-show-ASP

'here are the women that the men showed us'

'here are the women to whom the men showed us'

'here are the men to whom the women showed us'

Example (136) reveals that four different readings are possible in Kinyarwanda, which cannot occur in Rufumbira, where subject and object relative clauses are clearly marked, and a distinction is (usually) necessary. In Rufumbira the same sentence (137) would be understood, and classified as "school Kinyarwanda", but would still remain ungrammatical.

(Rufumbira) (based on Kimenyi 2002: 33)

(137) **dore abagabo abagoré bátweeretse*   *dore*   *abagabo*   *abagoré*   *ba-á-tw-eerets-e*

'*here are the men that the women showed us'   look   men   women   they-PST2-us-show-ASP

'*here are the women that the men showed us'

'*here are the women to whom the men showed us'

'*here are the men to whom the women showed us'

In order to match the first of the asterisk-marked readings ('here are the men that the women showed us'), the object relative concord *bo* [β(o)] would be needed in Rufumbira; it then becomes an object relative clause, following the subject of the main clause *abagabo* ('men'). When the second reading is expressed in Rufumbira ('here are the women that the men showed us'), the word order has to be changed since subject-object inversion does not occur to the same extent in Rufumbira (see Section 4.3.2), and the object relative concord *bo* has to be inserted again. The sentence matching the second reading would then have to be realized as *dore abagore b(o)'abagabo baátweeretse*. In order to match the third reading in Rufumbira, the order of constituents has to be changed to *dore abagore abagabo báatweeretse*, again due to the lack of such inversion in Rufumbira (unlike in Kinyarwanda). Since the order of indirect and direct objects changes, no object relative concord is needed, but the prosody on the subject concord changes. When the fourth reading is intended in Rufumbira, the sentence has to be realized as *dore abagabo abagore baátweeretse,* without relative concord (since the order of objects is changed: the indirect object in the main clause, the direct object of the 1st person plural *-tw-* in the relative clause).

Apart from these salient differences, one notable feature which is retained in Rufumbira is the change from 3rd person + human subject marker *a-* to *u-,* occurring both in relative and cleft clauses. This is also mentioned by Kimenyi (1976) and Zeller & Ngoboka (2015: 11-12) for Kinyarwanda.

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Zeller & Ngoboka 2015)

(138)	*umugabo ucúruuza ihené*		*u-mu-gabo*	*u-cúruuz-a*	*i-hené*
	'the/a man who sells goats'		AUG-cl1-man	3sgHUM:REL-sell-FV	AUG-cl10.goat

The prefixed negation marker -*da/ta*-, described in Section 4.2 as the "secondary" negative element, is the only strategy of negation employed in both subject and object relative clauses (139), and is also used in Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha.

(139)	*umuntu udafite ubwenge*		*u-mu-ntu*	*u-da-fite*	*u-bw-enge*
	[umuntʰu udafit(e) ubgeːɲɟe̥]		AUG-cl1-person	3sg-NEG-have	AUG-cl14-wisdom
	'a person who has no wisdom				
	(who does not know anything)'				

Rufumbira does not require relative concords when locative relative clauses occur. While the relative concord refers to a locative adjunct ('there where…'), the relative clause still contains both subject and object, and therefore needs no relative concord (see 140).

(140)	*harí ahantu nabonye umukobwa*		*ha-rí*	*a-haa-ntu*	*na-bon-ye*	*u-mu-kobwa*
	[haɾ(i) ahantu naβonj(e) umukobga]		cl16-be	AUG-cl16-place	1sgS-see-PFV	AUG-cl1-girl
	'there is a place where I saw a girl'					

Moreover, the relative concord -*o* is used with infinitive constructions in purpose clauses ('so that'/'for') or when expressing 'relating to, about', as shown in (141-142). This feature is shared by Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda speakers.

(141)	*imyáka yo gutangira isomero*		*i-mi-áka*	*yo*	*gu-tangira*	*i-somero*
	[imjáːka jo gutʰanɟiɾ(a) isomero]		AUG-cl4-year	cl4:REL	INF-begin	AUG-cl9.school
	'the age [years] in order to start school'					

(142)	*imigenzo yo gupfa no guhámba*		*i-mi-genzo*	*yo*	*gu-pfa*	*no*	*gu-hámba*
	[imiɟenzo jo gupfa noː guháːmba]		AUG-cl4-traditions	cl4:REL	INF-die	and	INF-bury
	'traditions relating to death and burial'						

4.3.2 Subject-object inversion

Subject-object inversion (so-called e.g. by Hale 1973 in his study of Navajo word order), more generally referred to as 'inverse' or 'inverse voice'[88] (see Hiroyuki 2000), or as a form of 'topicalization' (Givón 1975) is a recurrent syntactic feature in numerous Bantu languages, such as Dzamba, Lega and Rundi, which have proven not to be as rigid in their word order as first assumed. It is often based on three criteria, namely that

---

[88] This does not relate to the homophonous concept found in Amerindian languages.

(1) [t]he word order of the logical subject (SUBJ) and the logical object (OBJ) in the active transitive clause **is changed** so that the positions of OBJ and SUBJ are inverted (with V as the pivot in Bantu); (2) the inverted logical **object (OBJ) acquires some of the properties of subject** (i.e., subjecthood); and (3) the logical subject (SUBJ) partially **loses its subjecthood** but it is not demoted in the sense that it stands as nominative Case [sic!] without any preposition (or postposition). (Hiroyuki 2000: 40)

Two more characteristics have to be added. Inversion reveals subject agreement on the verb with the fronted logical object, which is not the case in other processes of topicalization. Moreover, there is no morphological sign that changes when active constructions turn into inverse constructions. Marten & Gibson (2015) differentiate between frequent kinds of inversion that occur in Bantu, namely subject-object inversion (which they call 'patient inversion'), locative inversion and a few others. For a more general overview of Bantu inversion strategies, see also Marten & van der Wal (2014).

All three criteria listed by Hiroyuki also apply to subject-object inversion as found in the Kinyarwanda spoken in the Rwandan capital Kigali. Subject-object inversion is a frequent phenomenon, and has been described by Kimenyi (2002: 31-32) as focus strategy, where "the focus is put on the subject and the object is considered as old information". It also becomes obvious that inversion as a marked strategy expresses definiteness of the object (see 144). According to Kimenyi, this kind of reversal fulfils the same function as in passivization (but without passive morphology and without the preposition *na* 'by' as 'flagging'), where the object also adopts some of the properties of the subject.

The examples provided by Kimenyi for Kinyarwanda were tested with speakers of Rufumbira and rejected, which revealed the more configurational structure of the language, as presented in example (143), illustrating the language's rigid SVO order. A sentence as in (144), correct in Kinyarwanda, was commented upon by Rufumbira speakers with "that means *the book* is reading *the kids* [laughter], impossible!" Subject and object were thus not recognized as being able to follow an inverted constituent order by Rufumbira speakers, and the logical roles of subject and object as found in SVO word order were projected onto the sentence presented.[89]

(Rufumbira, SVO)

(143) *abána barí gusoma igitabo*   *a-ba-ána*   *ba-rí*   *gu-soma*   *i-gi-tabo*

[aβáːna βarí gusom(a) iɟitʰabo]   AUG-cl2-child   3plS-be   INF-read   AUG-cl7-book

'the children are reading a book'

---

[89] The data on Rufumbira syntax was to some extent extracted from recorded free texts, and to some extent contrastively elicited by presenting examples from Kinyarwanda (mainly based on Kimenyi 2002). The following recorded discussions as part of qualitative interviews revealed the underlying syntactic structure, as well as speakers' stance in interaction.

(144) *igitabo kirasoma abána*   *i-gi-tabo*   *ki-ra-som-a*   *a-ba-ána*

[iɟitʰabo cirasom(a) aβáːna]   AUG-cl7-book   cl7-PRG-read-FV   AUG-cl2-child

'the children are reading the book'

Speakers agreed, however, on focus marking through a passive construction as in (145), which is therefore a legitimate structure both in Kinyarwanda and in Rufumbira.

(Kinyarwanda/Rufumbira, passivization) (Kimenyi 2002: 31)

(145) *igitabo kirasomwa n' abána*   *i-gi-tabo*   *ki-ra-som-w-a*   *n' a-ba-ána*

[iɟitʰabo cirasoɱa n(a) aβáːna]   AUG-cl7-book   cl7-PRG-read-PASS-FV   by AUG-cl2-child

'the book is being read by the children'

It is highly questionable whether all Kinyarwanda speakers really assess the grammaticality of OVS constructions in the same way, or if this is rather of a theoretical nature, as part of a corpus-planning approach by Rwandan educational elites (and those in the diaspora, such as the late Alexandre Kimenyi himself, using his own language data as a native speaker). During the course of the present study, speakers from Northern (Kirera) and Northwestern (Kigoyi) Kinyarwanda dialects within the Republic of Rwanda in particular were far from sharing all morphosyntactic features, as described by Sibomana (1974) or Kimenyi (1980, 2002, 2009). Hiroyuki (2000: 42) also presents data on the closely-related Kirundi (JD62), where allegedly the same kind of inversion occurs as in Kinyarwanda (based on Ndayiragije's study, 1996); see example (146). Testing speakers' grammaticality judgments of these constructions, Kirundi speakers were therefore asked if nowadays in interaction OVS structures, like the one quoted below, were commonly used in people's interaction.

(Kirundi, OVS) (Ndayiragije 1996: 267, quoted by Hiroyuki 2000)[90]

(146) *ivyo bitabo byasomye Yohani*   *ivyo*   *bi-tabo*   *bi-á-somye*   *Yohani*

[iβjo (i)βitabo βjasomje Yohani]   those   cl8-books   3plS-PAST-read(PERF)   John

'those books were read by John'

Kirundi speakers actually *did* reject the inverted structure, complaining that the sentence would not make sense, and would therefore not be grammatically correct, saying *"c'est faux parce que en traduisant ça, ça donnerait* 'those books read John' "[it's incorrect because when translating it, it gives 'those books read John'] (Eloi Niragira, March 2016). Speakers corrected the sentence by suggesting the use of a passive suffix -*w*- (147), through which subject and object would be maintained as in the non-inverted structure.

---

[90] For reasons of completeness, the phonetic transcription was added.

(147)	*ivyo ibitabo vyarasomwe na Yohani*	*ivyo*	*bi-tabo*	*vy-á-ra-som-w-e*	*na Yohani*
	[iβjo (i)βitabo βjarasomge na Yohani]	cl8:DEM	cl8-book	cl8-PST-DJ-read-PASS-PFV	by John
	'those books were read by John'				

This shows that despite the theoretical possibility of an inverted word order, speakers do not necessarily have to agree with the conventions that are marked by linguists, and may actually prefer passive voice over "Bantu inverse voice" (Hiroyuki 2000: 41). However, not all Bafumbira are involved in corpus-planning activities, especially those who speak regional varieties of the language (such as the Kirera and Kigoyi dialects in Northern/Northwestern Rwanda) that deviate in relation to features stated in the literature. The tendency of speakers to correct OVS structures and change them into passive constructions occurred both in Rufumbira and Kirundi, while tests with Kinyarwanda speakers from the Northwestern periphery may have led to similar results (despite Kimenyi's claim).

While the more configurational word order in Rufumbira could therefore be due to the (prescriptive) corpus-planning processes initiated in Kigali (which are certainly not implemented in Kisoro District, Uganda), the non-realization of subject-object inversion can also constitute a metaypy from the Bantu languages Rukiga(-Runyankore)[91] and Luganda, from which Rufumbira borrows many morphological features. The analysis of the progressive aspect (Section 4.2) as well as the conjoint-disjoint alternation (in the following section) reveal that not only are morphological forms prone to borrowing but also entire structures, or attempts to "restructure the grammar of one language on the model of the other wholesale", as Ross (2007: 116) puts it, when differentiating metatypy from borrowing a grammatical feature. The reason behind this is, as already explained with regard to the sociolinguistic situation of Rufumbira, speakers' striving for a "Ugandan" way of speaking, and deliberately facing away from the adjacent varieties across the borders. Rukiga reveals some syntactic flexibility, as also expressed by Asiimwe (2014: 21), stating that

> Runyankore-Rukiga has the basic word order of SVO. However, **word categories can freely move** from their base positions depending on structural configurations of the language, as well as the communicative needs of the moment.

Despite this claim of a less rigid word order in Rukiga, Asiimwe's data does not contain examples in which subject and object are fully inverted. This construction type is either not analyzed by the author, or simply does not exist. As possible inverted structures, he lists three

---

[91] Rukiga-Runyakore, or Nkore-Kiga (JE 13/14, see Maho 2009) is a continuum of two mutually intelligible languages and will henceforth appear as 'Rukiga' whenever mentioned in the text.

other topicalized realizations, which follow the word orders SOV, OSV and SVOS[92] – but not OSV (see 148a-148c).[93]

<blockquote>

(Rukiga, SOV) (Asiimwe 2014: 142)[94]

(148a) *omwishiki *(e)kitabo naakishoma*

'Lit.: The girl, the book, she is reading it'

'The girls [sic!] is reading the book.'

(Rukiga, OSV) (Asiimwe 2014: 142)

(148b) *ekitabo omwishiki naakishoma*

'Lit.: The book, the girl is reading it.'

'The girl is reading the book.'

(Rukiga, SVOS) (Asiimwe 2014: 142)

(148c) *naashoma *(e)kitabo omwishiki*

'Lit.: She is reading the book, the girl.'

'The girl is reading the book.'

</blockquote>

While all three topicalized structures are described as grammatical by Asiimwe, Rukiga speakers from Kabale who were interviewed emphasized that a structure OVS would render the sentence ungrammatical. Two speakers with knowledge of both Rufumbira and Rukiga were intentionally chosen for these interviews, due to their higher probability of producing metatypical structures, as evidence that speakers actually project properties found in one language onto the syntactic frame of a second language. Speakers said that "just as in Rufumbira, this sentence does not work: A book cannot read a girl!" (two Rukiga interlocutors, March 2016), which underlined the hypothesis that knowledge of Rukiga and its slightly more rigid syntactic features has an impact on one's realization of Rufumbira.

They suggested instead the two possible structures illustrated in (148d), the regular SVO word order, and (148e), a passive construction, which were both judged as grammatical in Rukiga. Both suggested structures look similar to Rufumbira speakers' realizations, and strengthen the claim that metatypy occurs with speakers who have proficiency in both languages.

<blockquote>

(Rukiga, SVO)

(148d) *omwishiki naashoma (e)kitabo*

'Lit.: The girl is reading the book.'

'The girl is reading the book.'

</blockquote>

---

[92] SVOS seems to be a suitable abbreviation for the structure, since the gloss of the inflected verb in (116c) is *ni-a-shoma*, PROG-1.3SG-read-FV, and thus contains a subject concord.

[93] For locative inversion, see the next Section 4.3.3.

[94] Asiimwe's (2014) gloss is not provided here in the quoted Rukiga data.

(Rukiga, passivization)

(148e) *ekitabo nikishomwa n'omwishiki*

'Lit.: The book is being read by the girl.'

'The girl is reading the book.'

The structure of Rukiga is by no means entirely responsible for the more conservative and configurational structure of Rufumbira, but metatypy does leave an imprint on speakers' linguistic choices. When a less flexible word order in Rufumbira conveys more of an in-group identity by distancing itself from Kinyarwanda *and* utilizing structures similar to those found in neighboring Rukiga (as well as similar instances of rejection), the syntactic choice in question is more likely to be realized (and agreed upon) by speakers.

4.3.3 Multiple direct objects, adjunct objectivization and locative inversion

Kimenyi (2002: 34) states for standardized Kinyarwanda that multiple direct objects occur, which stand as complements in SVO order without being connected by a preposition. This relates not only to "classic" ditransitive verbs such as *kwé(e)reka* ('to show'), *guha* ('to give') etc. (see 149a) but also to other verbs that express the semantic roles of benefactives, instrumentals (149a), locatives and inalienable possession. He explains this by saying "first because Kinyarwanda has ditransitive verbs and secondly because adjuncts can become structural direct objects when an extension is added to the verb" (ibid.), referring to them as either 'inherent accusatives' when two direct objects are juxtaposed, or 'structural accusatives' when the process of objectivization (of instrumental or locative constructions etc.) is involved.

Rufumbira also has ditransitive verbs with two arguments (149b), and allows two direct objects when a benefactive or an instrumental connotation is expressed (150b); in this regard it does not reveal any difference from Kinyarwanda. It is not possible, however, to have a locative adjunct preceding the object argument without a locative marker, although this is possible in Kinyarwanda (compare also 151a-151b).

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 34)

(149a) *umugore aréereka umwáana igitabo*   u-mu-gore   a-ra-éerek-a   u-mw-áana   i-gi-tabo
[umugoɾ(e) aɾéːɾek(a) uɲáːn(a) iɟitaβo]   AUG-cl1-woman   3sg-PRG-show-FV   AUG-cl1-child   AUG-cl7-book
'the woman is showing a book to the child'

(Rufumbira)

(149b) *umugore arí kwéreka umwána igitabo*   u-mu-gore   a-rí   kwéreka   u-mw-ána   i-gi-tabo
[umugoɾe aɾí kʌeɾek(a) uɲáːn(a) iɟitaβo]   AUG-cl1-woman   3sg-be   INF-show   AUG-cl1-child   AUG-cl7-book
'the woman is showing a book to the child'

In examples (150a-150b), the instrumental can be objectivized and therefore no longer requires 'flagging' with a preposition *n(a)*, which can still optionally be inserted (cf. Kimenyi 2002: 34), both in Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira.

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 34)

(150a) *umwáana arakúbita imbwá inkoni* u-mw-áana a-ra-kúbit-a i-m-bwa i-n-koni
[uɲáːn(a) arakúβit(a) imbgá inkoni] AUG-cl1-child 3sg-PRG-hit-FV AUG-cl9-dog AUG-cl9-stick
'the child is hitting the dog with a stick'

(Rufumbira)

(150b) *umwána arí gukúbita imbwa inkoni* u-mw-ána a-rí gu-kúbita i-m-bwa i-n-koni
[uɲáːn(a) arí gukúβit(a) imbgá inkoni] AUG-cl1-child 3sg-be INF-hit AUG-cl9-dog AUG-cl9-stick
'the child is hitting the dog with a stick'

In Kinyarwanda, according to Kimenyi (2002), a direct object and a locative adjunct can both function as objects without any locative agreement or locative marker (151a).

In Rufumbira, the construction of direct object and locative adjunct still requires a locative marker *mu* preceding the adjunct (151b), or a locative enclitic *-mó* attached to the inflected verb or following the adjunct, as pointed out by Rufumbira speakers when reacting to a Kinyarwanda example by Kimenyi (see 151a).

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 35)

(151a) *umugabo arahíinga umuríma ibijuumba* u-mu-gabo a-ra-híing-a u-mu-ríma i-bi-juumba
[uɲáːn(a) arahíːŋ(a) umurím(a) iβiʒuːmba] AUG-cl1-man 3sg-PRG-dig-FV AUG-cl3-field AUG-cl8-sw.potato
'the man is cultivating sweet potatoes in the field'

(Rufumbira)

(151b) *arí guhínga mu (u)muríma ibijumba* a-rí gu-hínga mu u-mu-ríma i-bi-jumba
[arí guhíːŋ(a) mu (u)murím(a) iβiʒuːmba] 3sg-be INF-dig LOC AUG-cl3-field AUG-cl8-sw.potato
'(s)he is cultivating sweet potatoes in the field'

Bearth (2003: 137-138) describes *two* different strategies of the subjectivization of locatives in Kinyarwanda, replacing the common word order, according to which "adjuncts, contrary to core arguments (patients, goals and beneficiaries), tend to be encoded as prepositional phrases". The first one is "shifting the locative expression as a whole to subject position", in which "the subject marker *ha-* agrees with the locative class feature of the prepositional phrase introduced by *ku* 'on'" (ibid.). This process of 'locative inversion' is the one found in Rufumbira, too, and is shown in (152). This is the only possible strategy in Rufumbira, where we therefore always find locative markers *ku* and *mu*.

(152)   *ku*   *kibáaho*   *ha-ra-andik-w-a*   *amasómo*   *n'umwáalimu / n'umwígisha*
    on   blackboard   LOC-PRES-write-PASS-FV   lessons   by teacher
    'The [large] blackboard is being written lessons on by the teacher.'

Locative inversion constitutes a common feature in many Bantu languages, including Swahili (Ashton 1944), Lingala (Nassenstein 2014a) and Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 2002). The inversion of locative adjuncts generally means that

> a locative phrase precedes the verb and the logical subject (or agent) is expressed by an NP immediately following the verb. The locative phrase is marked by dedicated noun class morphology (conventionally referred to as classes 16, 17, and 18) and the subject marker agrees in locative noun class with the nominal phrase. (Marten & Gibson 2015: 4)

For Bantu languages, Salzmann's (2004, 2011) work is of particular interest, and provides insights into a range of languages that diverge in terms of their locative inversion, also labeled as 'anastasis' by Meeussen (1975: 4). The following examples illustrate how common SVO order (153a) is reversed, and a peripheral constituent, the locative adjunct, becomes a core syntactic constituent, i.e. the logical subject. For an overview of locative raising processes, see also Dimmendaal (2003). The subject concord has to agree with the locative adjunct in subject position through the use of the prefix *ha-* of class 16, otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical (153b vs. 153c). It becomes evident that locative inversion also increases the definiteness of the former adjunct.

(Rufumbira)

(153a)   *imbwa ziryamye mu (i)shyámba*   *i-mbwa*   *zi-ryam-*ye*   *mu*   *shyámba*
    [imbga zirɗɟamje mu ʃáːmba]   AUG-cl10.dog   cl10-sleep-PFV   LOC   cl5.field
    '(the) dogs slept in the/a bush'

(Rufumbira)

(153b)   **mu (i)shyámba ziryamye imbwa*   *mu*   *shyámba*   *zi-ryam-*ye*   *i-mbwa*
    [mu ʃáːmba zirɗɟamj(e) imbga]   LOC   cl5.field   cl10-sleep-PFV   AUG-cl10.dog
    '(the) dogs slept in the/a bush'

(Rufumbira)

(153c)   *mu (i)shyámba haryamyemó imbwa*   *mu*   *shyámba*   *ha-ryam-*ye=mó*   *i-mbwa*
    [mu ʃáːmba harɗɟamjehó (i)mbga]   LOC   cl5.field   cl16-sleep-PFV-ENCL   AUG-cl10.dog
    'the/some dogs slept in *the* bush'

In Rukiga, locative inversion functions according to the same syntactic principle. When the locative adjunct stands *in situ*, "the morpho-syntactic structure of the phrase does not indicate any presupposed familiarity of the locative nominal in question" (Asiimwe 2014: 147) but

when it becomes the logical subject of the sentence at the left periphery, it is treated as definite, as is also the case in Rufumbira (see 153c, *the* bush). This has to do with the fact that referents in clause-initial position often contain old or known information.

Altogether, structurally Rukiga and Rufumbira locative inversions do not look different at all. Despite the word-order change, either a locative marker (*omu/aha*) has to precede the logical subject, or – as Asiimwe (ibid.) states – "the occurrence of an appropriate locative resumptive pronominal is obligatory" [meaning postverbal enclitics *ho, mu, yo*] in Rukiga, and often the two are paired and in agreement with each other (see 154). This correlates with the common strategy employed in Rufumbira[95] (153c) (and, optionally, Kinyarwanda).

(Rukiga) (adapted from Asiimwe 2014: 146)

(154) *omu*   *n-ju*   *ha-aa-taah-a=mu*   *a-ba-gyenyi*
       IV-18.in   9-house   16-PASTim-enter-FV=18.in IV-2-visitor
       'in the house, there entered (some) visitors'

Kinyarwanda, however, goes further than that, and has a second more complex strategy (based on Bearth 2003). There is a two-step process in which first objectivization (omission of locative preposition, movement of locative complement to immediate postverbal position, cross-reference with locative enclitic *-mó/-hó*) takes place, followed by the advancement to subject (to the left) while "the subject marker (…) agrees with the inherent class of the subjectivized noun" (ibid., p.138) (see example 155a). Because of the necessity of maintaining the locative markers *ku/mu* in Rufumbira, this kind of objectivization + subjectivization cannot take place. This is the salient difference between the two varieties in terms of locative inversion. As stated above, this structure is equally ungrammatical in Rukiga (155b), and the locative marker *omu* cannot be omitted and *nju* subjectivized (with subject agreement).

(Kinyarwanda; ungrammatical in Rufumbira) (Bearth 2003: 137)

(155a) *ikibáaho*   *cyi-ra-andik-w-á-ho*   *amasómo*   *n'umwáalimu*
       blackboard   it-PRES-write-PASS-FV-LOC lessons   by teacher
       'The blackboard is being written lessons on by the teacher.'

[95] For the sake of completeness, it has to be noted that Asiimwe (2014: 146) also describes a different strategy which works in Rukiga, where the subject concord on the inflected verb corresponds with the logical object (the former logical subject), as in *omu nju **ba**ataahamu **aba**gyenyi* ('in the house, they have entered (there) the visitors'). This construction is not described for Kinyarwanda, nor does it seem to work in Rufumbira.

(155b)   *~~(o mu)~~   n-ju   e-taah-a=mu   a-ba-gyenyi

         IV-18.in   9-house   9-enter-FV-18.IN   IV-2-visitor

         'The blackboard is being written lessons on by the teacher.'

In Kinyarwanda, locative adjuncts can also be objectivized when the valency of verbs is increased through derivational affixes, as for instance with the causative suffix *-ish-*. This is explained by Kimenyi (2002: 35) as a process of "deleting these prepositions [*mu*] and adding suffixes to the verb". The locative enclitic is then attached to the finite verb. In Rufumbira (156a-156b), one of the complements still has to be marked as a locative adjunct through the use of the locative marker *mu*, which cannot be omitted as in Kinyarwanda. Bearth's (2003: 137) above-mentioned strategy of objectivization in Kinyarwanda, where "the locative complement is cross-referenced by the locative clitic (…)", does not work in Rufumbira with verbal extensions either; the locative marker preceding the locative complement has to be maintained in any case.

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 35)

(156a)   *arahíingisha-mó isúka umuríma ibijuumba*   a-ra-híing-ish-a=mó i-súka   u-mu-ríma   i-bi-juumba

         [arahí:ŋgiʃamó isúk(a) umurím(a) iβiʒu:mba] 3sg-PRG-dig-FV=ENCL AUG-hoe AUG-cl3-field AUG-cl8-sw.potato

         'he is planting sweet potatoes in the field with

         a hoe'

(Rufumbira)

(156b)   *ahíngisha-mó isúka mu umuríma ibijumba*   a-híng-ish-a=mó i-súka   mu u-mu-ríma   i-bi-jumba

         [ahí:ŋgiʃamó isúk(a) mu(u)murím(a) iβiʒu:mba] 3sg-dig-FV=ENCL AUG-hoe LOC AUG-cl3-field AUG-cl8-sw.pot.

         '(s)he plants sweet potatoes in the field with a

         hoe'

Another difference occurs when the two objects form a possessor+possessum construction of inalienable possession. In Kinyarwanda, they do not have to be linked through a connective in a 'possessor raising' structure; in Rufumbira, they do. This is also a sign of the more configurational syntax in Rufumbira, and shows that the reversal of objects does not replace possessive relationships which usually require a connective whose agreement depends upon the possessor (157a-157b).

---

[96] This example is supposed to express that when the locative marker in the locative complement is omitted and the subject concord on the inflected verb is now congruent with the noun (*nju*), the construction becomes ungrammatical in Rukiga, despite the locative enclitic (*mu*) being in verb-final position. Bafumbira with good knowledge of Rukiga rejected this (constructed) example.

(Kinyarwanda) (adapted from Kimenyi 2002: 34)

(157a) *umugore aríibuka umugabo izína* u-mu-gore a-r(a)-íi-buk-a u-mu-gabo i-zína

[umugore aríːβuk(a) umugaβ(o) izína] AUG-cl1-child 3sg-PRG-hit-FV AUG-cl1-man AUG-cl5-name

'the woman remembers the man's name'

(Rufumbira)

(157b) *arí kwíbuk(a) izína ry'umugabo* a-rí kw-íbuka i-zína ry' u-mu-gabo

[arí kʌíːβuk(a) izína rdʒ(a)'umugaβ(o)] 3sg-be INF-remember AUG-cl5-name cl5:CONN AUG-cl1-man

'the woman remembers the man's name'

My data on the contrastive polarity of syntactic variants in Kinyarwanda, as opposed to a more rigid realization in Rufumbira, is to some extent also based on the applied research method of confronting speakers with the examples found in the variety across the border. From the beginning this clearly had to trigger a response of rejection or an ascription of ungrammaticality in relation to Rufumbira. Speakers who were involved in judging the Kinyarwanda sentences by Kimenyi (2002) *knew* how Kinyarwanda syntax is constructed, and might at times, when interacting with Rwandans or speakers of other JD60 varieties, adapt the syntactic frame of Rufumbira and be less rigid in spoken interaction. However, when explicitly asked in exolingual speech events, a clear structural difference is constructed since Bafumbira's linguistic identity is at stake.

A speaker's knowledge of Rukiga also plays a crucial role in inversion processes. While not all phenomena may occur as a consequence of speakers' metatypy from one language to another (cf. Ross 2007, among others), despite there being similar or identical construction types in Rufumbira and Rukiga (e.g., restricted locative inversion, which does not allow the two-step objectivization + subjectivization processes with the loss of locative agreement as in Kinyarwanda), speakers may feel more at ease when using the deviating (non-Kinyarwanda) structure, as found in Giles' communication accommodation theory (Giles & Smith 1979)[97]. We find a large number of Bakiga, i.e. speakers of Rukiga (and nowadays also more and more Baganda, i.e. speakers of Luganda), in Kisoro. Many Bafumbira also move to Kabale (Rukiga-dominated) in order to study, or to Kampala (Luganda-dominated). Rukiga and Luganda therefore play an important role in Bafumbira's social interactions. Bafumbira thus prefer using a syntactic frame that exists in all of their everyday languages as a process of communication accommodation, especially if it matches the overall configuration of Rufumbira with a more rigid word order than is found in Kinyarwanda.

When no contrast in speech is needed, and in cases where speakers wish to express less contrastive polarity, they may at times use Kinyarwanda syntax (as becomes evident when carefully checking the data presented in Sauder's (2009) grammar sketch). It may be that a

---

[97] See also the more exhaustive explanations on Giles' theory in Chapter 3.

deviating structure in inversion processes turns out to be an aesthetic or stylistic feature rather than a fixed contact-induced feature.

4.3.4 Negative contrastive topicalization

While the negation of topicalized direct objects often occurs in varieties such as Kirundi (JD62) without a direct change in meaning, this structure usually expresses contrastivity in Rufumbira, and does not constitute a free variant to the common word order. Kirundi speakers state that *"les phrases ont la même signification mais sont construites de façon différentes"* [the sentences have the same meaning but are constructed in different ways] (Eloi Niragira, March 2016) (see 158a-158b).

In Rufumbira, a clear difference is made, and the negated topicalized structure is less often employed than the regular one, since it expresses contrast through the left-dislocation of the topicalized object, following the pre-initial negative marker and preceding the inflected verb (see 159a-159b). Sentence (159b) was thus uttered by someone who had just been invited for lunch in a restaurant, and was asked for money by a passerby. The construction therefore indicated that the person had food, but not any *money*.

	(Kirundi)		
(158a)	*simfise amafaranga*	*si=m-fise*	*a-ma-faranga*
	[simfis(e) amafaraŋga]	NEG:1sg =1sg-have	AUG-cl6-money
	'I do not have money'		

	(Kirundi)		
(158b)	*nta amafaranga mfise*	*nta*	*a-ma-faranga*	*m-fise*
	[nt(a) amafaraŋga simfise]	NEG	AUG-cl6-money	1sg-have
	'I do not have money'		

	(Rufumbira)		
(159a)	*ntaabwo mfite isente*	*ntaabwo*	*m-fite*	*i-sente*
	[ntʰabgo mfit(e) iseːntẹ]	NEG	1sg-have	AUG-cl9.money
	'I do not have money'		

	(Rufumbira)		
(159b)	*ntaa isente mfite*	*ntaa*	*i-sente*	*m-fite*
	[ntʰaː (i)seːnte mfitẹ]	NEG	AUG-cl9.money	1sg-have
	'I do not have *money* (even though someone bought something for me and it looks as if I did)'		

It becomes obvious that both Kirundi (as shown in the example presented) and Kinyarwanda (as discussed in the entire chapter) allow less rigid word orders in most cases. Word order variation thus becomes less salient in languages with dynamic syntactic patterns; this is not

the case for Rufumbira, nor for adjacent Kinyabwisha (DR Congo), where a similarly configurational syntax is found. Deviations such as topicalization in negation are therefore still perceived as more meaningful components in terms of differentiation, and may also express contrastivity. Topicalized structures have undergone less linguistic inflation and are semantically contrastive.

In Kinyabwisha though, the pattern seems more complex, and is bound to different age groups and the timeframe of speech events. Negative inversion has mostly become arbitrary among young speakers, and is thus treated as a free – but rare – variation, while it still expresses emphasis among elderly speakers. The inverted structure then marks a contrastive topicalization strategy, as explained by the linguist Paulin Baraka Bose (March 2016):

> *Normalement, tous les deux, les gens les confondent. Mais pour les veillards, et les gens un peu agés, quand ils disent* **ndabwo mfite amafaranga** *[ndaabgo mfit(e) amafaraŋga][98], peut-être ça signifie que j'avais de l'argent, mais ce temps-ci je n'ai plus d'argent,* **ndabwo mfite amafaranga ino mínsi, zino mínsi**, *tu vois, ce dernier temps j'ai plus d'argent. Ou j'avais, et je n'ai plus. Actuellement je suis 'broke', mais j'ai de l'argent souvent. Nda… et l'autre la ça signifie que je n'ai* **pas vraiment** *l'argent, peut-être je n'avais pas vraiment, et je n'ai pas. Parce que avec* **nda amafaranga mfite** *[ndaa (a)mafaraŋga mfite], tu peux me demander: 'Ah, Paulin, on peut aller à la plage?' – Vendredi je dis '***Nico, ꜛnda amafaranga mfite***!' Tu vois, ça signifie que je n'ai pas cette capacité… ça se constate souvent avec les gens de 'troisième âge', les grands adultes, mais déjà si c'est des jeunes, la jeunesse, ils confondent tout et ça n'a pas vraiment des grandes différences.*

[Normally, people confuse both. But for the elderly, people of old age, when they say **ndabwo mfite amafaranga** [I don't have money] maybe it means that I used to have money but nowadays I no longer have it, **ndabwo mfite amafaranga ino mínsi, zino mínsi** [I do not have money these days, these days], you see 'recently I no longer have money (left)'. Or I had it, and don't have it. Now I am broke but usually I often have some. Nda… and the other one means that I **really** don't have money, maybe I didn't really have, and I don't have. Because with **nda amafaranga mfite** [I don't have money], you can ask me: 'So, Paulin, are we going to the beach?' – Friday I say: **Nico, ꜛnda amafaranga mfite!'** [Nico, I don't have money; *voice rising*]. You see, it means that I am not able to do it… it often shows itself with people "of the third age", old adults, but with youth already, they confuse it all and it doesn't really make a big difference.]

This shows that the common NEGVO structure negates a current state, may contain new information, and refers to a proximate timeframe of the event/action referred to (i.e., the person has no money *right now*). When the inverted NEGOV structure is used, the emphasis lies on a state, contains old/background information, and embraces a more general pre- to post-

---

[98] According to speakers, long vowels are not marked orthographically in Kinyabwisha, in contrast to Rufumbira. This is why this distinction is not made in the Kinyabwisha examples provided.

hodiernal timeframe of the event/action in question (i.e., the person generally has *no* money). In both languages, Rufumbira and Kinyabwisha, the inversion is therefore a syntactic phenomenon that serves as a focus strategy, and differs from the more flexible and dynamic syntactic structures generally found in Kirundi or Kinyarwanda. Kimenyi (1979: 182) gives no indication that syntactic topicalization in negation marks contrastive focus in Kinyarwanda, but does show that either the direct object or the indirect one can be topicalized (see examples 160a-160b) when used with ditransitive verbs, while topicalization simply emphasizes the negation ('not *any…*') and regulates definiteness relations among constituents ('*the* child' vs. '*the* book').

(Kinyarwanda/Rufumbira) (Kimenyi 1979: 182)

(160a)	*ntaa*	*mwáana*	*abagoré*	*bá-záa-ha*	*igitabo*
	NEG	child	women	they-FUT-give	book

'the women won't give the book to any child'

(Kinyarwanda) (Kimenyi 1979: 182)

(160b)	*ntaa*	*gitabo*	*abagoré*	*bá-záa-ha*	*úmwáana*
	NEG	book	women	they-FUT-give	child

'the women won't give the child any book'

It is not surprising that Rufumbira only allows the topicalization of one object (160a) but not of both when ditransitive verbs occur, since (160b) was described as ungrammatical. This is another example of a significant syntactic variation in Rufumbira, in contrast to more flexible construction types.

4.3.5 Conjoint-disjoint tense-aspect marking

A conjoint-disjoint distinction in TAM systems of African languages has been studied by a range of scholars, e.g. by Kraal (2009) on the Bantu language Makonde, where a complex system of syntactic conjoint-disjoint markers is found. The tense-aspect system found in many JD60 varieties was first described as a system with a conjoint-disjoint distinction by Meeussen (1959) for Kirundi, with a more recent and detailed analysis provided by Ngoboka & Zeller (2015) for Kinyarwanda. The same phenomenon has been studied by other scholars on the level of information structure, classifying it as $+/-$ action focus (Givón 1972), as COMP focus vs. VP focus (Givón 1975), and later as conjunctive–disjunctive (Creissels 1996).

Kinyarwanda differentiates between different prefixed realizations ($\varnothing$ vs. *-ra-*) which are allomorphs in complementary distribution, depending on the syntactic structure of the predicate. Kraal (2009: 285) explains this syntactic phenomenon by paraphrasing Creissels, stating that "only the disjunctive form can be used in final sentence position, implying a break between the verb and what follows". In contrast, he proposes that "the use of a conjunctive

form means that the verb is followed by an element which belongs to the clause in which the verb in question fulfills the predicate function, and that this element provides some new information". A very similar and rigid distinction is made in Kinyarwanda, where several tense and aspect markers are affected by a conjoint-disjoint dichotomy, depending on the syntactic structure of the predicate, and marking different underlying information structures. Kimenyi (2002: 190) notes that "the distinction between conjunct and disjunct forms is made in certain tenses only in the affirmative verb form of main clauses", while negated verbs and verbs in subordinate clauses all take the disjunct form.

According to Kimenyi (2002: 190-193), the tense and aspect forms that are morphologically marked in this way (labeled as 'conjunct verb forms') are the habitual aspect ('habitual tense' according to Kimenyi), the perfective present (both characterized by the already introduced ∅ vs. *-ra-* distinction), the recent past (with the insertion of *-a-*), the participial recent past[99], the remote past, the narrative/consecutive (distinguished through tone from the disjunct structure) and the conditional (also with a tonal distinction). The disjunct predicates are always the marked ones in Kinyarwanda, while the conjunct ones are never marked.

However, Ngoboka & Zeller (2015) present a slightly different system, giving a more detailed account. They list the simple present and the present perfective[100] as tense-aspect forms with a disjoint marker *-ra-*, and a conjoint HT neutralization in the verb stem. The Rufumbira tense-aspect system has already been described as deviant from standardized Kinyarwanda (see Section 4.2), not only in terms of the verb morphology and tense-aspect distinctions but also in terms of information structure, such as conjoint-disjoint marking. In Rufumbira, most speakers still realize a distinction between conjoint and disjoint structures in terms of affixation in the present tense (161a-161b); however, no prosodic neutralization occurs and lexical tones are largely maintained (as shown in 161c). Yet in the collected corpus I found examples where speakers had omitted the disjoint marker, especially with the suffixed imperfective *-ag-* (forming habitual aspect), and had realized conjoint and disjoint constructions alike (161d).

(Rufumbira, present tense/CJ [∅])

(161a) *bakúnda ibishyíimbo*   *ba-kúnd-a*   *i-bi-shyíimbo*

[βakúːnd(a) iβiçíːmbo]   3pl-love-FV   AUG-cl8-bean

'they love beans'

---

[99] Kimenyi (2002: 191-192) does not discuss adequate examples for a conjoint-disjoint distinction in this past tense.

[100] The present perfective correlates with what is called 'immediate past' throughout the present study on Rufumbira. It is characterized by a zero TAM prefix (∅) and the verb-final perfective *-ye*, as in *nshoboye* ('I just could/I can'), from *gushobora*. It is very rare in Rufumbira (and in Kinyabwisha, too).

(Rufumbira, present tense/DJ [-*ra*-])

(161b) *umutwé gwanjye gurambabaza*   *u-mu-twé*   *gw-anjye*   *gu-ra-m-babaz-a*

[umutkʌ́mé gʍanɟe guɾamβaβaza]   AUG-cl1-head   cl3-POSS1sg   cl3-DJ-1sgO-hurt-FV

'my head hurts' (no temp. specification)

(Rufumbira, present tense/DJ [-*ra*-])

(161c) *ndagukúnda*   *n-*ra-gu-kúnd-a*

[ndagukú:nda]   1sg-DJ-2sgO-love-FV

'I love you'

(Rufumbira, present imperfective; habitual/DJ [∅])

(161d) *bagikóraga*   *ba-gi-kór-ag-a*

[βaɟikóɾaga]   3pl-cl7O-work-IMPV-FV

'they (usually) do it/work on it'

The present perfective is quasi absent in Rufumbira, and only occurs with certain specific verbs, such as *gushira* ('to end, to pass') in temporal adverbial constructions. There is no disjoint affix -*ra*- in Rufumbira in the few instances where the present perfective is actually used (see 162, marked in bold).

(Rufumbira, present perfective; immediate past/DJ [∅])

(162) *yagarutse umwáka* **gushize**   *a-a-*garuk-*ye*   *u-mw-áka*   *gu-∅-*shir-*ye*

[jagaɾuts(e) umɡá:ka guʃizẹ]   3sg-PST1-return-FV   AUG-cl3-year   cl3-DJ-pass-PFV

'(s)he returned last year [lit.: the year just passed]'

As far as the near past, labeled 'recent past' in the present study, is concerned, Ngoboka & Zeller state that "the H tone of lexically H-toned verbs is deleted in the CJ verb form, but retained in DJ form" (see 163a). They also explain "that the DJ form is segmentally marked with the morpheme -*a*-" (ibid., p.3) (163b). In Kinyarwanda, the tense marker for the recent past is already -*a*-, and is thus lengthened to -*aa*- when followed by a disjoint marker (see Ngoboka & Zeller 2015: 3-4).

In contrast, Rufumbira speakers use a LT prefix -*a*- for the recent past, both in conjoint and disjoint forms – and thus without any additional prefix -*a*- (see 164a-164b). Thus, lengthening of -*a*- (*-*aa*-) does not occur in Rufumbira disjoint forms. Interestingly, the recent past is always marked with a low tone, and does not trigger any prosodic changes in the verb root, while the Kinyarwanda HT in verb roots is deleted in conjoint forms. The realization of tone is therefore no longer dependent upon the syntactic structure of the predicate.

(Kinyarwanda, CJ [∅]) (Ngoboka & Zeller 2015: 4)

(163a) *umwáarimu yakoze akazi keénshi*   *u-mw-áarimu*   *a-a-kór-*ye*   *a-kazi*   *ka-ínshi*

'the teacher has done a lot of work'   AUG-cl1-teacher   3sg-PST1-PFV   AUG-cl9. money   cl12-QUANT

(Kinyarwanda, DJ [-*a*-]) (Ngoboka & Zeller 2015: 4)

(163b) *umwáarimu yaakóze*   *u-mw-áarimu*   *a-a-a-*kór-*ye*

'the teacher worked'   AUG-cl1-teacher   3sg-PST1-DJ-work-PFV

(Rufumbira, CJ [∅])

(164a) *inka zaríiye ibyátsi*   *i-nka*   *za-a-*ry-*ye*   *i-by-átsi*

[inkʰa zaríːj(e) iβjátsi]   AUG-cl10.cow   cl10-PST1-eat-PFV   AUG-cl8-grass

'the cows ate grass'

(Rufumbira, DJ [∅])

(164b) *abakobwa basetse*   *a-ba-kobwa*   *ba-a-*sek-*ye*

[aβakobga βasetsȩ]   AUG-cl1-teacher   3pl-PST1-laugh-PFV

'the girls laughed'

In Kinyarwanda, this difference between conjoint and disjoint generally applies to both perfective and imperfective forms, but in Rufumbira the distinction is omitted in imperfective forms too, as shown in (165a-165b). The lexical tonal patterns are maintained, as can be seen in both examples.

(Rufumbira, recent past imperfective DJ [∅])

(165a) *iyi imínsi twahúuriraga*   *iyi*   *i-mi-ínsi*   *tu-a-húur-ir-ag-a*

[iji (i)mínːsi tkʌahúːriraga]   cl4:DEM   AUG-cl4-day   1pl-PST1-wait-APPL-IMPV-FV

'these days we have been waiting'

(Rufumbira, recent past imperfective CJ [∅])

(165b) *yakóraga umurímo we*   *a-a-kór-ag-a*   *u-mu-rímo*   *we*

[jakórag(a) umurímo ʍe]   3sg-PST1-work-IMPV-FV   AUG-cl3-work   cl3:POSS3sg

'(s)he used to do her work repeatedly'

According to Ngoboka & Zeller (2015), the conjoint-disjoint alternation also affects the remote past (perfective and imperfective) in Kinyarwanda. While the general remote past tense marker is -*á*- in Kinyarwanda, it is prone to tone shift in specific conjoint structures. In particular, "the DJ form of the remote past tense is marked segmentally with the morpheme –*ra*-" (ibid., p.5), but also triggers a range of prosodic changes. These include (1) HT loss on H-toned verbs in the conjoint form, (2) HT addition on toneless verbs in the disjoint form, (3) HT loss on H-toned verbs in the conjoint forms with a HT shift to the radical, (4) HT shift with toneless verbs from tense marker to the radical, (5) HT loss with H-toned verbs in the

conjoint forms, H of tense marker shifts onto object marker, (6) HT shift with toneless verbs from tense marker to object marker, (7) HT shift with H-toned verbs/toneless verbs from tense marker to disjoint -ra-, with either deletion, retention or addition of HT on radical (see ibid., pp.4-8).

In Rufumbira, the remote past does have a functioning conjoint-disjoint alternation, with the prefix -ra- for disjoint constructions (see 166-167), and with no marker for conjoint constructions (168-169). The tonal patterns (high tone on the tense marker -á-; no lexical tone change) are maintained and reveal no alternation in either construction. Moreover, the prefix -á- always keeps its HT, and the prosodic marking of the radical of the verb is only affected by the conjoint-disjoint alternation when two high tones follow each other. This is not possible, according to Meeussen's rule, and one of the two high tones is neutralized (HH becomes HL; see also example (168) with a HT perfective radical). This corresponds with Ngoboka & Zeller's (2015) above-mentioned rule (1) in Kinyarwanda.

	(Rufumbira, remote past DJ [-ra-])		
(166)	*nako káratinye*	*na-ko*	*ka-á-ra-*tiny-*ye*
	[nako káratiɲje]	cl4:DEM	cl12-PST2-DJ-fear-PFV
	'and it [the small child] was also scared'		

	(Rufumbira, remote past DJ [-ra-])		
(167)	*náramuteruye*	*na-á-ra-mu-*terur-*ye*	
	[náramuteruje]	1sg-PST2-DJ-3sgO-lift.up-PFV	
	'I carried him/her (long ago)'		

	(Rufumbira, remote past CJ [∅])		
(168)	*abána báriye (*báríye) amatunda*	*a-ba-ána*	*ba-á-*ry-*ye*	*a-ma-tunda*
	[aβáːna βáriːj(e) amatunda]	DEM-cl2-child	3pl-PST2-eat-PFV	AUG-cl6-fruit
	'the children ate fruits'			

	(Rufumbira, remote past CJ [∅])		
(169)	*ikáramu yánditse umugani*	*i-káramu*	*i-á-*andik-*ye*	*u-mu-gani*
	[ikáramu jáːndits(e) umugani]	AUG-cl9.pen	cl9-PST2-write-PFV	AUG-cl3-story
	'a pen noted (/was used to note) the story'			

The most salient features in Rufumbira in terms of conjoint-disjoint alternation thus include free variations on the level of present tense disjoint forms, with some speakers realizing a disjoint marker -ra-, while others tend to omit it in interaction. Furthermore, the realization of the tense marker -a- for the recent past without lengthening (due to an additional segmental disjoint marker -a- in Kinyarwanda) is a phonological reduction, which is not found in stand-ardized Kinyarwanda across the border. The remote past tense marker -á- is maintained in

Rufumbira in all surroundings, and so is the general segmental conjoint-disjoint alternation (∅ vs. -*ra*-). The tonal changes in conjoint-disjoint structures, however, differ significantly from Kinyarwanda. Lexical tone (in verb roots) is therefore not affected at all by syntactic alternation in the recent past tense, and in the remote past tense only by Meeussen's rule. Speakers emphasized that "what happened recently goes always down [is marked with LT], what happened long ago is always high [is marked with HT]" (two Rufumbira interlocutors, March 2016), thus clearly differentiating between the prosodic structure of recent actions/events vs. remote actions/events, unaffected by the syntactic structure or prosodic surroundings. This can be seen as phonological hypercorrection of shifting tones due to a fixed paradigmatic contrast in Rufumbira (between recent past -*a*- and remote past -*á*- in all surroundings). Fixed prosodic features of tense and aspect markers therefore seem to be more emblematic in speakers' temporal frame than the morphological affixation strategies that are prone to alternation when used in conjoint or disjoint structures. In all other tense and aspect forms, no conjoint-disjoint alternation could be found.

We therefore observe both morphological retention from Kinyarwanda on the segmental level (for the present tense and the remote past tense) or omission of a conjoint-disjoint distinction (for the recent past tense), while morphological tone is always unaffected by syntactic structures. It can thus be assumed that phonological conjoint-disjoint features – if we consider the recent past -*a*- affixation as a vowel lengthening process – were lost more easily than segmental marking, which is too prominent to be simply omitted at this intermediate stage in Rufumbira. However, the morphological/segmental alternations may eventually also be dropped, as has occurred in the remote past tense in adjacent Kinyabwisha (DR Congo). In Kinyabwisha, conjoint-disjoint marking is no longer morphologically marked for any past tense, and only occurs in the present tense as a free variation. The disjoint marker -*ra*-, which is still employed in Rufumbira with the remote past, has turned into a general remote past tense prefix in Kinyabwisha when used together with the perfective suffix *-*ye*. This is shown in examples (170-171), which would be conjoint forms in Rufumbira, without segmental marking.

(Kinyabwisha, remote past tense)

(170) *narabónye igikweta*   *na-ra-bón-ye*   *i-gi-kweta*

[naraβonje (i)ɟikмeːta]   1sg-PST2-see-PFV   AUG-cl7-python

'I saw a python (long ago)'

(Kinyabwisha, remote past tense)

(171) *umugabo yaragurishije amaterefóne*   *u-mu-gabo*   *ya-ra-gur-ish-*ye*   *a-ma-terefóne*

[umugaβo jaraguriʃiʒ(e) amateрefóne]   AUG-cl1-man   3sg-PST2-buy-CAUS-PFV   AUG-cl6-phone

'the man sold (the) phones'

Fewer morpho-phonological alternations in the conjoint-disjoint system, and a tendency to prefer a paradigmatic contrast between prosodically independent tense markers, matches the overall analysis of a more configurational and less flexible syntactic structure in Rufumbira (with fixed morphological and prosodic features, as well). When comparing Rufumbira with the two languages Luganda and Rukiga, with which speakers are in daily contact, we realize that neither of the latter has an inherent conjoint-disjoint alternation, which may explain the reduction of these patterns in Rufumbira as a phenomenon of convergence, standing in stark contrast to Kinyarwanda constructions.

4.3.6 Concluding thoughts on syntactic variation

Altogether, when summarizing the syntactic core features of Rufumbira, the language appears to be more configurational than standardized Kinyarwanda, the latter allowing numerous modifications of the word order, namely in object-subject inversion, locative inversion and negative inversion. The ambiguity found in Kinyarwanda relative clauses also emphasizes the stricter (and less ambiguous) construction types in Rufumbira. The more rigid word order, as attested in the data discussed here, is consistent with the observations that a reduced system of conjoint-disjoint differentiations occurs, too.

The deviant stylistic construction of a sentence as a sign of syntactic variation (cf. Gerritsen & Stein 1992a) that does not resemble Kinyarwanda can therefore be seen as a matching alternative in the context of speaking. Speakers themselves would rarely employ the dialectic judgments of "wrong" and "correct" when describing Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira syntax, but would underline that *one* construction type would be Kinyarwanda, while the *other one* would be Rufumbira; another might be Kinyabishwa. During an interview with one of the main interlocutors in the course of the study, I tried to find out why some of Sauder's (2009) assistants, and Doris Sauder herself, had apparently opted for the more Kinyarwanda-like forms and structures in the grammar sketch, and what my assistant thought about this. He stated that

> I think she was dealing with words which are in Kinyarwanda and can still be used in Rufumbira… because if you take this [the more Kinyarwanda-like example] to a reverend in church [who assisted D. Sauder] and **ask him 'tell me this in Kinyarwanda and then in Rufumbira!' he will also change.** (Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016)

I then further asked him if the Kinyarwanda form would be seen as "correct" among Bafumbira, and he answered "it will be correct, but then if you tell 'and in Rufumbira?' because now you want a different word in Kinyarwanda and Rufumbira, he will also bring out a different thing in this." This means that Kinyarwanda forms and structures are not inadequate or incorrect per se in Rufumbira but that Rufumbira variants are preferred when a contrastive approach and view are intended. The speaker's realizations, and the choices (s)he makes, therefore depend upon the expectations of the hearer, and upon the hearer's stance in

the interaction. The tendency is that elderly speakers will opt for either the Kinyarwanda or the Rufumbira construction, while younger and middle-aged speakers' first choice will be the more Rufumbira-like structured equivalent.

The stylistic variability beyond judgments of "right" or "wrong" is dealt with by Wittgenstein (1966: 8) in his lectures on aesthetics, describing the insufficiency of applying either label when assessing and describing, for instance, tailor-made clothes, styles of architecture or musical compositions, since all of the latter "play[s] an entirely different role with us. The entire *game* is different…". He further emphasizes that "expressions of aesthetic judgement play a very complicated role, but a very definite role, in a culture of a period" (ibid.). The entire 'game' of using Rufumbira or using Kinyarwanda is different, and touches upon layers of iconization and iconic identification (cf. Irvine & Gal 2000), since the choice of language can be seen as speakers' indexical choice. The syntactic frame of Rufumbira thus marks speakers' orientation toward Ugandan Bantu languages such as Rukiga and Luganda, and also incorporates English morphology as a linguistic strategy of 'border thinking'.

5. LANGUAGE IN SOCIAL INTERACTION:

RUFUMBIRA AND ITS SOCIOPRAGMATIC CONTEXT

"Through the purist register, therefore, speakers voice values and stances of the ethnolinguistic group's self-conscious reflexive authentification and differentiation from other groups."
(Makihara 2007: 57, *Linguistic Purism in Rapa Nui Political Discourse*)

Linguistic distinctiveness, as analyzed for a "Rufumbira way of speaking" in the border triangle of Uganda, Rwanda and the DR Congo, is not only achieved on a phonological or morphosyntactic level, but also at the interface of interactional speech behavior and pragmatic strategies. The present chapter aims to give an overview of language use in context among Bafumbira, and of how speakers define their identity in their interactions. This includes some brief observations on **distinctive naming practices** and the power of speakers' English vs. French first names (5.1), followed by some thoughts on different linguistic conceptualizations of **conflict** (5.2) and pragmatic change. The overview then touches upon the "unspeakable" in Rufumbira, dealing with **linguistic taboos** (5.3), and analyzes different **greeting registers** as employed in all three border languages (5.4). Finally, the frequent use of **modal particles** from Luganda is analyzed as a pragmatic strategy (5.5).

It is interesting how speakers create a difference through divergent phonology and morphosyntax in the context of 'border thinking'. However, it is even more essential to analyze the parameters of social interaction in order to grasp the entire sociopragmatic context in which 'Rufumbira' is constructed in discourse by its speakers. Salient differences are observable when speakers reveal insights into taboo topics and (non-)conformity in language use in public spaces. The language ideologies according to which speakers differentiate between 'polite language', 'transgressive language' and '(in)appropriate language' in their variety show how they construct their identity in contrast to the closely related languages Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha in the adjacent borderlands.

As stated in the introduction to this study, conversations about sex, public images of nudity, open-mindedness in discourse toward 'dirty dancing', prostitution, flirting and dating (among others) are social phenomena that are taboo (and not addressed in public by speakers) in Eastern DR Congo, and are also quite rare across the border in Rwanda. In the constant liminality of the borderlands, where collisions with divergent linguistic and cultural systems and the inescapability of the confrontation with the allegedly Other are steady endeavors, different modes of dealing with disorder and 'chaos' become evident. In post-genocide Rwanda, strict policies and laws were established as a strategy of preventing chaos, ethnicized confrontations and preserving cultural values, while Congolese rather stick to established

traditions and more traditional forms of interaction, whereas Bafumbira adopt a liminal, and at times chaotic way of addressing taboo topics, as shown in the following.

The anthropologist Bertrand Hell (2012: 21)[101] mentions the *'Dynamik der Unordnung'* ('dynamics of disorder') in his paper on the *Tohuwabohu der Grenzgänger* ('hullaballoo of the (border) crossers'), where he refers to a 'complex theory of chaos', describing that the breaking of norms and rules can be seen as a strategy of mastering threatening disorder and chaos. The appropriation of liminality in interaction in the border zone, when using transgressive language and overthrowing linguistic norms, helps Bafumbira to deal with liminal encounters, linguistic contestations and re-negotiations of spatial belonging and identity.

> *"Das die Norm verletzende Handeln ist unlösbar mit einer Grundeigenschaft verbunden, mit der **Fähigkeit, die Unordnung zu meistern**. Um dem bedrohlichen Chaos zu entkommen, muss man selbst die **Attribute des Liminalen tragen, muss man sich in einen "Grenzgänger" verwandelt haben**. In dieser Situation ist es von existenzieller Bedeutung, die gewohnte Ordnung der Dinge umzustürzen (…)".*

> [Norm-breaking actions are insolubly bound to a common characteristic, to the **ability to master the disorder.** In order to escape the threatening chaos, one has to **carry the attributes of liminality, one has to transform into a "(border) crosser".** In this situation it is essential to overthrow the usual order of things (…)] (Hell 2012: 19)[102]

According to Hell, Bafumbira turn into 'crossers', not necessarily by crossing geographical boundaries but by overcoming established concepts of transgression and "pure" language by addressing sex, intoxication and impurity. Chaotic and non-normative language (also in terms of non-standard variation, see Chapters 3–4) is a disorderly response to Rwandan order and Congolese traditionalism.

Going beyond the divergences in linguistic realizations analyzed in Chapters 3–4, in these cases it is rather the choice of topic that (re)constructs a salient 'border' between Bafumbira, Banyabwisha and Banyarwanda in the true sense of the word. Taboo language, and forms of transgression when referring to it in speech, have a great potential to provide a deeper insight into the cultural foundations of speakers' social practices. Just like linguistic forms, these practices may be prone to contact-induced change, variation and deliberate rejection, in cases where they appear to speakers as being too similar to the practices found in neighboring varieties. The following sections will therefore focus on discursive practice, spoken interaction and principles of sociopragmatic differentiation in this border area.

---

[101] I am particularly grateful to Anne Storch for her inspiration concerning the importance of chaos and liminality in Bafumbira's speech.

[102] Rough translation by the present author.

5.1 Naming and labeling

In the given setting, where traditions, clan affiliations, rituals and feasts are almost identical, speakers necessarily find other means of differentiation between varieties. This happens predominantly on a linguistic or pragmatic level, and becomes obvious in interaction, for instance when naming people. While 'old names', i.e. names of places, landmarks, honorifics that are used when referring to elderly Bafumbira, do not play a salient role in processes of differentiation, the practices of naming newborn children do.

Surnames cannot be differentiated in the borderland of all three countries. They mainly carry a religious meaning, and often include the name of God (*-(i)mana*); they are chosen by the parents when the person is born, and need to have a specific meaning. However, the surnames that parents choose from usually occur in all three borderlands (such as the name *Nsabiyumva* 'pray to God who hears', which is used in Rwanda, Congo and Uganda). Distinctiveness is therefore achieved through the diverging Christian names that people are given in Rwanda, DR Congo and Uganda. Bafumbira are aware that either an English or a French name can have an indexical value in a context where no differentiation is made by a surname, since English or French first names link speakers' identity with an alleged Ugandan, Rwandan or Congolese origin.[103] Bodenhorn & vom Bruck (2006: 3) state in their introduction to an anthropological study on names and naming that

> [b]ecause **others usually name us**, the act of naming has the potential to implicate infants in relations through which they become inserted into and, ultimately will act upon, **a social matrix**. Individual lives thus **become entangled – through the name – in the life histories of others**. (…) Babies – and often names themselves – are frequently assumed to have significant agency.

This social matrix, based on the geolinguistic distribution of names, is an important component in naming practices in Kisoro: while a French name hints at a Rwandan or Congolese origin, an English name suggests a Ugandan origin. By referring to their English or French names as clear indications of identity, speakers refer to the colonial powers, to the missionary campaigns of baptizing and counting Christian souls and distributing Christian names in a colonial system, while eradicating local names, established ritual labels and former indices of identity. The fresh use of Christian names as remnant traces of coloniality in a context of border thinking and linguistic differentiation is a striking example of Mignolo's 'relocation of the thinking' in a postcolonial context.

Similar strategies are observable in the linguistic landscapes in Kisoro, where the use of English (in contrast to French in Bunagana, DR Congo, and Kinyarwanda/English/French

---

[103] This has already been briefly introduced in Chapter 2, although without going into detail. The analysis of names is essential for the study of Rufumbira, since naming always encompasses the construction (and ascription) of identities.

in Cyanika, Rwanda) on signposts, billboards and shops has an emblematic value (see also Section 2.2.1). 'Naming' the landscapes around Kisoro Town with English words, and flooding it with a multitude of (sometimes obfuscating) signposts marks ownership and Bafumbira's distinctive practices of labeling their environment. Figure 5.1 shows numerous overlapping signposts in front of a craft shop at the main road in Kisoro, all held in English and reading (among others) 'Staff only', 'Camping area', 'Out of bounds…' and 'Drinks and meals from outside not allowed'. Apart from the hardly legible smaller ones, at least four other larger inscriptions can be discerned. The visual arrangement of as many English signs as possible appears chaotic and bewildering to non-initiated visitors.

Figure 5.1: English signposts and advertising signs at a craft shop in Kisoro

Naming practices are important due to speakers' practice of naming their own language. Rufumbira is a distinctive label in its own right, and has to be defended, justified and filled with distinctiveness (in its phonology, morphosyntax and lexicon). Turning Rufumbira and the Bafumbira culture into an easily recognizable label is done not only for nationalistic reasons, or as a form of fashionable distinction, but is part of an inevitable process of identity creation.

Some Banyabwisha say *"il n'a jamais eu une langue appelée Rufumbira"* [there has never been a language called Rufumbira]. This was a claim made by the Kinyabwisha-

speaking linguist Paulin Baraka Bose (March 2016) when explaining to a speaker of Kirundi what Rufumbira allegedly meant, after the Kirundi speaker from Bujumbura stated that he had never heard of a language called 'Rufumbira'. To deny the existence of a language and cultural entity 'Rufumbira/Bafumbira' is a very powerful practice: questioning or denying someone's name is an imperialist practice and is reminiscent of Northern colonial endeavors in the Global South, where existing place names, self-designations and existing practices of labeling the environment were replaced by names that had emerged in a Northern episteme and that brought with them unequal power constellations. When Bafumbira are threatened by linguistic neighbors who deny their language and culture, they find themselves in a context where they have to rebuild and reinforce colonial borders both linguistically and also sociopragmatically.

The weakening of one's neighbor's name strengthens one's own adopted label, and makes the former a copy of the latter, a mimetic wiedergänger (i.e. a form of reappearing zombie) of the authentic Self. When a Munyabwisha denies the linguistic label 'Rufumbira', Kinyabwisha is strengthened in its authenticity and constructedness. When a Mufumbira claims never to have heard of a language called 'Kinyabwisha' across the border, (s)he reinforces the distinctiveness of his/her own way of speaking. The borders of a speaker's language are here the borders of his/her world. This essential observation, made by Wittgenstein, will be analyzed in more depth in Chapter 6, when 'speaking with a difference' is approached from a theoretical, or, more precisely, a language philosophical angle. This form of denial of the Other as a strategy of strengthening the Self also relates to Derrida's *différance*, which will also be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

When someone names a person or a thing, (s)he classifies the concept in question within the order of things that matter to him/herself, or his/her community. In the borderlands, the name serves figuratively as a sort of name tag which makes the entity real and tangible, marking its belonging onto one side of the border. If the given name is a French one, then the child belongs on the Rwandan or Congolese side, but if the given name is an English one, then the child is marked as being Ugandan, and as Mufumbira (or, potentially, is indicated as belonging to the new Anglophone and post-genocide Rwanda). An English or French first name is therefore much more than simply an indexical 'label' given by parents to a newborn child. In the border triangle, naming is a powerful practice, as also elsewhere in the world in contexts of marginalization, conflict or a speaker's quest for identity. Kripke (1980: 28), in his study *'Naming and necessity'*, analyzes how names can serve as denotations and connotations, and states that "[w]hatever we know about them [the people], determines the referent of the name as the unique thing satisfying those properties". This means that if one knows that in the border triangle people called 'Peter' are most likely Ugandan, and that people called 'Pierre' are either Congolese or Rwandan, it means that a Ugandan is eligible to carry an English name, while Congolese or Rwandans are eligible to carry French names but not vice versa, since the indexical reference would be disturbed.

Numerous stories have been told about the semiotic nature of naming, the power of names as strategies of Othering and as a way of ostracizing the Other. Ostracizing through naming also occurs in Kisoro District, when Bafumbira name Batwa as "pygmies", "half-savages" or mockingly, *"abapíiza"*. The label *abapíiza* is a derogatory label with no clear meaning. When asked about the meaning of the term, speakers usually laughed but could not specify what it actually meant. It seemed that the unspecific label, accompanied by laughter, has taken on the function of depersonalizing Batwa. If one calls a person a name that is meaningless, vague or cryptic, the referent's identity is rejected and substituted with emptiness. Here, naming serves as powerful strategy of exclusion, while the opposite happens when Bafumbira refer to the English names of their children as essential markers of identity, stating that they like to give their children an English name, in contrast to the French names given to children across the borders, since "the name Peter is well known as an English name, which means that you can't hide your identity as from Uganda", as pointed out by one Mufumbira.

When interviewing the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva and his friend Innocent Mugisha on this matter in April 2016, the latter stated that "you can differentiate a Munyarwanda and a Mufumbira not by the surnames but by other names. (…) Jean-Claude, Ildephonse and so on…". The second speaker added that "some names like Innocent [ɪnəsənt] are pronounced as Innocent [inɔsɑ̃]. When a Mufumbira goes to Rwanda and says Innocent [ɪnəsənt], *baraménya ko arí umuganda* [they know he is Ugandan] because Innocent [ɪnəsənt] as a name is in English but Innocent [inɔsɑ̃] is in French."

It becomes obvious that first names serve as multi-indexical icons, as also expressed by John Stuart Mill (1974), who analyzes names as 'the names of things', in contrast to the 'names of ideas of things'. He points out that "[n]ames, therefore, shall always be spoken of in this work as the names of things themselves, and not merely of our ideas of things" (ibid., p. 25). Mill thus acknowledges a direct indexicality between a name given and the labeled object to which it is inevitably linked. For Bafumbira children, this would mean that if they were named *Jean-Claude* or *Marie-Claire,* they would automatically adopt a Rwandan or Congolese label – and would in a way become Rwandan or Congolese, while the name *John* would stand as a fixed label of a Ugandan. However, today the situation is no longer as clearly separable as before, since Rwandans increasingly have English names, ever since the implementation of English as the official language in the educational system in 2008.

However, people who cross the borders and do not adapt their names can also face specific problems of stigmatization. When a Mufumbira with an English first name goes to Congo, where all first names are French ones, he would have to change his/her name if he wants to be fully integrated into the society. Innocent, a Rufumbira speaker, explains the indexical usage and emblematic function of Christian first names, and that speakers often have to change their names when they cross from a Francophone to an Anglophone are and vice versa (Innocent Mugisha, April 2016). It becomes obvious that naming is a powerful tool of

differentiation.

> *Nka Peter ribaga Pierre, mu Rwanda ugasanga ahandi yitwa nka Nsabimana Pierre, Nsa-bimana is a surname abafumbira barí kóreshaga na banyarwanda bakaríkóresha kirimwe. Nonese umuntu avuye mu Uganda akajya mu Rwanda akaguma yiyíta Innocent cangwa akiyíta Peter abantu bamuréeba nabí...*

> [**like Peter is then Pierre**, in Rwanda you find another place where one is called like Nsabimana Pierre, Nsabimana is a surname that Bafumbira use and Banyarwanda use it alike. Now a person who comes from Uganda, **when he goes to Rwanda** and continues to call himself Innocent or he calls himself Peter, **people look at him in a bad way**]

5.2 Language, conflict and pragmatic change

While Bafumbira often claim that politeness patterns in Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyar-wanda differ considerably, all three pragmatic systems are characterized by negative polite-ness patterns in relation to the theoretical framework of Brown & Levinson (1987: 101-211), where positive and negative politeness strategies are explained in more detail. In Rufumbira, speakers are expected to be indirect, to humble themselves and to be "polite", i.e. to express requests, criticism compliments and replies with questions instead of using direct imperatives. In Kisoro, there are a few exceptions, namely orphans who have grown up without parents and are considered as "hooligans, who are vulgar" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016), who have a reputation for affecting the hearer through positive FTAs (face-threatening acts) such as violent emotions and rude speech, e.g. in terms of offensive language and direct requests. When elderly beggers asked for financial help, these few street youths would for instance comment provocatively with *"Umva, nka kiríiya...!"* [Ah, listen to that one...!], which was perceived as very offensive in Bafumbira society.

Apart from age and class-related variation in the pragmatics of politeness, it is mainly the violent conflict in the broader area that has influenced speakers' pragmatic patterns, and enhanced specific differences in the three border communities. While Rufumbira speakers usually describe Rwandans as "very polite", and Congolese as "a bit rough" (cf. also Chapter 1), it is mainly speakers' interaction in conflict situations that is divergent. The interrelatedness of language and conflict scenarios in the Great Lakes Region is an understudied phenomenon, while the sociolinguistic and pragmatic impact of the fragile contexts across the entire Great Lakes Region has a salient impact on speakers and their linguistic realizations. Among the studies available on this topic is Wright (1998), with a general overview of the sociolinguistic relationship between language and violent conflict, as well as various other preliminary ap-proaches (Nassenstein 2016c on youth language and conflict; Dimmendaal & Nassenstein forthcoming on identities and variation in Bunia, DR Congo). Other studies include the use of metaphorical language during the Rwandan Genocide (Mugiraneza 2011, 2014), which can be seen as the antecedent of today's divergent strategies of encoding (and concealing) conflict

terminology in the three borderlands. Most other in-depth analyses focus on post-conflict settings such as the Balkans (Greenberg 2004).

Mugiraneza (2014) lists metaphors that were employed in public discourse during the killings of 1994 and that referred to the Tutsi minority (i.e. the alleged enemies of the Hutu-dominated Interahamwe militia), such as *inyenzi* ('cockroach', p.58-59), or to the act of their targeted extermination (e.g. *gukóra* 'to work', pp.117-118), that have to some extent been in use until today in the Congo-based conflict scenarios. Euphemistic and dysphemistic language and secrecy in interaction therefore has a long history in the border triangle.

Deeply rooted in colonial times, the ethnic segregation of the Rwandan society has led to ethnicized thinking, which was instrumentalized in the Rwandan Genocide (1994) and also in the Great Lakes refugee crisis (1995-1996) and the following Congo Wars (1996-2003). Despite the fact that ethnic labels never played a role among Bafumbira (as explained by university professor Alois Kwitonda, September 2013)[104], and despite the relatively safe situation in Kisoro District, Bafumbira have constantly been surrounded, confronted and affected by conflict scenarios, mainly due to the flux of refugees, the participation of Uganda in the First and Second Congo Wars, and their frequent interaction with Congolese rebels of the former M23 movement (2012-2013), who used to have their strongholds in Rutshuru and Bunagana on the adjacent Congolese territory.

The members of armed groups with a predominantly "Rwandophone" background, i.e. Banyabwisha, former Rwandan militia who had actively participated in the genocide and other recruited local forces, began over time to use similar metaphoric concealment strategies to those that had been in use during the Rwandan Genocide. The Congo-based FDLR (*Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda*), mainly consisting of Hutu fighters, and the former M23 (*Mouvement du 23 Mars*), mainly Tutsis, who were defeated by the Congolese army and UN troops in November 2013, are/were the ones who particularly use(d) the secret register of war-related terms. During my study of Rufumbira, I managed to conduct interviews with some members of armed groups in the Congo, mainly in order to analyze frequently used metaphors that conceal war atrocities and violence, and that do not exist in Rufumbira. A corpus of 75 secret terms was compiled,[105] most of which are used in order to conceal rebels' strategic plans of attacking villages, looting and raping, and aim to shield intra-group communication from outsiders and civilians. The secret register can be divided into six semantic domains of metaphors, among them agriculture and housework-related metaphors, figurative language

---

[104] While many Banyabwisha, when I conducted fieldwork on the Congolese side of the border in September 2014, claimed that another glottonym for Kinyabwisha was *Igihutu* ('the language of the Hutus'), Bafumbira strongly rejected that label, saying that "people would never call their language Igihutu. It has a *name*, Rufumbira. And we are not only Hutus we have also Tutsis".

[105] For more detailed information, see Nassenstein (2014b, 2018).

around eating and drinking, landscape and nature metaphors. Examples (172-174) provide an insight into armed groups' metaphoric strategies in Kinyabwisha.

(Kinyabwisha)

(172)   *bamwambitse ipantaron*   *ba-mw-*ambar-*is-*ye*   *i-pantaron*
[βaŋgambits(e) ipantarõː]   3pl-3sgO-wear-CAUS-PFV   AUG-cl9.pants
'they chopped his/her legs off'
(lit.: 'they made him/her wear pants')

(Kinyabwisha)

(173)   *imvuga irí kugwa iRutshuru*   *i-m-vura*   *i-rí*   *ku-gwa*   *i*   *Rutshuru*
[imvuɾa irí kugʌa iɾutʃuɾu]   AUG-cl9-rain   cl9-be   INF-fall   cl23   R.
'the battles have started in Rutshuru'
(lit.: 'it is raining in Rutshuru')

(Kinyabwisha)

(174)   *barí kubatiza mu centre*   *ba-rí*   *ku-batiza*   *mu*   *centre*
[βarí kuβatiza mu sãtr]   3pl-be   INF-baptize   LOC   AUG-cl19.center
'they are killing people in town'
(lit: 'they are baptizing downtown')

This secret register was increasingly calqued into Swahili and then adopted by (non-militarized) Banyabwisha in the area, and primarily used as a taboo strategy for attenuating group shame (*isoni*) by individuals who had been affected by rape, murder etc. in their communities. From a militarized terminology it therefore changed into a face-saving tool and a warning mechanism against new attacks (175), especially among victims of the militias' sexualized assaults.

(Kivu Swahili)

(175)   *kila mutu atafute mwamvuli*   *kila*   *mu-tu*   *a-tafut-e*   *mw-amvuli*
'everyone should seek shelter'   QUANT   cl1-person   3sg-look.for-SUBJ   cl3-umbrella
(lit: 'everyone should look for an umbrella')

Apart from the adoption of rebels' euphemistic metaphors by civilians, politeness patterns have also changed due to language contact in the war-affected areas of North Kivu province of the DR Congo, where people speak Kinyabwisha. The presence of soldiers and of members of several dozens of armed groups in the region have increasingly led to the spread of Lingala, the military language in the DR Congo. More and more civilians in war-affected areas are acquiring some basics of Lingala due to their frequent interactions with militarized personnel. Unlike Swahili, requests, criticisms and suggestions are expressed as direct imperatives in Lingala, which makes it a language with a higher degree of positive politeness than Swahili

or Kinyabwisha. Several speakers confirmed that due to the ongoing conflict direct imperatives, as in (176a), could increasingly be heard in Kinyabwisha-speaking areas, calqued from soldiers'/rebels' Lingala (176b). Example (177) represents the common (accepted) kind of utterance that would hitherto be used in all three borderlects, as uttered by a house owner to an unwanted guest. A slight variation of the indirect request in (177) would be *Ushobora kudusigara umwanya mu inzu?* ('Could you accord us some space in the house?'), which would also ask the addressee to kindly leave the place.

	(Kinyabwisha, positive FTA)			
(176a)	*Va mu inzu!*	*v-a*	*mu*	*i-n-zu*
	[va muːnzu]	come.from-IMP	LOC	AUG-cl9-house
	'Leave the house!'			

	(Lingala)			
(176b)	*Bimá na ndako!*	*bim-á*	*na*	*n-dako*
	[bimá na ndako]	go.out-IMP	LOC	cl9-house
	'Leave the house!'			

	(Rufumbira/Kinyarwanda, negative FTA)					
(177)	*Ushobora guduha umwanya mu inzu?*	*u-shobor-a*	*gu-du-ha*	*u-mw-anya*	*mu*	*i-n-zu*
	[uʃoβoɾa guduh(a) uɱgaːɲa muːnzu]	2sg-can-FV	INF-1pl-give	AUG-cl3-space	LOC	AUG-cl9-house
	'Could you give us some space in the house?'					
	(meaning: 'Leave the house!')					

When the list of secret terms, as well as the direct imperatives that had come into Kinyabwisha through contact-induced change, were shown to Bafumbira, they looked at me in bewilderment. They had heard neither of the secret register used among Banyabwisha, nor of the pragmatic changes in terms of politeness that had been adopted by civilians. One speaker commented upon the use of direct requests (176a) instead of the commonly used polite question (177) with "You don't find that [in Rufumbira], really! That is quite impolite!" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016). This was not only judged to be unacceptable in Uganda; in Rwanda, the opposite, an enforcement of negative politeness strategies, has taken place as speakers' (and politics) respond to conflict and genocide, as discussed below.

In Rwanda, post-genocide awareness in the establishment of Paul Kagame's regime after 1994 has led to linguistic campaigns of purification, which means that ethnicized labels are no longer allowed in conversations, and any threat to the unity of the Rwandan nation is severely punished. Banyarwanda have therefore adopted more indirect ways of communicating, avoiding any conflict-related terminology in their interactions, or at least employing metaphors that conceal the banned language. Numerous genocide memorials, the official annual *Kwibuka* ('remember') campaign across the entire country on April 6 and the strict

language policy have all enhanced negative politeness strategies among Banyarwanda, particularly in terms of not damaging the hearer's positive face (and threatening one's own safety as a result of confrontation in interaction). Speakers have become more indirect and vague, and have increased parameters of social distance in discourse, e.g. by increasingly employing the polite forms of the 2nd person plural instead of the 2nd person singular even when addressing a single person (178). This is uncommon in Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira.

	(Kinyarwanda)		
(178)	*Mushobora kumfasha?*	*mu-shobor-a*	*ku-m-fasha*
	[muʃoβora kumfaʃa]	2pl-can-FV	INF-1sg-help
	'Can/Could you help me?' (directed to one person)		

The (allegedly) ethnic labels *Hutu* and *Tutsi* as part of a banned conflict-related discourse play a major role in Rwanda and Congo, but are not perceived as a potential source of conflict in Uganda. Speakers stated that

> [p]eople are **free to talk about ethnic things**, Hutu and Tutsi, but it depends where. At the counter of the Muhabura Bar, no, but in a circle of two or three friends, yes. This is different from Rwanda and Congo. (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016)

The different degrees of having been affected by violent conflict and insecurity have contributed to changing politeness patterns in Uganda, too. The Congo is nearby in Rufumbira speakers' view, and the constant gunshots that can be heard in Kisoro are audible reminders that war and instability are located close to speakers' own doorsteps. They explain that

> [i]n Congo, they are ever fighting, ever fighting. You can hear that it is fighting. Even now you can hear that it is fighting. But in Uganda, what we like about this country of ours, **we have peace**. We want to give [the president] Museveni other term because you have peace in Uganda. (Allan Musekura, November 2015)

The trauma of being confronted with neighbors "ever fighting" has had an impact on Bafumbira, causing them to stay away from combat operations and within the borders of their own country whenever possible, although Ugandan troops were fighting on Congolese soil in the Second Congo War until 2003 (see Prunier 2009, Stearns 2012), as commented upon by speakers: "we have many who have joined the army in Congo, and also before in Rwanda". The war atrocities taking place in the near vicinity may at times lead to sorrow and trauma, but can also trigger a form of 'bitter laughter' (see Storch & Nassenstein forthcoming). A bitter laughter in response to horror occurs when stories of cruelty, bloodshed and images of distortion are shared in narrative practice. People in Kisoro often refer to a story of a grenade that was brought into Uganda from the DR Congo and was fired from the border town of Bunagana during the final battle of the M23 militia against the Congolese government and UN troops. The grenade hit into a crowded area, and neatly cut off a woman's buttocks;

according to the story she survived but without her posterior. This often triggered a dark and bitter laughter, both among Bafumbira and Congolese.

It is not only bitter laughter and sarcasm that has emerged among Bafumbira as a response to conflict, but also the habit of abstaining from discourses about conflict, and trying to avoid engaging in discussion of potential insecurity, war and rape. The stories of war are "the ones of the refugees", and Bafumbira see themselves as neutral both in regard to the Congo conflicts and the post-genocide trauma of Rwanda. Conflict discourse is "Othered", marked as a Congolese practice, as a Rwandan post-genocide commemorative culture (banning ethnicized language), but not considered a Ugandan issue.[106] The social distance of Bafumbira from conflict discourse is emblematically increased further through heavy borrowing from Rukiga and Luganda, two Ugandan Bantu languages (which will be analyzed further in Section 5.5 in relation to modal particles). By avoiding the borrowing of Swahili, Kinyabwisha, Kinyarwanda or French linguistic material, as well as by refraining from Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha politeness strategies, Rufumbira speakers enforce a Bafumbira identity, increasing speakers' linguistic awareness in the discursive reconstruction of the borders. Language choice[107], deliberate change and the pragmatics of politeness turn into meaningful tools of differentiation.

5.3 The unspeakable in Rufumbira: Avoidance strategies and taboo

Linguistic taboos, often loosely understood as 'Forbidden words', as inspired by Allan & Burridge's (2006) framework of the same name, fulfil a range of social functions in

---

[106] When talking about the narratives of genocide potentially brought along by Rwandan refugees in 1994, Bafumbira said that "after 1994, first Tutsis came to the refugee camps, then Hutus came. They settled here. They never ever talked about what had happened [i.e. the genocide]", emphasizing that Bafumbira also did not ask for details.

[107] It is not only euphemistic metaphors and the realization of linguistic politeness that reveal salient differences in the border triangle, but also the choice of language out of a broad linguistic repertoire, which draws clear boundaries between Bafumbira and non-Bafumbira. When Congolese armed groups crossed the border to Uganda, secrecy was mainly maintained through the choice of an unintelligible language in Kisoro. M23 militia leaders like Bisimwa, Makenga and others were aware of the close relationship of Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda (the varieties they were mostly using) and Rufumbira, the language spoken in Kisoro. They therefore chose Lingala and French for their discussions on war strategies and future expansions in the border triangle. My interlocutors told me that "they often came to print here in Kisoro, in Congo they do not have printers, and then they sit having a drink, and talk their Lingala, or French" (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015). A language can be spoken not only as a tool of war but also as a secret practice, as is the case of Lingala and French in Kisoro. In Kisoro, these unintelligible words and languages turn into soundscapes that represent gunshots, screams of atrocity and elegies of war.

Rufumbira. This "system of placing prohibitions and restrictions on certain acts and utterances", as defined by Agyekum (2002), encompasses various topics in Rufumbira, and is realized very differently than in the neighboring varieties (a fact that most Bafumbira are aware of). The geographical setting, shaped by conflict and affected by its close vicinity to the setting of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, as well as the following Central African refugee crisis, has influenced speakers' patterns of interaction. In particular, **in-law terminology** (also prominent in Kinyarwanda) (5.3.1), **'sex talk'** (5.3.2), **alcohol and intoxication** (5.3.3) and **death and silence** (5.3.4) are topics that mark a pragmatic segmentation between Bafumbira and their closest neighbors. Awareness of divergent practices, and of different ways of addressing taboo subjects, often has an impact on the social positioning of Self and Other, i.e. speakers' identity in contrast with neighboring groups (Bucholtz & Hall 2005: 586).

5.3.1 In-law avoidance terminology (*gutsíinda*)

In-law avoidance language has been researched for a couple of settings on the African continent, and includes widely recognized patterns that are summarized by Storch (2011) in her inspiring book on *'Secret manipulations'*. After Evans-Pritchard's (1948) groundbreaking study on Nuer forms of address and names, Herbert (1990) has worked on Hlonipha, based on Zulu/Xhosa, and Treis (2005) on the avoidance practice Ballishsha in Kambaata, among others. Kimenyi (2002: 36) summarizes the phenomenon *gutsíinda* for standardized Kinyarwanda as follows:

> The taboo language (*gutsíinda*) used by married women originated from the prohibition
> of **married women to pronounce words which sound like the names of the parents-in-**
> **law**. New words have to be created for these words.

When reading this brief and rather vague note on taboo language with my interlocutor Capher Nsabiyumva, he seemed reluctant to acknowledge its applicability to Rufumbira, shaking his head in light disbelief, stating "it is not there, I have never really encountered that [laughing], no, not really". When I asked him in detail, questioning the use of similar taboos in the family context between his wife and his parents in law, he eventually replied, "maybe you can find it, when they [the parents in law] are there, they [the wife] would find another word". It appeared to me that the remnants of that *gutsíinda* practice – of which I had already heard some years earlier when working with the student Corazon Ukuli – while per se being gender-specific, had become rare among Bafumbira over time. *Gutsíinda* seemed to be perceived more and more as a "Rwandan practice", and therefore as less meaningful in the Rufumbira context. Acknowledging it as a common Rwandan practice which also played a role in Kisoro among Bafumbira may have had the potential to reduce the distinctiveness of a prominent conversational practice in Rufumbira, I thought, as I tried to understand the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva's dubious reaction when I asked whether this practice was used in Kisoro.

Indeed, when deepening my research on the in-law avoidance register, I found out that it was still commonly used with families who had neither migrated to Kampala, nor to other parts of the country (such as Kabale, to the east of Kisoro District). Families or young women who had spent a considerable time in Kampala in order to study were less likely to fully engage in the *gutsíinda* practice. Moreover, speakers increasingly tend to omit the avoidance register since it is associated with a 'Kinyarwanda way of speaking', and numerous Bafumbira stated that these patterns would be more frequently used in Rwanda (this could not be analyzed in detail in the course of the study). However, non-performance of avoidance techniques marks a difference, as it seems, when the in-law register is associated with the language of the neighbors, from where it may have initially emerged and been adopted.

Corazon Ukuli, despite having grown up in Kabale and being a "city girl", as others would call her, could still list the three examples (179-181) that show how avoidance of names is marked by referring to semantically related concepts, either in shape, function or consistency. This avoidance strategy was explained by the elderly interlocutor Joe Haguma (April 2014) with the words *"harihó nk'amazina yo twasanze bíta aríko banarikwíta kandi ukabona abantu ritabashimijije"* [there are some names which we found them being given but when they would call it [them], you see that people are not happy with it]; he was referring to names of people that cannot be uttered by their daughters in-law.

	Name: Serusatsi (*umusatsi* 'hair') → replaced with *ishyamba* ('forest')		
(179)	*ngiye kunaba ishyamba*	n-*gend-*ye	ku-naba	i-shyamba
	[nɟije kunaβ(a) iʃaːmba]	1sg-go-PFV	INF-wash	AUG-cl15.forest
	'I am about to wash my hair'		

	Name: Munyagasozi (*umusozi* 'hill') → replaced with *umurambi* ('steep slope')		
(180)	*ndi guhínga ku umurambi*	n-*rí	gu-hínga	ku	u-mu-rambi
	[ndi guhíːŋga ku muɾaːmβi]	1sg-be	INF-cultivate	LOC	AUG-cl13-steep.slope
	'I am cultivating land on the hill'		

	Name: Sebishyimbo (*ibishyimbo* 'beans') → replaced with *amabuye* ('stone')		
(181)	*ntéetse amabuye*	n-*téek-*ye	a-ma-buye
	[ntéːts(e) amaβuje]	1sg-cook-PFV	AUG-cl6-stone
	'I cooked beans'		

If a girl's father in-law is named Serusatsi (179), which incorporates the root -*satsi* ('hair'), she will necessarily have to refer to hair with a different word due to the fact that she is not allowed to use his name, or any component of it. When referring to the act of washing her hair, she will choose a semantically related term such as *ishyamba* ('forest, bush').

5.3.2 Brothels, sex and dirty dancing

A first impression of the salient differences in 'sex talk' as a more liberal topic among Bafumbira was already introduced in Chapter 1, when referring to the conversations with the former government official Joe Haguma. More evidence was given when another of my assistants referred to 'sex talk' in Rufumbira, and mentioned how openly such topics are addressed. When asked about taboo topics that cannot be talked about among Bafumbira, one speaker told me that there is a Batwa brothel in the barracks behind the local radio station, which is a taboo topic in Bafumbira society since sexual intercourse with a Mutwa woman would mean public loss of face, and *isoni* ('shame') for the entire family. This represented one of the few topics that Bafumbira seemed to avoid in public.

> There is a place here, you pass Kisoro FM, behind, they are there [Batwa prostitutes]. Even other people come there, it's not really really taboo. There is no word for what they do, but it usually happens, and everybody knows (…). **Most people go there hiding, during the night**. (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016)

Otherwise, the interlocutor Joe Haguma would, when asked to produce free texts on sexual education and the initiation of boys and girls, directly name body parts (see Chapter 1), and would refer to the sexual act by name (expressed with *gusambana* 'to have sex'); this would be impossible in the two adjacent border areas of Rwanda and the Congo. He would often explain this with the fact that he had grown up in the 1950s and 1960s when this terminology was freely used, and that the use of such words "would not really matter among men".

However, sex is not only an expression of an allegedly more liberal political regime, or of less societal restrictions in terms of intra-gender conversational practice; it also marks a colonial difference. Sex talk and sex imagery characterizes the nightclubs and street life of the capital, Kampala. Attracted by the obvious abundance of exoticized dark skin, promiscuity and scandalous encounters, the Italian photographer Michele Sibiloni (2016) published an illustrated book *'Fuck it!'*, which portrays the nocturnal scenery of Kampala, its actors, sex and vice, advertised on his website with the words "all the animals come out at night…"[108]. This is reminiscent of colonial images of "native obscenity" (Fabian 2000: 85), as they were recorded through the lens and in the notebooks of explorers and missionaries in the imperialistic endeavor of colonization, and can be associated with white hunter stories and hunting fantasies. In Sibiloni's photographs as well as in Bafumbira's narratives of Kampala's night clubs, sex as the main trope in popular culture and art turns into a criticism of colonial prudery and into the mimetic image of the exoticized Other, the primitive, bestial and lustful colonized subject, who achieves liberation only through powerful supersexuality, and through performed sexual offensiveness. In Kisoro, sex marks a further difference between Bafumbira, who have grown up in a liminal society, and Banyarwanda and Banyabwisha. The colonial boundary

---

[108] See [http://www.michelesibiloni.com/Fuck-it-book] (accessed 20 June 2016).

becomes a moral-ethical boundary: while Ugandans tend to play with sexualized images as an attempt to overthrow colonial thought, Rwandans and Congolese stick to images of purity and morality, and see themselves in a tradition of prudery, whose foundations were laid in colonial times; this is a common stereotype in the border triangle. However, 'sex talk' in Kisoro has adopted an emblematic value, and people in the three borderlands reveal different strategies of addressing the topic.

The same applies to dance styles and the Jamaican "daggering", a style of highly sexualized dancing which has become popular in Kampala due to the spread of dancehall music. While this form of 'dirty dancing' is taboo in Kisoro, it is not beyond the district's boundaries in the rest of Uganda, and Bafumbira can practice it as soon as they find themselves in Kampala, Kabale or other parts of the country. Female adolescent Rufumbira speakers can go to bars and nightclubs and engage in 'dirty dancing', "but not here [in Kisoro], it can't happen, but she can do it in Kampala" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016). It is still a stigmatized practice, and can evoke hearsay-accusations as shown in (182), but has nowadays become part of Ugandan youth culture. The truck full of half-naked girls that once passed through Kisoro town (see the narrated incident in Chapter 1) would, according to speakers, still be commented upon by elders with *"Isi yashize!"* ['The world is ending!'], but they would however tolerate it nowadays.

(182)	*arí kubyina yambaye nabí*		*a-rí*	*ku-byina*	*a-a-*ambar-*ye*	*nabí*
	[narí kuβjina jambaje naβí]		3sg-be	INF-dance	3sg-PST1-wear-PFV	badly
	'she was dancing and badly dressed'					
	(meaning: 'she was performing sexually explicit dance moves')					

While several speakers emphasized that Rwandan prostitutes come to Kisoro since they are less severely prosecuted when engaged in sex business in Uganda, Congolese prostitutes are less respected. While crossing the border to Congo, I once witnessed the arrest of three minors who had spent three days in Kisoro, Uganda, in order to make money through prostitution, and were caught when returning back home to the Congolese side of the border town Bunagana. After they had passed the Ugandan control, the Congolese customs officers severely whipped all three girls, accompanied by Swahili curses intended to keep them from further sex migration to the (economically more prosperous) Uganda; this again shows the liminality and disorder in the borderlands.

Women's language has also changed. Relating to changing social parameters, the restrictions that were formerly imposed on women no longer exist in Kisoro. Especially among young people, genderized registers have been broken up, and the patterns of language used among women have become more liberal. Linguistic roles have changed, and women can actively participate in men's talk, while men can also engage in women's talk. Initiation into sexual matters was formerly strictly the duty of a girl's aunt (or a boy's uncle respectively),

who would address the topic of a girl's first menstruation in the family circle by announcing *yagiye umugóngo* [jaɟij(e) umugóːŋo] ('she went to the back') (as explained by Joe Haguma, March 2014); more variation is allowed in these patterns nowadays. More traditional patterns have been maintained among Kinyabwisha and also among Kinyamulenge-speaking communities in Eastern DR Congo. In Kinyabwisha, women have to stick to more traditional gender roles, especially in terms of domestic duties and female submission to their husbands and in-laws. In Kisoro, despite the fact that girls are supposed to have good manners, *imicó myíza,* they no longer have to lower their gaze when interacting with (male) strangers, as girls in rural areas of Rwanda and Eastern DR Congo are still being taught. Bafumbira men stated that in interaction with a young Mufumbira woman "the girl will answer you and you get tired, they are not respectful (…), we take it that way, it happens, you go with what your culture is saying, doing" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016).

In the eyes of Banyabwisha and Banyarwanda, Uganda is often seen as a symbolic place of promiscuity and of decaying morality. Sexualized performance and knowledge of apparent prudery across the borders gives Rufumbira speakers engaged in 'sex talk' a tingling sensation, and the adoption of the disreputable and indecent becomes a decolonial sexual revolution, and a form of invisible moral border.

5.3.3 Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol is seen as a common practice in Bafumbira culture, and also as an expression of sociability, without necessarily being stigmatized. In Rwanda and parts of Eastern DR Congo, the consumption of alcohol is usually perceived as a taboo act that does not align with Christian beliefs and has to be concealed. Banyabwisha and many Banyarwanda who consume alcohol do not mention this topic in public, nor do they share alcoholic drinks with people beyond their community of practice. In Kisoro, however, alcohol is often included in Bafumbira's storytelling, and freely spoken about. One (anonymized) interlocutor explained that his father, now that he is retired, focuses on drinking. "He doesn't care. He is old, he is retired. I come home drunk, he is drinking. He just does not care, that's all." When asked if this was sanctioned by neighbors and friends, or if he is socially stigmatized, he denied it, saying that they would do the same when they got the chance.

Intoxication is a recurrent trope in stories; drunk Batwa are part of Kisoro's nightlife when they are paid with *agasururu* ('sorghum beer') for their work, and the numerous bars of Kisoro town serve as ritual places where local culture is shared, where rumors are spread and where people create a 'Rufumbira way of speaking' in interaction, mostly through liberal swearing patterns, joking, loud laughter and talking about alcohol, all of which represent practices that are taboo in Rwandan cities. When discussing why the Rwandan and Congolese scenarios are so different from Bafumbira's indulgence in the consumption of alcohol, one assistant assumed that the stigmatization in parts of Rwanda was due to the state program of

constructively developing the country, focusing on state-controlled efficiency, while the Ugandan lifestyle was very different, and more liberal.

> I don't know. Because, for them, the thing when people take alcohol, it's like they do not *do* anything, in terms of development. **In Uganda, you can drink in the morning**. The Rwandan president **Kagame says: You have to work**. You, when you wake up in a bar, you are not doing anything for the day. (…) In Uganda, they have that freedom, **the whole of Uganda, that's how it is**. (Capher Nsabiyumva, June 2016)

Drinking, in the context of taboos and transgressive practice in bars, turns into a symbol of a Ugandan lifestyle, and 'bar talk' is a common place for the narrative creation of Rufumbira in interaction, beyond standardized Kinyarwanda and conflict-bound Kinyabwisha. Speakers repeatedly uttered, displaying their liberal view on topics concerning intoxication and sexuality, "all that does not matter in Rufumbira".

5.3.4 Silence, death and burials

Speakers of Rufumbira reported that mourning practices differed remarkably from those found in Rwanda and Congo. When Bafumbira cross the borders to attend the burial of a distant relative, they are usually struck by the volume of noise that they encounter, both on the Rwandan and the Congolese side, when the deceased is being buried. The journalist Capher Nsabiyumva who had just come back from a Rwandan burial pointed out that "there is a lot of crying, they are loud, *ah mamaaaaa-e* [imitating mourning women], *ahhhhh*, it is not like in Kisoro, where we do this silently" (February 2016). When I asked him if people were surprised when they saw him motionless and silent while attending the burial, he replied that "it was a burial, so they could not ask me where I am from, we speak the same language". 'Speaking the same language', otherwise rejected when differentiating the labels Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda, was mentioned here since 'speech' was no longer needed as the only criterion of differentiation in that situation; *keeping silence* also marks a specific Rufumbira way of interaction. Former government official Joe Haguma explained the particular 'Rufumbira way of mourning' as follows, emphasizing the 'humble and dignified way' in which the gathering place has to be left.

> *Bwa nyuma misa yarangira, mugahámba, then – mugakurikizahó ibindi nko kunya amayóga g'intwérerano,[109] bwa nyuma* **umwe agahíitahó**, *ajya iwe n'undi iwe, ubwo bikanashíra.*

---

[109] According to Rufumbira culture, *gutwérera* [gutkʌɛɾɛɾa] is an act of showing sympathy and empathy with those in mourning by giving a gift, e.g. alcoholic drinks carried on the head. Beer is then called *intwérerano.* The noun class 6 connective used in the example (*ga/g'*) is a borrowing from Luganda or Rukiga.

[Afterwards, when the mass is over, you bury, then you make others follow there, like for example for drinking beer as gifts shown out of sympathy [carried on their head], after that **each person leaves the place in a humble and dignified way**, goes to his place and another one to his place, it ends there] (Joe Haguma, April 2014)

In Rufumbira culture, death-related terminology is perceived as taboo, and is not uttered in public. When referring to *urupfu* 'death', the transition from life to lifelessness is meant, but it must not be related to the fate of an individual, which would be perceived as very rude. Instead, when referring to the death of a relative or friend, the euphemism *kugenda* ('parting, leaving') has to be used (see 183-184). Another common euphemism is shown in (185). In Kinyabwisha, in contrast, talking about death and deceased people is not taboo; this is mainly due to the continuing conflict in North Kivu province (DR Congo), which has had an influence on speakers' way of addressing death-related topics.

(183)   *urupfu ni rubí*   *u-ru-pfu*   *ni*   *ru-bí*
         [uruɸu ni ɾuβí]   AUG-cl11-death   COP   cl11-bad
         'death is bad'

(184)   *kugenda kwe kwambabaje*   *ku-geenda*   *kwe*   *kw-a-*babar-ye*
         [kuɟeːnda kʌe kʌamβaβaje]   cl15-leave   cl15:POSS3sg   cl15-PST1-hurt-PFV
         'his/her death filled me with pain'

(185)   *yítabye Imana*   *a-í-itab-*ye*   *Imana*
         [jiːtabj(e) Imaːna]   3sg-REFL-reply-PFV   God
         '(s)he died' (lit.: '(s)he replied God')

Silence, or communication through non-speaking, can actually mark a bigger difference than speaking does. While death and burials are organized in utmost silence in Kisoro, in Rwanda and Congo they are not. However, the opposite occurs in Rwanda with regard to small talk in public spaces. In the post-genocide society of modern Rwanda, phatic communication among strangers is usually perceived as unnecessary, and the many buses, taxis and squares of the capital Kigali are characterized by an absence of communication.

The crying at Rwandan burials was perceived as a noise nuisance and as inappropriate by Capher Nsabiyumva, who went a step further and described his experience when "the children of the deceased threaten[ed] to throw themselves into the grave. Before this noise was there in Kisoro, now it has changed" (March 2016). The noisy Rwandan burial turns into a scenery of "bruitism in primitivism", as described for noises of the avant-garde by Kahn (2012: 428), referring to so-called "negro language" in dadaism, where "the grinding sound of power relations are heard (…) in the way noises *contain* the other". The Ugandan view on 'noise' as a disturbing element resembles a Western view of differentiating between "civilized

sounds" vs. "non-civilized sounds" at a burial, Othering the noisy as being produced by the primitive one who is not able to deal with grief in silence.

5.4 Greeting registers – a "hello" with a difference

As also found in other closely-related varieties, greetings differ to some extent among speakers of Kinyabwisha, Rufumbira and Kinyarwanda. While these ritual patterns of interaction are prone to divergence and differentiation, speakers are very aware of the different realizations. Table 5.1 summarizes the main greeting strategies that were extracted from video and audio recordings, which were discussed with speakers of the variety in question.[110] The qualitative interviews with speakers revealed that those greetings that are not found in neighboring language varieties are especially likely to achieve emblematic status, and are more commonly used by speakers across social categories (class, age, gender), even if they originally constituted informal means of communication. The most prominent example is the use of *koméra!* (literally 'Be strong!'), which has turned into a popular greeting among Bafumbira of all ages, due to the fact that is not used across the borders among Banyabwisha/Banyarwanda. Its informal character is now of secondary importance.

As can be seen when analyzing the use of the 2nd person plural for greetings in Kinyarwanda (even when individual speakers are addressed; see also Section 5.2), Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda exhibit clear deviations in their politeness strategies, which also encompass greeting practices. The same applies to direct and indirect strategies of referring to disabilities, diseases or politically delicate terms. For instance, terms for bodily impairments such as 'deaf', 'dumb' are expressed directly in Kinyabwisha, while speakers of Kinyarwanda use periphrastic euphemisms that denote 'those who do not speak, hear' etc. Another example is the term *amagufa* 'bones', which cannot be used in Kinyarwanda when referring to genocide discourses because it evokes "associations with a dog's food" (as expressed by the Rwandan student Patrick Ndabarishye, September 2013). The term *imibíri* 'bodies' is used instead in public discourse.

	RUFUMBIRA	*KINYABWISHA*	*KINYARWANDA*
morning	Amakuru? –	Amakuru? –	Amakuru? –
	Ni meza.	Ni meza.	Ni meza.
	[What are the news?]	[What are the news?]	[What are the news?]
	Waramutseho? –	Waramutse? –	Waramutse? –
	Waramutseho!	Yéego.	Waramutse(ho) /
	Waraye? –	[Did you wake up well?]	Mwaramutse(ho). (neg. polit.)
	Waramutseho!		[Did you wake up well?]

---

[110] Data on Kirundi and Kinyamulenge are not included in the present overview, due to the focus on the three borderlects Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira. However, Kinyamulenge, in particular, deviates considerably from the greeting registers presented here.

	[Did you wake up well?]		
afternoon/ evening (5pm)	Wiriwe? – Wiriweho! [How was your day?] Umeze ute? – Ndaho. / Meze neza. [How are you? – Good.]	Wiriwe? – Yéego. [How was your day?]	Wiriwe? – Wiriweho! / Mwiriwe! [How was your day?] (Umeze ute? – Ndaho. / Meze neza.) [How are you?]
informal	Bite! – Ni byiza! [hello] Koméra! – Koméra! [How are you?]	Bite! – Ni byiza! [hello]	Bite! – Ni byiza! [hello]
formal	Uraho? – Ndaho neza. Umeze ute? – Meze neza. / Ndaho. [How are you? – Good.]	Uraho? – Yéego. [How are you? – Good.]	Uraho? / Muraho? – Uraho neza. / Ndaho. / Muraho! [How are you? – Good.]
nighttime	(Urare aharyana!) Urare neza! Ijoro ryiza! [Good night!]	Urare aharyana! (rural) Urare amahoro! Ijoro ryiza! [Good night!]	Urare aharyana! Urar(e)_amahoro! Ijoro ryiza! [Good night!]
farewell	Usigare neza! Ngaho! – Yegó. / Ego. Bye! [Goodbye/Stay well!]	Urabehó! Sigara amahoro! / Genda neza/amahoro! [Goodbye/Stay well!]	Urabehó! / Murabehó! – Urabehó. / Murabehó. [Goodbye/Stay well!]

Table 5.1: Different greeting registers in the three border varieties

As summarized in Table 5.1, the main greetings are similar or almost identical, but some salient differences occur. The morning greetings include the common ones that are used throughout Rwanda (*Amakuru?* 'What is the news?'; *Waramutseho* 'how did you wake up?') and also the genuine greeting *Waraye?*, asking for someone's well-being. Among the greetings uttered in the late afternoon or early evening, the common form *Umeze ute?* [umez(e) ute] is practically absent in Rwanda and Eastern DR Congo, but has become emblematic in Kisoro. Other informal greetings such as *Bite!* [βite] are present on all three sides of the border, as are most formal greetings and the greetings that are uttered when wishing someone a good night. The farewell formula *Ngaho!,* triggering the reply *Yegó/Ego* ('yes'), is a specific feature of Rufumbira and is less commonly used in Rwanda and DR Congo. Finally, the English *Bye!* serves as a marker of 'Ugandanness', and is frequently used by younger and older speakers alike.

5.5 Modal particles: Differentiation through stance

Modal particles, defined for some languages as "noninflected words marking the speaker's mood or attitude towards the proposition expressed" (Bross 2012: 182), are frequent in Luganda, from where they are often borrowed to Rufumbira in order to express a speaker's stance in interaction with "a very subtle inherent semantic connotation (…) decid[ing] how FTAs are either preserved or avoided and whether face-loss is intended or not" (Nassenstein 2016b: 19)[111]. They occur neither in Kinyarwanda nor in Kinyabwisha.

Rufumbira speakers make frequent use of the particle *wama* (186-187), and sometimes of *bambi* (188), which is often realized as *bambe* [βaːmβe], and thus adapted to Rufumbira phonology. While *wama* expresses either slight pity, often paired with a form of understanding that was previously not granted, *bambi/bambe* are clear indicators of empathy, pity, and also serve as exclamations of compassions. The hearsay-hedging marker *mbu* is the only one of the Luganda modal particles to be used less often, since it is replaced with the Rufumbira equivalent *ngo*.

The common Luganda particles *oba* (open choices), *nga* (criticism) and *ate* (surprise, asthonishment) are also less commonly employed, but can still occur idiolectally in people's linguistic realizations. The modal particle *nawe*, in Ugandan English "a negative politeness marker that reduces the face-threat against the negative face of the speaker by assuring a 'polite' and even begging tone" (Nassenstein 2016b: 21) is used in similar ways in Luganda and Rufumbira, even though it is homonymous with the second person singular comitative + substitutive ('with you'). The context usually clarifies which *nawe* is used (189).

(Rufumbira)

(186) *Wama, réeba!*   *wama*   *réeb-a*
     [wama ɾéːβa]   MP   look-IMP
     'Then just look!' (after first being rejected to look)

(187) *wama naramubonye*   *wama*   *n-a-ra-mu-bon-ye*
     [wama naɾamuβonje]   MP   1sg-PST1-DJ-3sgO-see-PFV
     'oh yes, I saw him/her' (pity, empathy; after initially not having seen his/her state)

(188) *bambi, abána ntaabwo bafite isente*   *bambi*   *a-ba-ána*   *ntaabwo*   *ba-fite*   *i-sente*
     [bambi aβáːna nthaːbgo βafite iseːnte]   MP   AUG-cl2-child   NEG   3pl-have   AUG-cl9.money
     'oh my, the children have no money' (pity, empathy)

---

[111] This is based on observations that were made for Ugandan English, from where the modal particles used in Rufumbira might have entered speakers' repertoires.

(189) *Nawe, mfasha…*   *nawe   m-fash-a*

[naːʍe mfaʃe]   MP   1sgO-help-IMP

'Would you be so kind as to help me?/Even you, help me!' (emphatic plea, demand)

While discourse markers, such as the frequently used vagueness marker *simanyi* ('I don't know'), borrowed from Luganda, reveal a high level of borrowing and are among the structural elements most easily borrowed from one language to another (cf. Matras 2009), the borrowing of modal particles is also to some extent ideologically motivated. Most speakers use Luganda (or Ugandan English) particles frequently and might not be aware of it, but *if* a speaker intends to make a linguistic difference and differentiate him/herself from neighboring varieties, modal particles can serve as emblematic markers that come in handy in exolingual communication, based on his/her knowledge that the neighboring groups have no equivalent markers in their language. The use of modal particles in Rufumbira therefore affects the semantic-pragmatic interface, and is one of several sociopragmatic strategies of differentiation in Rufumbira.

6. THEORETICAL APPROACH: 'BORDER THINKING' IN KISORO

"The boundaries of language (the only language I under-
stand) indicate the boundaries of my world."
(Wittgenstein 1922: xx)

When talking to Rufumbira speakers about Kisoro District as a place, about its people, history, and sociopolitical struggles, at some point speakers are likely to address the subject of the border(s), as well as the differences between Congolese, Rwandans and Ugandans, and probably also the implications of conflict in the broader area, in contrast to the relatively stable and peaceful Kisoro District. 'Border thinking', as it has been labeled in this study so far – without providing a theoretical approach to this concept yet – is an underlying force in processes of variation, an essential component in the diversification of styles in Rufumbira, and far more than a mere way of conceptualizing speech: it also describes a decolonial option in a linguistic system (see Mignolo 2011 for the in-depth analysis of decoloniality).

The gradual analysis of speakers' implications on the previously discussed levels of phonological, morphosyntactic and sociopragmatic distinctions leads us now to a different and more theoretical look at 'border thinking', including concepts of decoloniality and spatiopragmatic awareness. The analysis of border thinking in this chapter provides notes on the **emergence of border thinking in postcolonialism** (6.1), followed by a discussion of **different theoretical approaches** to Bafumbira's border talk and thinking (6.2), as well as a focus on **the border as zone** rather than as a boundary line (6.3). Finally, **lexical choices** (6.5) are analyzed as representations of spatial repertoires, altering semantic and stylistic connotations.

Border thinking as a strategy of deconstructing colonial hegemonies and ideologies (cf. Errington 2008), and fixed demarcation lines in order to construct something new (languages, cultures, epistemologies), are also described by Anzaldúa (2012). The required shift from Spanish to English when crossing the US-Mexican border, the fact of living marginalized in the borderlands, as well as others' expectations "to tame a wild tongue" (p.76), i.e. to speak English without accent and to separate English and Spanish, show the struggle to which individuals are exposed in (post)colonial border constructs, where Western hegemonies still represent the 'standard' and are imposed onto cross-border migrants. Relating to Chicano/a Spanish, which has emerged in the borderlands of the United States with Mexico, Anzaldúa (2012: 77) states that

> for a people who cannot entirely identify with either standard (…), what resource is left
> to them **but to create their own language?** A language which they can **connect their identity**
> **to, one capable of communicating the realities and values** true to themselves.

198

Similar dynamics can be ascribed to Bafumbira, who find their linguistic 'homeland', as Anzaldúa calls it, in the practice of a divergent language variety, its context emerging from a decolonial struggle in the crossfire of Western hegemonies and untamed identities.

In the context of border thinking, Rufumbira becomes – and is – a "wild tongue" in the narrow sense: non-canonical due to its variants, contested by outsiders beyond the borders and at times by its own speakers, a hybrid torn between its Ugandan legitimacy and its cross-border heritage, a creative decolonial crossbreed.

6.1 What is 'border thinking'? On theory, practice and decoloniality

Speaking in more general terms, "the primary function of geographic borders is to create and differentiate places" (Diener & Hagen 2012: 4). We already live in a very "bordered world", full of borders that were established during imperialism and colonialism and by the new nation states that have emerged over the last decades (e.g. South Sudan in 2011), which are still strongly affected by the demarcations of territory based on the division of geographical space of the late 19th and early 20th century. 'Border thinking' can be understood as the critical reflection of these modes of territoriality that have emerged in unequal power relations, and that currently still affect different modes of bordering the world, ranging from precise lines of division to zones of transition (see Diener & Hagen 2012: 5). Border thinking also affects the bordered realities of the Global North, i.e. producing images of vanishing border posts, customs and less bureaucracy (as represented in the EU's Schengen regulations etc.); these are viewed in contrast to bordered realities in the Global South, with politics of exclusion, individuals lacking freedom of movement, and increasingly controlled territoriality when people intend to cross from the South to the North. The concepts of 'closeness' and 'openness' of borders and communities have had an impact on people's thinking since Plato and Aristotle (ibid., p. 10-11), and have contributed to the emergence of a territorial state model, with fixed boundaries and clear demarcations.

In the scramble for Africa, the territorial state model was applied to colonies, border thinking in the late 19th century being primarily motivated by competing imperialistic interests, leading to the partition of Africa and the severing of realms, regions, cultures and languages. For speakers of African languages, this often meant a separation of people who spoke the same language, and who from then on were considered as two different peoples, caught within the boundaries of two different colonized territories. While the colonial borders have contributed to new emerging power constellations in some places (such as the separation of the realm of Rwanda from formerly annexed territories), they have also caused ethnic and political clashes (such as the affectedness of "Rwandophone" communities by war and stigmatization in Eastern DR Congo).

In a postcolonial world, border thinking encompasses the ways that people from the Global South deal with colonial lines of demarcation and with the social problems arising

from them, and how decolonial thought aims at deconstructing epistemic inequalities through a critical view of spatial belonging and linguistic and cultural identities across borders (cf. Bauman & Briggs 2003, among others). African actors, being aware of the fact that borders always reveal a certain permeability and that these are not as fixed boundaries as allegedly established in colonial thought, use the demarcation lines between countries and languages in order to critically question the "anomaly of nationalism", as Anderson (2006: 4) calls it in his work on *Imagined Communities*. Moreover, border thinking addresses individuals' agency in the borderlands, where they – as formerly colonized and 'bordered' objects, as apparent victims of boundaries – reclaim power and critical thought, in contrast to the exclusion and social segregation by means of borders that they have hitherto experienced. As a result, speaking, writing and performing against the geopolitical colonial remnants and their resulting realities takes places in the borderzone. Border thinking also comprises identity constructions along/across the border, where people from either side may have a sense of (sociospatial) belonging that does not coincide with ascriptions of marked boundaries.

The concept of 'border thinking', which is increasingly gaining interdisciplinary academic attention, [112] looks back on a tradition in postcolonial studies, beginning with so-called Chicano/a authors such as Anzaldúa (2012) and Saldívar (1997), who came up with critical approaches regarding how to discursively deconstruct the US-Mexican border, and how to assess identity and language use in the borderland. Both have given rise to what Anzaldúa calls the 'Borderlands Theory', characterizing the fact of living in the borderlands, which

> produces knowledge by **being within a system while also retaining the knowledge of an outsider** who comes from outside the system. This "outsider within" status gives Chicanas' sense of self a layered complexity that is captured in Anzaldúa's concept of mestiza consciousness (…). It was **at the border that Chicanas/mestizas learned the socially constructed nature of all social categories**. By standing on the U.S. side of the river they saw Mexico and they saw home; by standing on the Mexican side of the border they saw the United States and they saw home. Yet they were **not really accepted on either side**. (Cantú & Hurtado 2012: 7)

Orozco-Mendoza (2008) looks at Anzaldúa's work with a focus on 'border epistemologies', the de-colonization of the Chicano/a self in the borderlands, where (s)he faces stigmatization

---

[112] The academic focus on the border as a critical interdisciplinary approach in temporary culture studies has given rise to new studies programs in 'Border studies' at several universities, including the University of Texas El Paso, Earlham College, Lewis & Clark College (United States) and the Europa-Universität Viadrina (Germany/Poland), among others, and has led to summer schools, conferences and interdisciplinary approaches being held by scholars who work on (post)colonial topics, geography, politics, anthropology, and occasionally also linguistics. The peer-reviewed *Journal of Borderland Studies* and some others also publish research that deals with border thinking.

and exploitation and is exposed to reduced mobility. Building on Anzaldúa's understanding of the border as a "psychic, social, and cultural terrain" (as described on the back cover of her book), Orozco-Mendoza (2008: 41) states that "borders can take many different forms: ideological, epistemic, geographical, emotional, spiritual, and so on", i.e. borders are seen by her as a human production, but humans are also the products of a border in terms of group making, nation building, belonging etc. (ibid.). As demonstrated in the present study on Rufumbira (and explained in more detail in the following sections), the linguistic impact on and of borders should also be included in the list of attributes gathered by Orozco-Mendoza. In Anzaldúa's work, the entangled Northern and Southern identities of a cross-border passenger become linguistically evident in the code-switching patterns used throughout her book.[113]

Apart from Anzaldúa's groundbreaking work, which has led to controversial debates in the United States due to its critical potential (Cantú & Hurtado 2012: 9), Saldívar's (1997) approach to border thinking in his work *Border Matters* covers a broad range of cultural texts and practices, such as "novels, poems, paintings, *conjunto,* punk and hip-hop songs, travel writing, and ethnography" (Saldívar 1997: ix), that he analyzes in order to prove Chicano/as' agency in cultural productions of the US-Mexican borderlands, as an important aspect of cultural representations of the United States. Chicano/as' cultural representations are non-congruent with linear ideas of a nation state and its cultural production, which is said not to take place along the Mexican border. In this sense, borderland people are actors in the development of the border as a cultural space of "crossing, circulation, material mixing, and resistance" (ibid., p.13), engaged in critical writing and performance and giving a voice to cultural hybridity by "challeng[ing] this stable, naturalized, and hegemonic status of the national" (Saldívar 1997: 14).

The most prominent thinker in the field of borders and boundaries and their geopolitical implications for individuals is, without doubt, Mignolo. In his principal work on border thinking, *Local Histories/Global Designs* (2012; the second edition of his study), he describes exactly what this study has so far been about, stating that "border thinking that leads to decoloniality is of the essence to unveil that the system of knowledge, beliefs, expectations, dreams, and fantasies upon which the modern/colonial world was built on is showing, and will continue to show, its unviability" (Mignolo 2012: viv). According to Mignolo (ibid., p.x), one of the principal aims of border thinking as a delinking epistemology is the restoring of dignity which was taken away from people by a 'universal history' as proclaimed by the West (i.e. the Global North, when sticking to the terminology used so far). He sees the main problem as being in the fact that modernity and Western civilization were, and often are, based on the belief that non-Western societies should surrender to the Western ideas of civilization and the colonial

---

[113] For most Bafumbira, the 'Rufumbira way' of dealing with borders was the opposite (see Chapters 3–4), refraining from borrowing of lexemes and grammar from Rwanda/Congo as a rejection of trans(border)-lingual practices, and instead focusing on borrowing from other Ugandan languages.

world. A people's strategy of confronting and overcoming the unequal system of Western hegemony and 'modernity' is represented by the concept of 'relocation of the thinking' (see also Mignolo 2002, and Section 1.2 of this study).

Mignolo explains that we can no longer think from the perspective of Western philosophy alone, even if that perspective criticizes modernity (and capitalism, coloniality etc.) itself; instead, we have to start to think from a level of subalternity, because otherwise we would simply reproduce colonial patterns of global history that blank out local histories. This means that Western thought cannot simply continue as coloniality of thought; otherwise Western philosophers are caught in a similar situation as Bafumbira, gazing at old boundaries, no longer crossing them that often but performing their existence and historicity:

> The limit of Western philosophy is the border where the **colonial difference** [my emphasis] emerges, **making visible the variety of local histories** that Western thought, from the right and the left, hid and suppressed. (ibid., p.66)

Among the new philosophers from the South, beyond colonial epistemology, who have greatly contributed to the deconstruction of border nations, are Anzaldúa, Fanon and Khatibi. The limits of Western thought (due to an impossibility of thinking, theorizing and philosophizing beyond European/Western epistemology) are described by Mignolo (2002) as the 'colonial difference'. This means that when this epistemology was transported to places where thinking was simply not seen as existing (i.e. the emerging colonies), but instead understood as being replaced by "folklore, magic, wisdom, and the like" (ibid., p.90), there could not be a simple continuation of Western philosophy, and "an other logic (or border thinking from the perspective of subalternity)" (p.91) was needed. This was due to the fact that there is a clear "ratio between places (geohistorically constituted) and thinking, the geopolitics of knowledge proper" (p.66). The perspective of subalternity here has to come from the excluded, from the people shorn of their histories and thinking, e.g. from Bafumbira in the borderlands around Kisoro, pushing "epistemic geopolitics beyond absolute knowledge, restitution of colonized subaltern knowledges, and divers[ification of] visions of life" (Mignolo 2012: xviii). The colonial difference is thus also the space where Rufumbira is spoken. "The subaltern speaks Rufumbira…" can be claimed – with reference to Spivak's (1988) well-known paper on subalternity – when taking this thinking a bit further, with Bafumbira creating their own form of modernization and reconstitution of language barriers.

Tuhiwai Smith (1999: 87) also shows, for a Maori community in New Zealand, how local histories and geographical spheres of spatial belonging were not only suppressed by Western universal history but also rewritten. Two colonial agents, Smith and Best, summarized the histories of the Maoris' origins into two 'orthodoxies', which have been commonly accepted as containing Maori accurate lineages and migration patterns. This constituted not only a deceptive way of framing the Maori past geographically, but also displaced the role of Maoris in processes of colonial conquest, depicting them as being exposed to a (beneficial)

civilization process by Western coloniality. Tuhiwai Smith therefore demands the decolonization of methodologies when talking and writing about local knowledge and its global implications, due to historical but also geographical fixity in terms of borders, and to trajectories as a form of "original habitats" that were ascribed to communities by Western colonial narratives.

From a linguistic perspective, theoretical thoughts of sovereignty beyond real-life boundaries is based on geolinguistic awareness and knowledge of speakers; languages play salient roles as '(cross)border tongues', whose fluidity, creativity and variation stands in stark contrast to the differences proclaimed by colonial systems through arbitrary geographic boundaries. Apart from 'cross-border languages' or 'trans-border languages' (Legère 1998, Filppula et al. 2005) and their sociolinguistic implications, border thinking also encompasses speakers' marked agency in the form of rejected borrowing, as a linguistic response to borders as 'contact zones' (see Saldívar 1997) and to the potential permeability of linguistic items, as is the case in Rufumbira. Speakers can also mark and reconstruct their colonial heritage by choosing or rejecting the former colonial language; this is why English plays a salient role among Bafumbira in Kisoro, and is thus used emblematically in contrast to French in Congo and French/English in Rwanda. Esoterogeny as a linguistic process is a result of border thinking, through which a difference is marked, and so are deliberate change, lexical choices and sociopragmatic variation. These processes are accelerated and pushed, as it seems, by a desire for linguistic chaos, which stands in clear contrast to the normative order of interaction beyond the border(s).

The fresh use of variants in Rufumbira, and the identification of speakers with English as the former colonial language in the creation of a regional identity that builds upon the colonial borders but 'relocates' the history (Bafumbira as actors; Rufumbira as non-colonial language and 'border tongue' at the same time), is a good example of Mignolo's colonial difference. While the border triangle, and the resulting linguistic ascriptions of fixity (*the* standard Kinyarwanda within the Rwandan borders vs. other(ed) varieties beyond), were produced by Western thought (and its drawn boundaries), local voices were suppressed (the ones that would claim that Rufumbira is a form of Kinyarwanda, that Kisoro was affiliated with Rwanda, etc.); even though Western thinking now criticizes that very Western epistemology and coloniality, it needs a hitherto subaltern voice and philosophy for delinking and decolonialization. These subaltern philosophers are Bafumbira who 'relocate the thinking', and construct Rufumbira as a different 'way of speaking', in the borderlands and e-borderlands (Omoniyi 2014), i.e. on Facebook, in WhatsApp chats, as comments to Instagram pictures, just to name a few.

Figure 6.1: "Reading" Rufumbira or Kinyarwanda – 'relocating the thinking' on Facebook[114]

In Figure 6.1, the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva argued with a friend on Facebook, stating that he found his name in the Rufumbira bible. His friend commented upon his post and claimed that there was no Rufumbira bible, whereafter Capher Nsabiyumva explained that he *read* the Kinyarwanda bible as Rufumbira. When being criticized again, he explained that the application in his phone simply displayed "*Bibliya yera*" ['Holy Bible'; the introduced colonial term referring to the bible], and not "Kinyarwanda bible", and could therefore have different readings, including one in Rufumbira. The journalist's friend, also a Mufumbira, deleted his comments afterwards, as becomes obvious in the screenshot.

Here, speakers redefine colonial constructs of classified languages and of standardized languages that have emerged in a colonial context, and delink colonial ideologies (central vs. peripheral varieties, 'correct' vs. 'defect' language etc.). The concept of delinking is closely related to Mignolo's (2011) 'decolonial option' (a connecting element of different decolonial paths), which also becomes evident in Bafumbira's border thinking, as the "definitive rejection of 'being told', from the epistemic privileges of the zero point, what we [i.e. they] are" (ibid., p.121). As already analyzed in Chapter 2, the delinking of social identity, as the unveiling of who in fact Bafumbira really are, is achieved through agency in language use.

6.2 On different theoretical approaches to Bafumbira's border practice

While speakers (often, although not permanently) intend to mark a difference from neighboring varieties in Rufumbira, by means of phonological and morphosyntactic divergence in speech, a deeper and less visible distinction is also involved, namely the conceptualization of a geographical/political boundary in people's speech behavior. The border is never just a line

---

[114] See [https://www.facebook.com/nsabac] (accessed 18 June 2016).

where one's own culture and language ends, but also where another one begins. One out of ten Bafumbira who were asked to give short statements on their perception of the borders replied *"umupaka n'ahó igihugu kirángiriye ikindi kikahatangirira"* ['the border is where a country ends and another one begins'], which underlines the implication of a permanent dichotomy in the creation of social meaning. Rufumbira cannot be constructed and performed without something different beyond the border, as will be shown further in the following paragraphs on theoretical approaches to Bafumbira's border talk and thinking.

The above-cited Bafumbira statement in relation to the borders is reminiscent of Foucault's (1970: 20) description of *'convenientia'* in *The order of things*, since in a way "their edges touch, their fringes intermingle, the extremity of the one also denotes the beginning of the other", while a certain 'resemblance' appears between the two concepts, both a resemblance of the place (as a site where adjacency occurs) and a resemblance of properties. By stating that "place and similitude become entangled" (ibid.), it is shown that Bafumbira's way of speaking always stands in relation to the ways of speaking across the border, and that the contested relationship (emerging out of contrast) between them gives rise to Bafumbira's distinctive linguistic behavior: without resemblance, Rufumbira could not *differentiate*, and the performance of a difference would lose its meaning. The (geopolitical and historical) context of the *convenientia* Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda is essential for identity constructions.

Analyzed from a theoretical angle, the concept of '*différance*' comes into play.[115] In contrast to the linguistic understanding of de Saussure's (1959), who sees conceptual and phonic differences as having issued from the system, Derrida (1982) coined the concept of *différance* as an endless interplay of meaning-producing negativity, since

> in short, a concept never is what it is, because it is *constituted* by its differences with other concepts, so that what it *is not* is constitutive of what it is: **it is what it is not** (Baugh 1997: 128)

This means that Rufumbira always turns out to be what the ideologically and politically promoted Kinyarwanda (as a standardized product that emerged in colonial times) is not; equally, Rufumbira *is* what Kinyabwisha *is not*. The negation of the emblematic contrast to the variety across the border marks Rufumbira's genuineness, and deviation marks particularity. The same occurs in the DR Congo among speakers of Banyabwisha, who reject the existence of a language called Rufumbira (see Chapter 4), and in doing so strengthen the Banyabwisha identity. Kinyarwanda speakers do not have to negate Rufumbira or Kinyabwisha in order to emerge as 'something', since Kinyarwanda is already the product of colonial policies, and

---

[115] I am indebted to Anne Storch for introducing to me the concept of *différance,* which has considerably contributed to my understanding of linguistic variation in Rufumbira. I am also indebted to her for bringing Benjamin's work (see Section 6.3) to my attention.

was developed in its current form in colonial epistemologies, through fixation, status planning and standardization (see also Errington 2008 for colonial processes of Othering and the appropriation of languages). *Différance* can only be created through the relationships of Rufumbira to other varieties, and Rufumbira itself does not participate in the process of meaning production since it is defined by external negativities.

> It is because of différance that the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called "present" element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, **is related to something other than itself**, thereby keeping within itself **the mark of the past element** (…), and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not: what it absolutely is not (…)" (Derrida 1982: 13)

Without any relation to the colonial borders or to Banyabwisha and Banyarwanda, Rufumbira stands as 'nothing', and Derrida's "mark of the past element" is Kinyabwisha. Both Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda leave 'marks' on the gestalt of Rufumbira, since they define what Rufumbira *is* by not *being* themselves (in the eyes of Rufumbira speakers). The polarity of languages based on Derrida's model of *différance* marks clear 'borders' between them; one is because the other is not, ontologically separated. These borders represent the actual geopolitical boundaries that surround Kisoro, and through which Rufumbira is doubly-constructed: once by the 'real' boundaries that block adjacent varieties from intruding, and once on a theoretical level as borders in thinking (we think it can *be* since the other is not).

Derrida (1993: 3) has also explicitly addressed borders in his *Aporias* (*Apories*), although this relates to his discourse on death, in which he points out that the "*rhetoric of borders*, (…) a treatise about the tracing of traits as the borderly edges of what in sum *belongs to us* [*nous revient*], belonging as much to us as we properly belong to it". This rhetoric of borders, already briefly introduced in Chapter 2, can also be set in relation to the geographical boundaries that characterize speakers' life. Bafumbira claim ownership (in an epistemological way) over Bufumbira, which is the largest part of Kisoro District, and the borders mark Bafumbira's space of belonging. In the same way as the border belongs to them, they also belong to (and depend upon) the border, or *finis.* Not only is the border a product of Bafumbira's (postcolonial) border thinking (see Section 6.1), but Bafumbira are also a product of the (colonial) border, and their distinctive language practices (i.e. Rufumbira) are a product of Bafumbira's 'relocation of the thinking', as the ensemble of a critical Southern voice of decoloniality. While speakers claim territoriality through marked boundaries, these very boundaries also *mark speakers*, and tell their own postcolonial narrative.

A similar view is shared by Bourdieu (1991: 222) in his work on symbolic power; he addresses the separation of regions as 'frontiers', which is the term he uses to denote borders. He describes frontiers between regions as a "product of a division which can be said to be more or less based on 'reality'" (which is social, i.e. based on arbitrary imposition). He explains that frontiers produce cultural difference on the one hand, and are produced by it on

the other hand. This bidirectional process of coming-into-being explains steady processes of borrowing in the border tongues, where Rufumbira is changed into a kind of 'performative discourse' (ibid., p.223). This discourse "aims to impose as legitimate a new definition of the frontiers and to get people to know and recognize the region that is thus delimited in opposition to the dominant definition" (ibid.,), a delinking strategy and part of speakers' relocation of their thinking on a performative level. Bourdieu's idea of performance here matches with Bafumbira's idea of 'speaking differently' through a range of diverging phonological and morphosyntactic markers, which are not stable but can vary depending upon the conversational partner, and upon the level of 'distinctiveness' that is needed.

Bafumbira's performed distinctiveness can be related to Butler's (1990) idea of 'performativity' and has to do with 'doing' rather than with fixed 'being'. While Butler elaborates the idea of performativity of identities in a gender discourse, Bafumbira perform in a border discourse, as also expressed by a research participant after I had asked him whether he was "happy about the differences" between the three border tongues. He replied "[y]es, of course, we are not from Congo, from Rwanda… Uganda! When someone here wants to behave like a Rwandan or Congolese, you don't *do* it in public" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016). The doing, the behaving, the performing of identities in public is a flexible concept, and shows that the identities attached to variation in language are never really stable but have to be performed and re-performed by the speakers.

In a context of border thinking, Rufumbira's language boundaries are congruent with Bafumbira's political borders (at least toward Congo and Rwanda); Rufumbira becomes, if we refer to Wittgenstein (1922), "the only language in the world" for its speakers, as also presented in the epigraph. This may need a little more explanation, though. Wittgenstein classifies 'boundaries' as logical schisms of the world, and points out that we can never understand the world as a whole but have to consider it in terms of what we see, and of how it appears to us. Our world may be bounded, but we do not see the boundary because we are unable to look beyond it. We would have to be outside of our world in order to clearly see the boundaries. The same applies to logic. The world is filled with logic, and the boundaries of the world are therefore also the boundaries of logic. This has to do with Wittgenstein's concept of 'solipsism', which explains that people's boundaries of their (constructed) world are also the boundaries of their language and what they can speak about and refer to. To Bafumbira, their world is demarcated by colonial borders, which separate Kisoro District from the DR Congo and Rwanda. However, it is not the colonial borders that mark the boundaries – since people are able to cross if they want to (see Chapter 2) – but their *language(s)*. Wittgenstein proposes that (1922: 69) "solipsism, when its implications are followed out strictly, coincides with pure realism", which he explains with the comparison of the eye and its visual field. What a human being sees is in the visual field, and nothing in the visual field allows us to see the eye; the eye therefore does not belong to the visual field. To the same extent "[t]he metaphysical

subject does not belong to the world but is a boundary of the world", as stated by Bertrand Russell (1922) in his introduction to Wittgenstein's (1922) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.* It is further stated by Wittgenstein (1922: 70) that the self in solipsism "shrinks to a point without extension", which therefore makes Rufumbira, as the linguistic border (limiting the sphere of reference, like the visual field), the only language in the world for Bafumbira, and the only language within whose frame the self can refer to things, and speak.

Bafumbira's strategies of linguistic differentiation can also be critically seen as a form of mimicry in Bhabha's (1994: 85) sense, which "emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge". Bhabha explains mimicry as being "almost the same *but not quite*" [my emphasis], where the colonized, or the subaltern, mimics the paradigm of colonial authority, due to the colonizer's ideal of having a reformed and altered Other. Mimicry marks an "ironic compromise" and a partial representation of the colonial (p.86). When Bafumbira, as the colonized ones, who find themselves surrounded by arbitrary borders that were established by colonial powers in a struggle for exploitation and domination, reconstitute borders linguistically as a strategy of facing away from conflict (Congo) and strict (language) policies (Rwanda), their reestablishment of borders always has a connotation of mimicry, and a comic representation that oscillates between mimicry and mockery.

Due to the fact that Bafumbira are aware of the colonial disaster and the arbitrariness of the drawn lines of geographic demarcation, they can never fully construct Rufumbira as a serious endeavor per se, but only as a performance of critical awareness, while the target of linguistic differentiation is still seriously pursued. As such, colonial mimicry can be seen as decolonial option: Bhabha (1994: 88) writes that "[t]he *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority", where disrupted authority becomes a delinking process of hegemonic epistemology. Bafumbira's linguistic borders, constructed through *différance* ("You are *not*, so I am") and through linguistic differentiation ("I am what I speak"), are in the end a spoofed, or 'relocated' (Mignolo 2012), way of speaking.

6.3 A zone, not a line: Borders as sociological space

Rather than considering the geographical boundaries around the triangle of Uganda, Rwanda and the DR Congo as a simple line that separates three nation states from each other, the border has to be seen as a space that is filled with specific interaction, as a 'non-place' (Augé 1995, see Chapter 2) where encounters are usually quick and formal, and as a '*Schwelle'* [threshold], in Benjamin's (1991) understanding. Unlike a simple boundary, the *Schwelle* here marks a zone of transition that empowers and marks change, and is characterized by *Gestaltenwandel* (transformation), transforming everybody who passes through that same zone of transition. Benjamin (1991: 617-618) compares this to the transition phase between

208

wakefulness and sleep, which leaves the individual in a completely different state after the passage across this threshold:

> *Wir sind sehr arm an Schwellenerfahrungen geworden. Das Einschlafen ist vielleicht die einzige, die uns geblieben ist. (Aber damit auch das Erwachen.) (…)*
>
> [We have grown very poor in threshold experiences. Falling asleep is perhaps the only such experience that remains to us. (But together with this, there is also waking up.)][116]

He states that the threshold must be distinguished from the boundary, and that the threshold (*Schwelle*) has to do with the word *schwellen* ('to swell'), since transformation, passage and wave action (" *Wandel, Übergang, Fluten*") are combined in this word. *Gestaltenwandel* also implies that when one crosses the border, one arrives on the other side as an altered being, transformed and in a different state. This also implies that a Mufumbira who crosses is no longer necessarily a Mufumbira, and can in the transformed state also be someone else and use other linguistic representations, i.e. possibly also speak Kinyarwanda or Kinyabwisha. Due to the apparent similarity of the varieties, it would "take speakers only up to a month, maybe a month, people would not notice" (as expressed by the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva, February 2016) to fully adapt to the language beyond the border. This frees Bafumbira from identity concerns: when crossing, Bafumbira identity does not necessarily have to be performed and constructed without betraying one's own culture and community. Another speaker also referred to the zone of transition as 'no man's land', stating that *"[a]hantu h'ibihugu bibaga bihuuye aríko bigabanyije kandi nihó habaga harí no mans land"* [a place of countries that are similar but that are made to cohabitate where there is no man's land]. This no man's land between the countries (which is actually described with *guhuura* 'to meet', meaning 'similar') is where wave action is concentrated that either transforms the individuals who cross, or that is the relational center of both "meeting" languages, where the linguistic differences and similarities ring in people's ears, and push further differentiation.

As well as Benjamin, Saldívar's (1997) work on the borderzone also has to be taken into consideration. While he first calls the overlapping zone on the American and Mexican sides of the borders *corrido* (p.57), he later introduces the term '*Transfrontera* contact zone'.

> '*Transfrontera* contact zone' refers to the two-thousand-mile-long border between the United States and Mexico and to other geopolitical border zones (…). This zone is the **social space of subaltern encounters**, the Janus-faced border line in which peoples geopolitically forced to separate themselves now negotiate with one another and **manufacture new relations, hybrid cultures, and multiple-voiced aesthetics** (Saldívar 1997: 13)

He explains that he borrowed the term 'contact zone' from Pratt (1992), and uses it in a fresh context since it marks a "space of subaltern encounters". These subaltern encounters are quite different around Kisoro in Uganda than along the US-Mexican border. However, in Uganda

---

[116] The translation provided here is found in the Benjamin's (1999) version of *Arcades*.

too the border zone is a space for subalternity, where decolonial thinking emerges out of a confrontation with the colonial demarcation lines. While the border is more of a contact zone for Chicano/as than it is for Bafumbira, both are neither on the one nor on the other side when they enter that zone. While it becomes a space of cultural hybridity in the US-Mexican setting, where new styles of writing and new music and narratives emerge, it becomes a space for redefinitions of spatial belonging among Bafumbira, who negotiate in this zone between self-language and other-language. Both are subaltern, decolonial ways of thinking, and are dealing with the remnants of colonialism and social inequalities.

Figure 6.2: The threshold between Uganda and Rwanda

The philosopher Simmel (1903: 35) refers to the sociological dimension of borders as a *"Raumgestaltung"* 'space design', which is a sociological construction, meaningless as a geographical boundary but meaningful due to its structure of social meaning (see also Eigmül-ler & Vobruda 2016 on *Grenzsoziologie* 'border sociology'). In this thinking, a border turns into 'social space' ('*sozialer Raum*') which is filled with borderscapes, thus visual indexical representations, and with confrontations of languages, traditions and values.

Mignolo (2012: xv) is of the opinion that border thinking presupposes a "dwelling in the border", rather than a "dwelling in the territory", since migrants are constantly dwelling on borders, stuck (and hindered) at embassies, at border posts, and so on. Bafumbira always dwell on the border, too. The potential accusation of being Rwandan and speaking Kinyarwanda by fellow Ugandans, and thus being shorn of their identity, locates Bafumbira's language practice right on the border, where local history (being/making Bafumbira through the spoken practice Rufumbira) always underlies the global design (Uganda bordering Rwanda, the former British East Africa bordering German/Belgian territory). The border as a dwelling place is therefore

a space of thought, of identification and of relocated power. When understanding Bafumbira's language practice as a form of border thinking (that gives rise to variationist patterns and language ideologies that focus on differentiation from the adjacent neighbors), all of Kisoro turns into a borderzone and it is not only the geographical space surrounding the border posts and the forests that divide the DR Congo from Uganda. Language practices in Kisoro District are characterized by border thinking and by the colonial difference; the district therefore *becomes* the border in a broader sense. And the border becomes 'home', as also expressed by Anzaldúa. Marking the border as a space filled with culture, (ecstatic and violent) emotions and transient thinking, rather than as a separation line, Anzaldúa (2012: 35) ends her chapter on *The Homeland, Aztlán / El otro México* with the words

This is her home
        this thin edge of
                barbwire.

6.4 Lexical choices and boundaries: Altering semantic and stylistic repertoires

The most frequent and in a sense almost trivial strategy of creating different languages is the use of a specific Rufumbira lexicon that exists neither in Kinyabwisha nor in standardized Kinyarwanda, representing a "lexical border". As a simple yet efficient way of creating distinctiveness, lexical choice constitutes a powerful tool of ideological alterity in a border zone, where the words one chooses indexically stand for one's identity, origin and orientation. While phonology and morphosyntax are structural features that have already been dealt with, very little attention has so far been devoted to these "lexical borders".

DiMarco, Hirst & Stede (1993), who analyzed the differentiation and lexical choices in synonyms and near-synonyms in terms of their "*nuances* and *subleties* of denotation and connotation – shades of meaning and of style" (p.120) [emphasis in original], ask "how do we choose between the words gazing, staring, and peering? What exactly is the difference between an argument, a dispute and a row?" (ibid.). They state in their analysis, based on dictionary usage notes, that there is a twofold representation in lexical items, and they differentiate between synonymy and plesionymy. Pairs of words that are complementarily distributed in Kinyarwanda, Kinyabwisha or Rufumbira are seldomly entirely synonymous, they are rather "nearly synonymous", and therefore so-called plesionyms, overlapping in their semantic projection yet not denoting the same concept in their entirety. Etymologically, the words that are used in any of the three border areas go back to lexical borrowings from surrounding languages, they are coined (and manipulated) lexemes from the same root, or they are plesionyms that exist in one form or another in all three languages but have over time replaced the other competing lexemes (we could call these "lexical triplets").

Let us discuss this for the examples of *umusirikare* ('soldier', Rufumbira) vs. *umusoda* ('soldier', Kinyabwisha). Kinyarwanda speakers use *umusirikare* for 'soldier' (from Swahili

serikali, 'government'), but equally employ *umusoda*, a loanword from French *soldat*. When speaking of 'policeman', they prefer *umuporisi*, another loanword from French *policier*. Because Kinyabwisha speakers in Eastern DR Congo use *umusoda* for both policemen and soldiers (as is also done in Kivu Swahili and Lingala), Bafumbira use the more generic *umusirikare* for any person in uniform, be it 'policeman' or 'soldier'. While Kinyarwanda has specific semantic nuances, Kinyabwisha and Rufumbira eradicate those and broaden one specific term (which is distinctive!) and use it for both concepts. These are plesionyms and are not a hundred percent congruent, but are redefined for new concepts due to the need to create distinctiveness in speech. The disambiguation of broad terms for narrow concepts, and the redefinition of semantic content, marks a powerful strategy of "speaking with a difference" in Rufumbira. This is when the use of wider languages of communication kicks in, and speakers acquire lexicon from Luganda and English (or Swahili, French, Lingala on the other side of the border in DR Congo) (see also Table 6.1). Vagueness often plays a crucial role here, since "the boundary between *forest* and *wood* 'tract of trees' is vague, and there are some situations in which either word might be equally appropriate" (DiMarco, Hist & Stede 1993: 120).

Rufumbira	Kinyabwisha	Kinyarwanda	Gloss
umuhare	*ibarabara* (Swah.)	*umuhanda*	'street'
agatare (Lug.)	*isoko* (Swah.)	*isoko* (Swah.)	'market'
isente (Lug.)	*amakuta/amafaranga* (Swah./Fr.)	*amafaranga* (Fr.)	'money'
impare ngufi	*kabutura* (Swah.?)	*ikabutura*	'shorts'
ikibuga/town (Lug./Engl.)	*umugi/ville* (Fr.)	*umujyi*	'town'
ifumbe	*amabíga*	*igikoni*	'kitchen'
indiga/umushyo	*igisu* (Swah.)	*icyuma/umushyo*	'knife'
igikopo	*ikopo*	*igikombe*	'cup'
isiripa (Engl.)	*amapápa* (Ling.)	*rugabire*	'flip flops'

Table 6.1: Lexical divergence in Rufumbira, Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda[117]

Very often, the Rufumbira word is not unknown to speakers of Kinyarwanda but is rejected due to the narrow, and in their eyes, inadequate context of use of this plesionym. While Bafumbira base their distinctiveness in lexical terms on a 'grammar of orientalization', as suggested by Baumann (2004), and based on Said (1978), Kinyarwanda speakers see lexical differences from the angle of a 'grammar of encompassment'[118]. This will be further explained in the following, since the concept of the three grammars of identity and alterity[119] focuses on

---

[117] In Table 6.1, Lug. represents 'Luganda', Engl. stands for 'English', Swah. for 'Swahili', Ling. for 'Lingala' and Fr. for 'French'.

[118] For both concepts, see also Chapter 2, where they were already introduced.

[119] The third grammar, namely the grammar of alterity, is less suitable for explaining the differentiation in Rufumbira, but has a prominent predecessor in Evans-Pritchard's (1940) model of the lineage system

a socio-anthropological scale, which is seldom applied to linguistics (but is, however, very suitable for the analysis of linguistic differentiation and 'border thinking' in the present case).

Whenever lexical distinction is intended, Bafumbira will therefore only accept a word that diverges from the Kinyarwanda lexicon, despite knowing the equivalent employed on the other side of the border, thus marking a contrastive choice. They would, when asked, often answer "no, that's the Kinyarwanda word – we use a different one" (as stated by Capher Nsabiyumva in various situations, March 2016). As has been mentioned before, the orientalist angle from which variation is seen is not only a binary opposition but is also what Baumann (2004: 20) calls a "very shrewd mirror reversal". The good (distinctive/specific) in Rufumbira is the bad (the broad standardized forms/structures) in Kinyarwanda, and the bad (inadequate/colloquial) in Rufumbira is likewise the good (adequate/formal) in Kinyarwanda. This is illustrated in Table 6.2, based on Said (1978) and Baumann's (2004) summary.

Kinyarwanda positive	Rufumbira negative
• recognized (official status in Rwanda/ standardized variety)	• not officially recognized (by Rwanda) ("remote/colloquial variety")
• educationalized	• not used in education
• broadly applicable/widespread	• restricted sphere of usage/extension
Kinyarwanda negative	Rufumbira positive
• not distinctive (enough)	• distinctive way of speaking
• unspecific language continuum (less identity)	• localist/esoterogenist function
• autocratic educational corpus-planning	• community-based/democratic ideologization

Table 6.2: The grammar of orientalization from the angle of Rufumbira speakers

This stands in contrast with the view of many Rwandans, who see Rufumbira as one out of many (non-standard) varieties of Kinyarwanda, although as a remote and to some extent "broken" (as stated by the Rwandan interlocutor Grace 'Mama', 2016) or "far off" variety. This correlates with a different strategy of alterity, namely the 'grammar of encompassment' (see Baumann 2004: 25-27). The grammar of encompassment (see also Section 2.2.5) was initially based on Baumann's observations on the Indian caste system, where 'encompassment' means "an act of selfing by appropriating, perhaps one should say adopting or co-opting, selected kinds of otherness" (p.25). While the lower level of the grammar of encompassment recognizes differences, the higher level includes the recognized differences in a recognition of something universal. Baumann points this out as clearly as a Kinyarwanda speaker can refer to a Rufumbira speaker, stating that "your difference, in other words (…), is a fiction caused by your own low horizon" (ibid.), therefore incorporating all deviating (remote) varieties such

---

among the Nuer, and what he calls the predominant principle of 'ordered anarchy' (see Baumann 2004: 21-22).

as Rufumbira under the label of encompassment 'Kinyarwanda'. In the Kinyarwanda case, this strategy can be seen as a negation of differences due to its official and institutionalized status, in contrast to the non-standardized varieties in the margins.

Moreover, which word is chosen for which context is a stylistic issue, especially if there is a range of different lexemes that could potentially be employed. Kimenyi (2002: 40) states that "Kinyarwanda has thousands of words which have different phonetic forms without any change in meaning or register", and lists for instance five variants for 'or', namely *cyáangwá, byáangwá, cyáangá, ndangwá, yáangwá.* He moreover explains that "[t]the problem, however, is to decide among all these competing forms which one to select" (ibid.). This means that Kinyarwanda is characterized by a formal and standardized phonology and morphosyntax on the one hand, but by a rather free lexical pool from which speakers can choose. It has to be mentioned, however, that all variants listed by Kimenyi are minimal pairs, or at least very close in terms of their phonology. While there seems to be a lot of variation, the lexical items that speakers can choose from are not entirely arbitrary. There is a clear "lexical border" between Kinyarwanda and varieties across the border, and the broader and more open the lexical realizations in Rwanda, the more narrow the lexical pool in Rufumbira. While several (etymologically closely) related variants seem to constitute a flexible pool of variants in Rwanda, in Rufumbira there is always "exactly one word" that is perceived as correct. In contrast, the morphological representation of Kinyarwanda is prescriptive and strict (bound to one form), whereas Rufumbira often has two (or more) variants when speakers change conversational styles.

Summarizing the different and multi-faceted approaches to boundaries in language and thought, it becomes obvious that Rufumbira as a spoken practice can be explained with very different (theoretical) models, and can be approached from both philosophical and stylistic perspectives. The best answer to how speech and performance are influenced by the surrounding geopolitical lines of demarcations is given by speakers, as in the longer monologue provided for instance in the appendix to this study.[120] Moreover, it makes sense that Bafumbira, who live in a 'very bordered world' (Diener & Hagen 2012), often do not refer to the border in the first place, since by speaking and performing Rufumbira, they have already overcome and recontextualized the colonial inequality of living 'in the Ugandan margins' (due to classifications of center and periphery, standard vs. non-standard), and have been separated by borders from Rwanda's institutionalizing language policies. Focus on borders may serve as theoretical concept when approaching variability in style and linguistic choice (variants of forms and structures) but it is not mentioned constantly. My interlocutor Joe Haguma, when I asked him during a recording session in April 2014 what 'Rufumbira' *was* in his opinion in

---

[120] As part of the research for this chapter, short snippets of ten different interlocuters were recorded, based on people's perception of the border and their spontaneous associations with it.

relation to neighboring languages and the manifold contact-induced influences on the language, simply replied:

Urufumbira n'ururimi rwivanjemó, urunyarwanda rukabamó n'urutuutsi[121] na nurwo rutwa nyine, n'urukigakiga, aríko kandi **imico myínshi ne y'igifumbira***.*

[Urufumbira is a mixed language, Runyarwanda [meaning: Kinyarwanda] is in there and Tutsi language and that Batwa language, and a lot of Rukiga, but **many customs are just 'the Rufumbira way'**.]

---

[121] Hypothetically, it can be assumed that by naming 'Tutsi language' and 'Batwa language', since he belongs himself to the group of Hutus, he simply aims to emphasize that Rufumbira is made up of many different ways of speaking with speakers from different social backgrounds and group affiliations.

7. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

> *"Not only communities but also languages must be imagined*
> *before their unity can be socially accomplished"*
> (Gal 1998: 325, in *Language Ideologies:*
> *Practice and theory).*

The way languages are imagined, as addressed in Gal's epigraph, is based on the acknowledgment that 'speaking with a difference' may create identity, and that a border tongue such as Rufumbira is both socially constructed (in and by the community of speakers) but also linguistically, when intricate differences become emblematic in a border area. The imagining of Rufumbira has given rise to a social identity that is reflected in its speakers' lexical choices, their phonological realizations and the morphosyntactic forms and structures that they use.

Sociohistorically (as shown in Chapter 2), the colonial borders in Kisoro District were subject to European quarrels in the scramble for Africa from 1885 on, and had a salient impact on the inhabitants of the area due to the constant re-negotiations of the borders among the colonial powers, and a high degree of uncertainty about exactly where the boundaries lay, and whether people belonged to the British, German or Belgian territory, until the borders were clearly defined in 1910. From a sociolinguistic view, the borders are still decisive today: Rufumbira speakers achieve saliency through a social identity that is bound to language use, and through language ideologies to a different style and to a 'way of speaking' that diverges from that of their neighbors in Rwanda (speaking standardized Kinyarwanda) and the DR Congo (speaking Kinyabwisha). The ways in which Bafumbira speak about their language, as a form of indexical metalinguistic discourse, also contribute to distinctiveness in the "imagining of Rufumbira". Rufumbira as a language of the Ugandan border area also reflects Bafumbira's repertoires; while a large number of speakers have knowledge of Rukiga, Luganda and English, almost no one indicated that they were able to speak Swahili or French. These languages, that would have an impact on the realization of Rufumbira and would potentially lead to more convergence with the two closely-related varieties across the borders, are not spoken and are only understood to a minor extent. Several speakers would repeatedly claim to "hear some" [to understand these languages to a limited extent] but not to speak them (Capher Nsabiyumva, November 2015). It is not only the languages from the other side that are scarce, but also trajectories across the borders among Rufumbira are, displaying a reduced mobility in the area. However, Rufumbira is not only imagined and spoken but is also performed: hip hop artists such as Slenda MC use Rufumbira indexically as the language of the region, and the language of the ancestors, and turn it into a distinctive label. The

differences that are created through all these mechanisms are not only linguistic ones, but operate on a social and ideological level, as shared by speakers in their judgments and ideas.

Rufumbira's strategies of sociophonological differentiation, as presented in Chapter 3, are based on both divergent phonemes and tonal differences such as differing pitch contours, but also on speakers' perceptions of how a specific variety sounds, and how different phonaesthetic judgments contribute to a great extent to speakers' rejection, mimicry and acquisition of a specific phoneme or pitch contour. While a specific phonological realization may sound correct and desirable in one context (and constitute "good Rufumbira"), it may be perceived as less meaningful in another context, and speakers may allow more variation. However, it also becomes obvious that the phonological differences that present themselves always have to be explained in context; they are not stable variants but are prone to change and spontaneity. This indicates that Rufumbira as such is rather a spoken practice in *relation* to something.

This can best be illustrated by considering the palatalization patterns in Table 3.6, where Kinyarwanda lexemes are always palatalized (such as *kugenda* [kuʄeːnda] 'to go'), the Kinyabwisha lexemes from Congo are never palatalized (such as [kugeːnda]) and the Rufumbira lexemes reveal two different realizations and thus a 'mixed pattern' ([kuʄeːnda]/[kugeːnda]). These appear as lifeless and abstract data when listed one after the other, and were several times questioned by speakers, when crosschecking data. While the mixed pattern was frequently recorded in speech, discussions with the interlocutors afterwards raised questions concerning the abstract analysis of produced phonemes, forms and structures, when removed from their context.

The morphosyntactic frame of the language, as discussed in Chapter 4, yielded similar observations. The morphosyntactic construction adds to the distinctive ma(r)king of Rufumbira through processes such as esoterogeny, metatypy, conscious choices and borrowing from Luganda, Rukiga and English, and also through the rejection of specific syntactic structures that are associated with Kinyarwanda, for example. Again, the analysis showed that speakers mark their language with non-linear variants and inconsistencies that are meaningful in context, for instance depending upon whether a conversation is exolingual or endolingual. When critically assessing all features in Rufumbira that diverged from adjacent varieties, my presence in recording sessions, explicitly asking for specific features, led to different realizations than would be recorded in conversations among Bafumbira alone. While this could be explained in terms of esoterogenist motivations and also a striving for deliberate language change, it raised numerous questions concerning the adequateness of linguistic methods of language description (and of Northern linguists' angle on the analysis of Rufumbira), when identities in the postcolonial world are concerned (see the following sections).

Further, the study of border thinking was discussed in terms of sociopragmatics, wherein speakers construct context by discursive means, and where speech behavior was in

the focus (see Chapter 5). It became obvious that naming among Bafumbira becomes a salient mark of distinction when speakers' first names are concerned, in contrast to Kinyabwisha and Kinyarwanda, and that conflict-related topics do not play a salient role among Bafumbira, while they are banned in Rwanda and expressed with euphemistic strategies among Congolese rebels and to some extent among civilians. The conceptualization of taboos, which are perceived differently among Bafumbira than among their neighbors, shows that transgressions and playing with taboo subjects (sex, alcohol), on which restrictions are imposed in the Rwandan and Congolese societies, are prone to exploration and excessive public demonstration among Bafumbira. This emphasizes the fact that extralinguistic features beyond paradigmatic language data also contribute to Bafumbira's social identity, and that border thinking affects very different levels of language use.

Chapter 6 is based on the findings presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, and solves the puzzle of border thinking, laying the theoretical foundations for the phonological and morphosyntactic divergence, explaining the conceptualization of borders in Kisoro when speakers shape their languages in interaction and re-interpret the former colonial borders as linguistic borders. These linguistic borders provide identity and security, and contribute to Rufumbira's distinctiveness. While the structural analysis of Rufumbira is based on a dyadic system ('Selfing strategies' vs. 'Othering strategies', Rufumbira vs. Kinyabwisha etc.), the theoretical approach to the border as *'Schwelle'* ('threshold')*,* and thus as a three-dimensional areal division rather than a two-dimensional demarcation line (see Benjamin 1991: 618), treats it as a non-dyadic concept but also as a ground that serves speakers as a performative means of 'relocation of the thinking' (see Mignolo 2002) that emerged out of the 'colonial difference'. The theoretical chapter furthermore addresses the question in what sense Derrida's (1982) notion of a '*différance'* can be applied to Rufumbira-speaking individuals who shape differentiation through an endless play of negativity, as inherent in Derrida's concept (cf. Baugh 1997: 128): Rufumbira stands for what both Kinyarwanda and Kinyabwisha are *not*, and is realized accordingly. By referring to Spivak (1988), the (hitherto) 'subaltern' voices of Bafumbira are included in order to discuss whether and how speakers can define their own language and identity, by differentiating it from their neighbors and by performing it (cf. Butler 1990).

It must however be stated that not all Bafumbira deliberately speak differently from people across the borders. Borders are addressed in discourse due to cross-border trade and to the flux of refugees from Congo, but *ibintu ntaabwo biba bihuuye* ('those things that are not identical') are not reproduced as a deliberate strategy of border thinking. While specific speakers create distinctiveness, and clearly differentiate between "good" and "bad Rufumbira", or between *conc Rufumbira* ('dense, concentrated Rufumbira') and *Rufumbira rupfuye* ('broken Rufumbira'), depending upon how much distinctiveness is achieved in speech, others only copy their fellow Bafumbira's realization as forms of 'localist strategies', and as a form of ritualized behavior. This different language behavior would not be explained

by these specific speakers as border thinking but probably in terms of the fact that they realize Rufumbira the way the others around them do.

Anzaldúa (2012: 19), as a Chicana author in the borderlands of the US-Mexican border, states "I am a border woman"; and so are Bafumbira 'border people'. They (re)construct themselves as 'border people' in the triangle of Uganda, Rwanda and the DR Congo through spoken practice, through choice of words, forms and structure, and through local history – expressing a linguistic identity that, as a form of 'relocation of the thinking', is based on their postcolonial identities as Ugandans. But how can we interpret Bafumbira's border thinking, and the concrete linguistic results, i.e. variations in phonology, esoterogeny in morphology, metatypy and a more configurational syntax, that this border thinking yields? As already hinted at a few times, Bafumbira use language in a way that mainly stands out as different from the surrounding varieties through its variations and, if we may call it that, through a chaotic representation of language. A linguistic 'chaos' as a strategy of liminality may serve here as speakers' response to a fixed standardized Kinyarwanda as spoken in Rwanda (and institutionalized in schools and universities, cf. Chapter 4), and to more 'traditional', less transgressive and less tabooized interactional behavior in Eastern Congo (cf. Chapter 5), where liminal topics such as sex and intoxication are largely banned. Banned ethnicized language in Rwanda can be seen on the same level as transgressive language, transgressive practice and also non-standard linguistic realization, since all of the latter are rejected in a system of strict language policy and societal control. Kinyabwisha speakers also find themselves in the margins and they may produce "incorrect" forms in relation to Kinyarwanda, but their interactions appear to be less socially transgressive (when recalling the statement of linguist Paulin Baraka Bose, who commented with astonishment on the half-dressed girls on the loading area of a pickup truck rolling through Kisoro in a noisy advertisement campaign, see Chapter 1).

Rufumbira speakers are per se liminal, both when addressing sexualized topics, and when producing non-standardized forms of language (such as varying morphological forms), which mark a 'relocation of the thinking' as part of a broader process of border thinking. When (post)genocide memorial campaigns occur in Rwandan news broadcasts, and when Congolese refugees flood into Kisoro and are accommodated in the refugee camp of Nyakabande, outside of Kisoro town, Bafumbira see their altered and othered Self in the apparent backwardness of the refugees and in the conflict-ridden past of Rwandan genocide survivors, while finding themselves confronted with groups of people from beyond the border who speak a similar-sounding language (i.e. Kinyabwisha or Kinyarwanda). This triggers linguistic chaos, rejection of linguistic order, and a different linguistic output, which structurally presents itself as morphological esoterogeny and deliberate borrowing from other Ugandan languages, marking Rufumbira as a liminal language, delinking from colonial prescriptions of linguistic purity and standardization (as established in early Kinyarwanda grammars; see

Hurel 1911, 1959), but also delinking from neighbors and over-generalizations of 'being similar', constituting a separate linguistic entity. Rufumbira as a stigmatized language in the margins is filled by its speakers with ritualized liminality in the sense of Turner (1967), who broadened the concept of liminality in rituals, i.e. in-between stages, "to understand the human reactions to liminal experiences: the way liminality shaped personality, the sudden foregrounding of agency, and the sometimes dramatic tying together of thought and experience" (Thomassen 2016: 87). This is also relevant when Bafumbira use non-standard language and break social taboos.

Moreover, the unruly variability found in the realization of Rufumbira, sometimes described by speakers as "most speakers say *ya*, others say *ga*" (Capher Nsabiyumva, March 2016), raises new questions regarding the documentation and analysis of un(der)documented varieties in the field of African Studies. Writing a "linear" grammar by paradigmatically listing forms and structures for a language like Rufumbira, a sort of an "untamed tongue" in Anzaldúa's (2012) sense, becomes a very complex endeavor. The variability of forms and structures in the contexts of exo- or endolingual communication, and the contextual variation in cross-border communication with Rwandans and Congolese, makes it evident that the parameters of choosing the 'right' data and describing variation from the alleged, colonially established standard of Kinyarwanda, does not yield the results that are relevant for speakers, when they explain that the "way they [the Bafumbira] speak, and actually the way they take themselves is not the same" (see Section 2.2.1).

So how should we analyze that "untamed tongue" Rufumbira and its variations against a theoretical postcolonial background? Fixing language through a descriptive grammar that tries to draw an image of the phonological, morphosyntactic and socio-pragmatic features of the variety displays only a limited picture of the practice and performance of Bafumbira, since a lot of essential information that relates to language ideologies in the postcolony, with a Southern perspective on variation, is often omitted in the analysis. Many variationist studies focus on language contact and convergence/divergence scenarios, without questioning the power of reversed hierarchies and relations whose basis was laid in imperial and colonial constellations. Moreover, the choice of one dominant form (out of many competing forms) by the researcher reduces the freedom that speakers have when Rufumbira is linguistically practiced. And it is specifically these decisions by speakers that have to stand central in the analysis of a border tongue, since borders mark not only linguistic restriction but also freedom in relation to linguistic and colonial epistemes of standard and non-standard variation. Speakers always have a range of choices, and their repertoires may allow different equivalents for a concept (Lüpke & Storch 2013). Things are sometimes untranslatable, or their realization may depend upon the context; the differences may sometimes also become meaningless when extracted from the context in which they are/were produced. When crosschecking some of the tables and transcribed language data with interlocutors in the final phase of data analysis,

some of the variants seemed to be no longer salient, or had become less expressive when organized in paradigmatic tables (see for instance Table 4.2). While the divergent forms were highly iconic in their context of utterance, they were rejected as banal when presented in an abstract way (as stated by different speakers).

This not only questions the structural analyzability of Rufumbira, where recurrent linguistic differences are context-bound, but also serves as a critical voice on epistemologies and parameters of linguistic description from the perspective of the Global North, where it is mostly structural arguments, as a form of "research through imperial eyes" (Tuhiwai Smith 1999: 42), that stand central. Non-grammatical components of language defined by speakers are often denied or rejected as a potential threat against "Western authority over all aspects of indigenous knowledges, languages and cultures" (ibid., p.64). And as has also been shown, critical postcolonial approaches that occur in the same episteme do not necessarily trigger a 'relocation of the thinking'. Southern philosophers are needed whose understanding of grammaticality, and of language in general, needs to be taken into serious consideration when analyzing languages. My research participants and interlocutors, such as the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva and former government official Joe Haguma, have to serve as Southern voices in grammar writing, since the understanding of linguistic differences in 'delinking processes' (see Mignolo 2011, see Chapter 6) in a border triangle, and variation in the Rufumbira language is best (and only fully) explained through the lens of a Mufumbira, a bordered speaker whose agency, status and awareness of local history make Rufumbira meaningful in spoken interaction.

While this becomes relatively obvious in Rufumbira, since the data analyzed reveals permanently unstable realizations and free variations, this should be expanded to other documentation projects, where a linear (Western) view on grammar becomes a hopeless endeavor since the linguistic reality cannot be fully grasped by turning spoken practice and decolonial thought into tables and paradigms (cf. also Lüpke & Storch 2013, Errington 2008). The example of Rufumbira can teach us that grammars on languages from the Global South have to include the (post)colony, speakers' freedom in the deconstruction of a colonial episteme, and their perception of 'language' as a distinctive practice far beyond linear representations of a standard. If we want to include and pursue a more emic circuit in the analysis of linguistic data, this becomes essential if we aim to describe language from a different, and broader, angle. This also means that the roles and contributions of our research participants, philosophers in Mignolo's (2002, 2012) sense, or linguists in the case of Rufumbira, in the relocation of local history and thought, have to change fundamentally.

I also found myself in the role of a constant (cross-)border commuter, as I collected data and interviewed research participants in the three borderlands between 2012 and 2015. My own experiences of constantly being at and in the borders, and dealing with the fine-grained differences that mark people's Ugandan, Rwandan or Congolese identities and the

social meanings of a slightly different performance in the border zone, in the local restaurants of Kisoro, or when communicating with Batwa, made me realize what a challenging task it would be to display Rufumbira as 'one *language'* with 'one *grammar'* in the traditional sense. The description of Bafumbira's linguistic practices turned into a sort of travel, whose geographical trajectories and methodological challenges both involved liminal experiences of boundaries and thresholds (i.e. *"Grenzgänge"* as a verbatim German translation). These border experiences included critical exchanges with people in the borderlands, doubtful reflections, and raised unexpected issues. Maybe new terminologies are needed, just as we need new linguists, and new methodologies, too, for a broader understanding of how languages are imagined, as stated in Gal's epigraph. In his study on language and philosophy, Medina (2010: 183) emphasizes

> the special **cultural productivity of border tongues** in general, for they make possible the **articulation of new experiences and new forms of identity,** facilitating the diversification of cultural norms and cultural expectations. The task of cultural self-affirmation through language is a complex and always ongoing task (…).

These "new experiences and new forms of identity" at the border, which play a role in the postcolonial practice of spoken Rufumbira, are described as border tongues, and their broad "cultural productivity" makes it almost impossible to grasp and "tame" them (referring to Anzaldúa 2012) so that they correspond with Northern models of classification and linearity.

Border thinking among Bafumbira does not necessarily produce a new language, or not only a new "dialect" of Kinyarwanda but an 'untied language' in the sense of Medina (2010: 184), which is supposed to be "*polyphonic*, that is, to contain a (diverse and heterogeneous) plurality of voices" (ibid.). The 'polyphony' is ubiquitous in Kisoro due to the variation of sounds, forms and structures that speakers of Rufumbira employ as a form of 'border speech'. I suggest the term 'border speech' as a term encompassing speakers variants, multimodal ways of speaking and writing with a difference and their critical voice against colonial linguistic predefinitions that have no hold in everyday language practice. Border speech marks Rufumbira in many different ways. Medina (2010: 185) concludes with the outlook that "[w]hen tongues are untied, we do not know what they will say, or even in what language they will speak; but we know at least this: that they will be able to talk". Bafumbira do *talk*, and they do it in a distinctive way, in an untied tongue, and maybe in the end it is impossible to narrow this down to a primarily grammatical analysis, and requires that we bring other decolonizing words, images and non-linguistic perspectives into our descriptions of language.

REFERENCES

Agyekum, Kofi. 2002. Menstruation as a verbal taboo among the Akan, *Journal of Anthropological Research* 58: 367–387.

Allan, Keith & Kate Burridge. 2006. *Forbidden words. Taboo and the censoring of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Andersen, Henning. 1988. Center and periphery: Adoption, diffusion and spread. In Fisiak, Jacek (ed.), *Historical dialectology: Regional and social,* 39–83. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (3rd edition). London/New York: Verso.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. 2012. *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza* (4th edition). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Ashton, Ethel O. 1944. *Swahili grammar (including intonation).* London: Longmans, Green & Company.

Ashton, Ethel O., E.M.K. Mulira, E.G.M. Ndawula & A.N. Tucker. 1954. *A Luganda grammar.* London: Longmans, Green and Company.

Asiimwe, Allen. 2014. *Definiteness and specificity in Runyankore-Rukiga.* Stellenbosch University: PhD thesis.

Auer, Peter. 2007. Introduction. In Auer, Peter (ed.), *Style and social identities. Alternative approaches to linguistic heterogeneity*, 1–24. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Augé, Marc. 1995. *Non-places. Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity.* Translated by John Howe. London: Verso.

Bagemihl, Bruce. 1995. Language games and related areas. In Goldsmith, John A. (ed.), *The handbook of phonological theory,* 697–712. London: Blackwell.

Bahuchet, Serge. 2006. Languages of African rainforest "Pygmy" hunter-gatherers: Language shifts without cultural admixture. [https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00548207/document] (accessed 25 September 2015).

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. 1981. *The dialogic imagination: Four essays.* Edited by Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.

———. 1986. *Speech genres and other late essays.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bastin, Yvonne. 2003. The Interlacustrine zone (Zone J). In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages*, 501–528. London: Routledge.

Bateson, Gregory. 1972. *Steps to an ecology of mind. Collected essays in anthropology, psychiatry, evolution, and epistemology.* New York: Ballantine.

Baugh, Bruce. 1997. Making the difference: Deleuze's difference and Derrida's différance, *Social Semiotics* 7,2: 127–146.

Baugh, John. 2007. Attitudes towards variation and ear-witness testimony. In Bailey, Robert & Ceil Lucas (eds.), *Sociolinguistic variation. Theories, methods and applications,* 338–348. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bauman, Richard & Charles L. Briggs. 2003. *Voices of modernity: Language ideologies and the politics of inequality.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baumann, Gerd. 2004. Grammars of identity/alterity: A structural approach. In Baumann, Gerd & André Gingrich (eds.), *Grammars of identity/alterity. A structural approach,* 18–52. New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Baumann, Gerd & André Gingrich (eds.). 2004. *Grammars of identity/alterity. A structural approach.* New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Bayard, Pierre. 2012. *Comment parler des lieux où l'on n'a pas été?* Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.

Bayingana. 2011. Beginning Kinyarwanda. [http://elias.fas.harvard.edu/units/beginning-kinyarwanda] (accessed 20 March 2016)

Bearth, Thomas. 2003. Syntax. In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages*, 121–142. London: Routledge.

Benjamin, Walter. 1991. *Gesammelte Schriften V.* Edited by Rolf Tiedemann. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

———. 1999. *The arcades project.* Translated by Howard Eiland & Kevin McLaughlin. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. *The location of culture.* New York: Routledge.

Blommaert, Jan (ed.). 1999. Language ideological debates. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

———. 2005. *Discourse. A critical introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2008. *Grassroots literacy: Writing, identity and voice in Central Africa.* London: Routledge.

———. 2010. *The sociolinguistics of globalization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan & Ad Backus. 2011. Repertoires revisited. 'Knowing language' in superdiversity, *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies* 67: 1–26. [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ sspp/departments/education/research/ldc/publications/30workingpapers/67.pdf] (accessed 26 December 2014)

———. 2012. Superdiverse repertoires and the individual, *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies* 24: 1–32. [https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/d53816c1-f163-4ae4-b74c-0942b30bdd61_tpcs% 20paper24.pdf] (accessed 15 March 2015)

Blot, Richard K. (ed.) 2003. *Language and social identity.* Westport/London: Praeger.

Blumer, Herbert. 1969. *Symbolic interactionism. Perspective and method.* Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press.

Bodenhorn, Barbara & Gabriele vom Bruck. 2006. 'Entangled in histories': An introduction to the anthropology of names and naming. In vom Bruck, Gabriele & Barbara Bodenhorn (eds.), *The anthropology of names and naming*, 1–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bonfiglio, Thomas Paul. 2013. Inventing the native speaker, *Critical Multilingualism Studies* 1,2: 29–58.

Boroditsky, Lera. 2011. How languages construct time. In Dehaene, Stanislas & Elizabeth Brannon (eds.), *Space, time and number in the brain*, 333–341. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bose, Paulin Baraka & Nico Nassenstein. 2016. Morphosyntactic core features of Kivu Swahili: A synopsis, *Afrikanistik & Ägyptologie Online* 2016. [https://www.afrikanistik-aegyptologie-online.de/articles] (accessed 8 July 2016).

Bostoen, Koen, Ferdinand Mberamihigo & Gilles-Maurice de Schryver. 2012. Grammaticalization and subjectification in the semantic domain of possibility in Kirundi (Bantu, JD62), *Africana Linguistica* 18: 5–40.

Botne, Robert D. 1983. The semantics of tense in Kinyarwanda, *Studies in African Linguistics* 14,3: 235–263.

———. 1987. Semantics and pragmatics of tense in Kikerebe and Kinyarwanda, *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 9: 29–44.

Botne, Robert D. & Tiffany L. Kershner. 2008. Tense and cognitive space: On the organization of tense/aspect systems in Bantu languages and beyond, *Cognitive Linguistics* 19,2: 145–218.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourgeois, René. 1957. *Banyarwanda et Barundi, Tome I, Ethnographie*. Brussels: A.R.S.C.

Braber, Natalie. 2007. Modal particles and emotion. In Weinert, Regina (ed.), *Spoken language pragmatics: Analysis of form-function relations,* 128–159. London/New York: Continuum.

Brandstetter, Anna-Maria. 1989. *Herrscher über tausend Hügel.* Mainz: PöAPö.

Bross, Fabian. 2012. German modal particles and the common ground. *Helikon, A Multidisciplinary Online Journal* 2: 182–209.

Brown, Penelope & Stephen C. Levinson. 1987. *Politeness. Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bruce, Gösta. 1977. *Swedish word accents in sentence perspective.* Lund: Gleerup.

Bucholtz, Mary & Kira Hall. 2005. Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach, *Discourse Studies* 7,4/5: 585–614.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity.* New York: Routledge.

Cantú, Norma Élia & Aída Hurtado. 2012. Breaking borders/constructing bridges: Twenty-five years of *Borderlands/La frontera*. In Anzaldúa, Gloria, *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza* (4th edition), 3–13. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Carstairs-McCarthy, Andrew. 1992. *Current morphology.* London: Routledge.

Carvalho, Ana M. 2014. Introduction: Towards a sociolinguistics of the border, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 227: 1–7.

Castells, Manuel. 2010. *The power of identity. The information age: Economy, society, and culture, Volume II* (2nd edition). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Chambers, J. K. & Peter J. Trudgill. 1980. *Dialectology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chrétien, Jean-Pierre. 2003. *The Great Lakes of Africa: Two thousand years of history*. New York: Zone Books.

Clements, George N. & John A. Goldsmith. 1984. Autosegmental studies in Bantu tone: Introduction. In Clements, George N. & John A. Goldsmith (eds.), *Autosegmental studies in Bantu tone,* 1–18. Foris: Dordrecht.

Comrie, Bernard. 1976. *Aspect: an introduction to verbal aspect and related problems.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coupez, André. 1980. Aspects de la phonologie historique rwanda, *Annales Aequatoria* 1,1/2: 575–590.

Coupez, André, Th. Kamanzi, S. Bizimana, G. Sematama, G. Rwabukumba & C. Ntazinda. 2005. *Inkoranya y íkinyarwaanda mu kinyarwaanda nó mu gifaraansá. Dictionnaire rwanda-rwanda et rwanda-français.* Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale.

Coupland, Nikolas. 2007. *Style. Language variation and identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crabtree, William Arthur. 1923. *Elements of Luganda grammar.* London: SPCK.

Creissels, Denis. 1996. Conjunctive and disjunctive verb forms in Tswana, *South African Journal of African Languages* 16: 109–115.

De Kind, Jasper, Maud Devos, Gilles-Maurice de Schryver & and Koen Bostoen. 2013. Negation markers, focus markers and Jespersen cycles in Kikongo (Bantu, H16): A comparative and diachronic corpus-based approach. Paper presented at the *Workshop on Information Structure in Bantu,* Humboldt University (Berlin, Germany) 10–11 December 2013. [https://www2.hu-berlin.de/predicate_focus_africa/data/2013-12-10_deKind_Negation.in.Kikongo.pdf] (accessed 24 February 2016).

Déchaine, Rose-Marie, Raphael Girard, Calisto Mudzingwa & Martina Wiltschko. 2015. Shona. In Grandi, Nicola & Lívia Körtvélyessy (eds.), *Edinburgh handbook of evaluative morphology,* 321–342. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Demolin, Didier & Véronique Delvaux. 2001. Whispery voiced nasal stops in Rwanda, *Interspeech* 2001: 651–654.

Derrida, Jacques. 1982. *Margins of philosophy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 1993. *Aporias.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Descartes, René. 1644. *Principia philosophiae.* Amsterdam: Elzevir.

Devos, Maud & Johan van der Auwera. 2013. Jespersen cycles in Bantu: Double and triple negation, *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 34,2: 205–274.

Diener, Alexander D. & Joshua Hagen. 2012. *Borders: A very short introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

DiMarco, Chrysanne, Graeme Hirst & Manfred Stede. 1993. The semantic and stylistic differentiation of synonyms and near-synonyms. In Dorr, Bonnie (program chair), *Building lexicons for machine translation, Papers from the* AAAI *Spring Symposium,* 114–121, Stanford.

Dimmendaal, Gerrit J. 2003. Locatives as core constituents. In Shay, Erin & Uwe Seibert (eds.), *Motion, direction and location in languages: In honor of Zygmunt Frajzyngier,* 91–109. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

———. 2009. Esoterogeny and localist strategies in a Nuba Mountain community. In Möhlig, Wilhelm J.G. et al. (eds.), *Language contact, language change and history based on language sources in Africa*, 75–95. Cologne: Köppe.

———. 2011. *Historical linguistics and the comparative study of African languages.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

———. 2015. *The leopard's spots. Essays on language, cognition, and culture.* Leiden: Brill.

Dimmendaal. Gerrit J. & Nico Nassenstein. Forthcoming. Bunia Swahili and emblematic language use.

Eckert, Penelope. 1989. *Jocks and burnouts: Social categories and identity in the high school.* New York: Teachers College Press.

———. 2000. *Linguistic variation as social practice.* Oxford/New York: Blackwell.

———. 2012. Three waves of variation study: The emergence of meaning in the study of variation, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41: 87–100.

Eigmüller, Monika & Georg Vobruda (eds.) 2016. *Grenzsoziologie. Die politische Strukturierung des Raumes.* Wiesbaden: Springer.

Errington, Joseph. 2008. *Linguistics in a colonial world. A story of language, meaning and power.* Malden: Blackwell.

Evans-Pritchard, Edward Evan. 1948. Nuer modes of address, *The Uganda Journal* 12: 166–171.

Fabian, Johannes. 2000. *Out of our minds. Reason and madness in the exploration of Central Africa.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Filppula, Markku, Juhani Klemola, Marjatta Palander & Esa Penttilä (eds.). 2005. *Dialects across borders.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Fishman, Joshua A. 1960. A systemization of the Whorfian hypothesis, *Behavioral Science* 4: 323–339.

Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The order of things.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Furere, Ritinywa & Annie Rialland. 1983. Accent tonal en Kinyarwanda. In Kaye, Jonathan, Hilda Koopman, Dominique Sportiche & André Dugas (eds.), *Current approaches to African linguistics,* 139–150. Dordrecht: Foris.

———. 1985. Tons et accents en Kinyarwanda. In Goyvaerts, Didier L. (ed.), *African linguistics: Essays in memory of M.W.K. Semikenke*, 99–166. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Gafaranga, Joseph. 2007. Code-switching as a conversational strategy. In Auer, Peter & Li Wei (eds.), *Handbook of multilingualism and multilingual communication*, 279–313. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Gal, Susan. 1998. Multiplicity and contention among language ideologies: A commentary. In Schieffelin, Bambi B., Kathryn A. Woolard & Paul V. Kroskrity (eds.), *Language ideologies. Practice and theory,* 317–332. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gal, Susan & Kathryn A. Woolard. 2001. Constructing languages and publics. In Gal, Susan & Kathryn A. Woolard (eds.). 2001. *Languages and publics: The making of authority,* 1–12. Manchester: St. Jerome.

García, Ofelia. 2009. Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century. In Mohanty, Ajit, Minati Panda, Robert Philippson & Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (eds.), *Multilingual education for social justice: Globalising the local*, 128–145. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

García, Ofelia & Li Wei. 2014. *Translanguaging. Language, bilingualism and education*. Hampshire/New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gårding, Eva. 1998. Swedish. In Hirst, Daniel & Albert Di Cristo (eds.), *Intonation systems. A survey of twenty languages,* 112–130. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gerritsen, Marinel & Dieter Stein (eds.). 1992a. *Internal and external factors in syntactic change.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

———. 1992b. Introduction: On "internal" and "external" in syntactic change. In Gerritsen, Marinel & Dieter Stein (eds.), *Internal and external factors in syntactic change,* 1–16. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Giles, Howard. 1973. Accent mobility: A model and some data, *Anthropological Linguistics* 15: 87–105.

Giles, Howard & P. Smith. 1979. Accomodation theory: Optimal levels of convergence. In Giles, Howard & Robert N. St. Clair (eds.), *Language and social psychology,* 54–65. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Givón, Talmy. 1972. Studies in Chibemba and Bantu grammar, *Studies in African Linguistics* Supplement 3.

———. 1975. Focus and the scope of assertion: Some Bantu evidence, *Studies in African Linguistics* 6: 185–205.

Goldsmith, John A. 1984. Meeussen's rule. In Aronoff, Mark & Richard T. Oehrle (eds.), *Language sound structure,* 245–259. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Golla, Victor. 2000. Language families of North America. In Renfrew, Colin (ed.), *America past, America present: Genes and languages in the Americas and beyond,* 59–73. Cambridge: The McDonald Institute for Archaelogical Research.

Gould, Peter & Rodney White. 2002. *Mental maps* (2nd edition). London: Routledge.

Grandi, Nicola & Lívia Körtvélyessy (eds.). 2015. *Edinburgh handbook of evaluative morphology.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Greenberg, Robert D. 2004. *Language and identity in the Balkans.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Güldemann, Tom. 1999. The genesis of verbal negation in Bantu and its dependency on functional features of clause types. In Hombert, Jean-Marie and Larry M. Hyman (eds.), *Bantu historical linguistics: theoretical and empirical perspectives,* 545–587. Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI).

Gumperz, John J. 1972. Introduction. In Gumperz, John & Dell Hymes (eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: the ethnography of communication*, 1–25. Oxford/New York: Blackwell.

Gumperz, John J. & Dell Hymes (eds.). 1972. *Directions in sociolinguistics. The ethnography of communication.* Oxford/New York: Blackwell.

Gumperz, John J. & Jenny Cook-Gumperz. 1982. Introduction: language and the communication of social identity. In Gumperz, John J. (ed.), *Language and social identity*, 1–21. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gussenhoven, Carlos. 2004. *The phonology of tone and intonation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1989. *The structural transformation of the public sphere. An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hale, Kenneth. 1973. A note on subject-object inversion in Navajo. In Kachru, Braj et al. (eds.), *Issues in linguistics, Papers in honor of Henry and Renee Kahane*, 300–309. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Harjula, Lotta. 2004. *The Ha language of Tanzania. Grammar, texts and vocabulary*. Cologne: Köppe.

Heine, Bernd. 1994. On the genesis of aspect in African languages: The proximative, *Proceedings of the 20th annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society: Special session on historical issues in African linguistics*, 35–46. [http://journals.linguisticsociety.org/proceedings/index.php/BLS/article/view/1487/1270] (accessed 15 March 2016).

Hell, Bertrand. 2012. Das Tohuwabohu der Grenzgänger. In de Loisy, Jean, Bertrand Hell & Nanette Jacomijn Snoep (scientific direction), *Narren, Künstler, Heilige. Lob der Torheit*, 19–24. Bonn/Berlin: Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland GmbH & Nico-laische Verlagsbuchhandlung GmbH.

Herbert, Robert K. 1990. Hlonipha and the ambiguous woman, *Anthropos* 85: 455–473.

Herms, Irmtraud. 1989. Zur Bildung von Diminutiv- und Augmentativformen im Swahili, *Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung* 42: 738–747.

Hertslet, Edward. 1967. *Great Britain and Germany to United States. The map of Africa by treaty* (3rd edition). London: Routledge.

Hill, Jane H. 2001. Language on the land: Towards an anthropological dialectology. In Terell, John E. (ed.), *Archaeology, language, and history: Essays on culture and ethnicity,* 257–282. Westport: Bergin & Garvey, Greenwood Publishing.

———. 2005. *A grammar of Cupeño.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 2009. Language change and cultural change. In Mey, Jacob L. (ed.), *Concise encyclopedia of pragmatics* (2nd edition), 425–432. Oxford: Elsevier.

Hiroyuki, Ura. 2000. *Checking theory and grammatical functions in universal grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hollington, Andrea, Nico Nassenstein & Anne Storch. Forthcoming. Linguistic outtakes: Ideologies of the unpleasant and the incomprehensible in language. In Neuenschwandner, Christoph & Laura Tresch (eds.), *Through the lens of ideology: Debates on language contact.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Honey, John. 1998. Sociophonology. In Coulmas, Florian (ed.). *The handbook of sociolinguistics,* 92–106. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hurel, Eugène. 1911. *Manuel de langue Kinyarwanda. Comprenant la grammaire et un choix de contes et proverbes.* Berlin: Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen.

———. 1959. *Grammaire Kinyarwanda.* Kigali: Imprimerie de Kabgayi.

Hyman, Larry M. 2003. Segmental phonology. In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), The Bantu languages, 42–58. London: Routledge.

Hyman, Larry & Jeri Moxley. 1996. The morpheme in phonological change: Velar palatalization in Bantu, *Diachronica* 13: 259–282.

Irvine, Judith. 2001. Style as distinctiveness: The culture and ideology of linguistic differentiation. In Eckert, Penelope & John R. Rickford (eds.), *Stylistic variation in language*, 21–43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Irvine, Judith & Susan Gal. 2000. Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In Kroskrity, Paul V. (ed.), *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities and identities*, 35–83. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press.

Jaffe, Alexandra, Jannis Androutsopoulos, Mark Sebba & Sally Johnson (eds.). 2012. *Orthography as social action. Scripts, spelling, identity and power.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Jespersen, Otto. 1917. *Negation in English and other languages.* Copenhagen: A.F. Høst & Søn.

Jørgensen, Jens Normann. 2008. Poly-lingual languaging around and among children and adolescents, *International Journal of Multilingualism* 5,3: 161–176

Joseph, John Earl & Talbot J. Taylor (eds.). 1990. *Ideologies of language.* London: Routledge.

Jouannet, Francis. 1983. Phonétique et phonologie: Le système consonantique du Kinyarwanda. In Jouannet, Francis (ed.), *Kinyarwanda: Études linguistiques,* 55–74. Paris: SELAF.

Jourdan, Christine. 2007. Linguistic paths to urban self in postcolonial Solomon Islands. In Makihara, Miki & Bambi B. Schieffelin (eds.), *Consequences of contact: Language ideologies and sociocultural transformations in Pacific societies*, 30–48. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kahn, Douglas. 2012. Noises of the avant-garde. In Sterne, Jonathan (ed.), *The sound studies reader*, 427–448. London/New York: Routledge.

Karangwa, Jean de Dieu. 1995. *Le kiswahili dans l'Afrique des Grands Lacs: Contribution sociolinguistique.* INALCO, Université de Paris III: PhD thesis.

Karpf, Anne. 2006. *The human voice. The story of a remarkable talent.* London: Bloomsbury.

Katamba, Francis. 2003. Bantu nominal morphology. In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages,* 103–119. London: Routledge.

Kayigema, Lwaboshi Jacques & Davie E. Mutasa 2014. The cohabitation of three official languages in post-genocide Rwanda: Kinyarwanda, English and French, *South African Journal of African Languages* 34,2: 235–245.

Kimenyi, Alexandre. 1976. Subjectivization rules in Kinyarwanda, *Proceedings of the 2nd annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society,* 258–268. [http://escholarship.org/ uc/item/2t3761j9] (accessed 13 May 2016).

———. 1978. Grammatical tone neutralization in Kinyarwanda, *Studies in African Linguistics* 9,3: 303–317.

———. 1979. Double negation and negative shift in Kinyarwanda, *Studies in African Linguistics* 10,2: 179–196.

———. 1980. *A relational grammar of Kinyarwanda.* Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press.

———. 2002. *A tonal grammar of Kinyarwanda. An autosegmental and metrical analysis.* Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press.

———. 2004. Kinyarwanda (Bantu). In Booij, Geert, Christian Lehmann, Joachim Mugdan & Stavros Skopeteas, in collaboration with Wolfgang Kesselheim (eds.), *Morphologie. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Flexion und Wortbildung, 2. Halbband,* 1527–1545. Berlin: de Gruyter.

———. 2009. Kinyarwanda. In Brown, Keith & Sarah Ogilvie (eds.), *Concise Encyclopedia of Languages of the World,* 604–610. Oxford: Elsevier.

———. n.d. The two types of causatives in Kinyarwanda: From iconicity to symbolicity. [http://kimenyi.com/causatives-in-kinyarwanda.php] (accessed 13 April 2016).

Kisoro District Language Board. 2009a. *English – Rufumbira Dictionary.* Kampala: Fountain.

———. 2009b. *Ingingo z'urufumbira* [Rufumbira grammar]. Kampala: Fountain.

Kloss, Heinz. 1967. 'Abstand languages' and 'Ausbau languages', *Anthropological Linguistics* 9,7: 29–41.

Kopytoff, Igor. 1987. The internal African frontier: The making of African political culture. In Kopytoff, Igor (ed.), *The African frontier. The reproduction of traditional African societies*, 3–86. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Körtvélyessy, Lívia. 2015. *Evaluative morphology from a cross-linguistic perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Kraal, Peter. 2009. Makonde. In Dimmendaal, Gerrit J. (ed.), *Coding participant marking: Construction types in twelve African languages,* 281–303. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Krifka, Manfred & Sabina Zerbian. 2008. Quantification across Bantu languages. In Matthewson, Lisa (ed.), *Quantification: A cross-linguistic perspective,* 383–414. Bingley: Emerald.

Kripke, Saul A. 1980. *Naming and necessity.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Kwibuka, Eugene. 2014a. Changes in orthography will make Kinyarwanda language user-friendly, says Dr Vuningoma, *The New Times,* 18 November 2014 [http://newtimes.co. rw/section/article/2014-11-18/183167/'.VGsUvWcJ040.twitter] (accessed 17 May 2015)

———. 2014b. How new orthography will simplify Kinyarwanda, *The New Times,* 30 October 2014 [http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-10-30/182514/] (accessed 17 May 2015)

Labov, William. 1966. *The social stratification of English in New York City.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

———. 1972. *Language in the inner city: Studies in the Black English vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

———. 2001. *Principles of linguistic change. Social Factors, Vol. 2.* Oxford/New York: Blackwell.

Ladd, D. Robert. 2008. *Intonational phonology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Landry, Rodrigue & Richard Y. Bourhis. 1997. Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality: an empirical study, *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 16,1: 23–49.

Le Page, Robert Brock. 1978. Projection, focussing, diffusion, or, steps toward a sociolinguistic theory of language, illustrated from the Sociolinguistic Survey of Multilingual Communities, Stages I: Cayo District, Belize, and II: St. Lucia, *York Papers in Linguistics* 9: 9–31.

Le Page, Robert Brock & Andrée Tabouret-Keller. 1985. *Acts of identity: Creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lederer, André. 1993. Incident de frontière au Kivu, *Civilisations* 41: 415-426.

Legère, Karsten (ed.). 1998. *Cross-border languages. Reports and studies. Regional workshop on cross-border languages*. NIED, 23-27 September 1996. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.

Leikola, Kirsi. 2014. *Talking Manjo: Linguistic repertoires as means of negotiating marginalization.* University of Helsinki: PhD thesis.

Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons & Charles D. Fennig (eds.). 2014. *Ethnologue: Languages of the world* (17th edition). Dallas: SIL International. [http://www.ethnologue.com] (accessed 15 November 2014.)

Lipski, John M. 2002. 'Partial' Spanish: Strategies of pidginization and simplification (from lingua franca to 'Gringo lingo'). In Wiltshire, Caroline & Joaquim Camps (eds.), *Romance phonology and variation*, 117–143. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Lucy, John A. 1993. Reflexive language and the human disciplines. In Lucy, John A. (ed.), *Reflexive language. Reported speech and metapragmatics*, 9–32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lüpke, Friederike & Anne Storch. 2013. *Choices and repertoires in African languages*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Maho, Jouni Filip. 1999. *A comparative study of Bantu noun classes*. Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

———. 2009. Nugl online. [http://www.goto.glocalnet.net/mahopapers/nuglonline.pdf] (accessed 14 October 2013).

Makihara, Miki. 2007. Linguistic purism in Rapa Nui political discourse. In Makihara, Miki & Bambi B. Schieffelin (eds.), *Consequences of contact: Language ideologies and sociocultural transformations in Pacific societies*, 49–69. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Malotki, Ekkehart. 1983. *Hopi time. A linguistic analysis of the temporal concepts in the Hopi language*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Manzanas, Ana M. (ed.). 2007. *Border transits. Literature and culture across the line.* Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi.

Marten, Lutz & Hannah Gibson. 2015. Structure building and thematic constraints in Bantu inversion constructions, *Journal of Linguistics,* FirstView Article: 1–43.

Marten, Lutz & Jenneke van der Wal. 2014. A typology of Bantu subject inversion, *Linguistic Variation* 14,2: 317–368.

Matras, Yaron. 2009. *Language contact.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McWhorter, John. 2014. *The language hoax.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Medina, José. 2010. *Language: Key concepts in philosophy.* London: Continuum.

Meeussen, Achille Emile 1959. *Essai de grammaire Kirundi.* Tervuren: Musée Royal du Congo Belge.

———. 1967. Bantu grammatical reconstructions, *Africana Linguistica* 3: 79–121.

———. 1975. Possible linguistic Africanisms, *Language Sciences* 35: 1–5.

Meinhof, Carl. 1948. *Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantusprachen* (2nd edition). Hamburg: Eckhardt und Messtorff.

Mignolo, Walter D. 2002. The geopolitics of knowledge and the colonial difference, *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101,1: 57–96.

———. 2011. *The darker side of Western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options.* Durham: Duke University Press.

———. 2012. *Local histories/Global designs. Coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking* (Paperback reissue, with a new preface). Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Mill, John Stuart. 1974. *A system of logic. Ratiocinative and inductive, being a connected view of the principles of evidence and the methods of scientific investigation. The collected works of John Stuart Mill, Volume VII.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Milroy, James. 2003. On the role of the speaker in language change. In Hickey, Raymond (ed.), *Motives for language change,* 143–157. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mpairwe, Yusufu & Gordon K. Kahangi. 2013. *Runyankore-Rukiga grammar. A modern student's guide.* Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Mugiraneza, Assumpta. 2011. Quelques mots du génocide des Tutsi, au Rwanda. In Collin, David & Régine Waintrater (eds.), *Les mots du génocide,* 51–62*.* Genève: MetisPresses.

———. 2014. Der Genozid an den Tutsi und seine Sprache. In Rau, Milo (ed.), *Hate Radio: Materialien, Dokumente, Theorie,* 112–121. Bonn: BpP (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung).

Munderi, Juliana. 2005. *Abantu b'iwacu* [People from among us]. Kisoro: privately published.

Munderi, Juliana & Kisoro District Language Board. 2009. *Inyandika y'urufumbira* [Rufumbira orthography]. Kampala: Fountain.

Murindwa-Rutanga. 2011. *Politics, religion and power in the Great Lakes Region of Africa.* Dakar/Kampala: Codesria/Fountain.

Myers, Scott. 2003. F0 timing in Kinyarwanda, *Phonetica* 60: 71–97.

Myers, Scott & Megan Crowhurst. Phonology: Case Studies, University of Texas. [http://www.laits.utexas.edu/phonology/kinyarwanda/index.html] (accessed 20 January 2015).

Namyalo, Saudah. 2015. Linguistic strategies in Luyaaye: word-play and conscious language manipulation. In Nassenstein, Nico & Andrea Hollington (eds.), *Youth language practices in Africa and beyond,* 313–344. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Nassenstein, Nico. 2014a. *Kurzgrammatik Lingala. Eine Beschreibung der Sprache von Kinshasa und Brazzaville.* Aachen: Shaker Media.

———. 2014b. Pragmatic change and new linguistic taboo strategies in a conflict zone: The case of Kinyabwisha and Rutshuru Swahili (DR Congo). Paper presented at *AMPRA2,* UCLA (Los Angeles, USA), 17–19 October 2014.

———. 2014c. *A grammatical study of the youth language Yanké.* Munich: LINCOM.

———. 2015a. Imvugo y'Umuhanda: youth language practices in Kigali (Rwanda). In Nassenstein, Nico & Andrea Hollington (eds.), *Youth language practices in Africa and beyond*, 185–204. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

———. 2015b. *Kisangani Swahili. Choices and variation in a multilingual urban space.* Munich: LINCOM.

———. 2015c. Multilingual hip hop in Uganda. Paper presented at *African Multilingualism: Motivations, Modalities, Movement and Meaning (M4)*, British Academy (London, UK), 8–9 September 2015.

———. 2016a. The metrolingual use of Swahili in urban Ugandan landscapes and everyday conversation, *Voices from Around the World 3/2015: Multilingualism in the Global South (and beyond).* [http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/948] (accessed 20 March 2016).

———. 2016b. A preliminary description of Ugandan English, *World Englishes,* Early view: 1–25. [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/weng.12205/abstract] (accessed 14 June 2016).

———. 2016c. The new urban youth language Yabacrâne in Goma (DR Congo), *Sociolinguistic Studies* 10,1: 235–259.

———. 2017. Kirundi Slang – youth identity and linguistic manipulations. In Ebongue, Augustin Emmanuel & Ellen Hurst (eds.), *Sociolinguistics in African contexts: Perspectives and challenges,* 247–267. New York: Springer.

———. 2018. Language movement and pragmatic change in a conflict area: The border triangle of Uganda, Rwanda and DR Congo. In Albaugh, Ericka A. & Kathryn M. de Luna (eds.), *Tracing language movement in Africa,* 295–318. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nassenstein, Nico & Andrea Hollington (eds.). 2015. *Youth language practices in Africa and beyond.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Nassenstein, Nico & Paulin Baraka Bose. 2016. *Kivu Swahili texts and grammar notes.* Munich: LINCOM.

Ndayiragije, Juvenal. 1996. Case checking and OVS in Kirundi. In Di Sciullo, Anna-Maria (ed.), *Configurations*, 267–292. Somerville: Cascadilla Press.

Newbury, David. 1987. "Bunyabungo": The Western Rwandan frontier, c. 1750–1850. In Kopytoff, Igor (ed.), *The African frontier. The reproduction of traditional African societies,* 162–192. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Ngoboka, Jean Paul & Jochen Zeller. 2015. The conjoint/disjoint alternation in Kinyarwanda. [http://www.jzeller.de/pdf/KinCjDj.pdf] (accessed 30 March 2016).

Ngologoza, Paul. 1998. *Kigezi and its people.* Kampala: Fountain.

Nkusi, Laurent. 1995. *Analyse syntaxique du Kinyarwanda, y compris ses dialectes et avec référence spéciale à la syntaxe des formes de la littérature orale rwandaise.* Université Paris V: PhD thesis.

Nurse, Derek. 2003. Aspect and tense in Bantu languages. In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages*, 90–102. London: Routledge.

Nurse, Derek. 2008. *Tense and aspect in Bantu.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nurse, Derek & Henry R.T. Muzale. 1999. Tense and aspect in Great Lakes Bantu languages. In Hombert, Jean-Marie & Larry M. Hyman (eds.), *Bantu historical linguistics,* 517–544. Stanford: CSLI.

Omoniyi, Tope. 2004. *The sociolinguistics of borderlands: Two nations, one community.* Trenton/Asmara: Africa World Press.

———. 2014. Constructing local and global in the e-borderland. In Rubdy, Rani & Lubna Alsagoff (eds.), *The global-local interface, language choice and hybridity,* 205–224. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Orozco, Inti Aedo. 2016. *Evaluatives in Grammar.* Munich: LINCOM.

Orozco-Mendoza, Elva Fabiola. 2008. *Borderlands theory: Producing border epistemologies with Gloria Anzaldúa.* Virginia State University: MA thesis.

Pak, Marjorie. 2007. Relative clauses without CPs in Luganda. Paper presented at the *Western Conference on Linguistics,* University of California (San Diego, USA), 01 December 2007. [http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.467.7114&rep=rep1&type=pdf] (accessed 13 May 2016).

Pawlikowá-Vilhanová, Viera. 1996. Swahili and the dilemma of Ugandan language policy, *Asian and African Studies* 5,2: 158–170.

Pennycook, Alastair & Emi Otsuji. 2015. *Metrolingualism. Language in the city.* New York: Routledge.

Phillips, J.E.T. 1923. "Mufúmbiro": The Birunga volcanoes of Kigezi-Ruanda-Kivu, *The Geographical Journal* 61,4: 233–253.

Pierrehumbert, Janet Breckenridege. 1980. *The phonology and phonetics of English intonation.* Massachusetts Institute of Technology: PhD thesis.

Pinker, Steven. 1994. *The language instinct.* New York: W. Morrow and Co.

Porquier, Rémy. 1984. Communication exolingue et apprentissage des langues. In Py, B. (ed.), *Acquisition d'une langue III,* 12–48. Neuchatel/Paris: Universités de Neuchatel et de Paris-VIII.

Pratt, Mary Louise. 1992. *Imperial eyes: Travel writing and transculturation.* London: Routledge.

Preston, Dennis R. 2004. Folk metalanguage. In Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland & Dariusz Galasiński (eds.), *Metalanguage. Social and ideological perspectives*, 75–104. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Prunier, Gérard. 2009. *From genocide to continental war.* Hurst: London.

Rampton, Ben. 1995. *Crossing: Language and ethnicity among adolescents.* London: Longman.

Roof, Wade Clark. 2012. "That ain't your name": An engaged identity and other gifts from a dysfunctional Southern family, *Southern Cultures* 18,4: 61–69.

Rosendal, Tove. 2011. *Linguistic landshapes. A comparison of official and non-official language management in Rwanda and Uganda, focusing on the position of African languages.* Cologne: Köppe.

Ross, Malcolm. 2001. Contact-induced change in Oceanic languages in North-West Melanesia. In Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. & Robert M. W. Dixon (eds.), *Areal diffusion and genetic inheritance: Problems in comparative linguistics*, 134–166. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2003. Diagnosing prehistoric language contact. In Hickey, Raymond (ed.), *Motives for language change,* 174–198. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2007. Calquing and metatypy, *Journal of Language Contact* 1,1: 116–143.

Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism.* New York: Pantheon.

Saldívar, José David. 1997. *Border matters: Remapping American cultural studies.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Salzmann, Martin. 2004. *Theoretical approaches to locative inversion.* University of Zurich: (Revised) MA thesis.

———. 2011. Towards a typology of locative inversion – Bantu, perhaps Chinese and English – but beyond? *Language and Linguistics Compass* 5,4: 169–189.

Sankoff, David. 1989. Sociolinguistics and syntactic variation. In Newmeyer, Frederick J. (ed.), *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey, Vol. 4*, 140–161. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sauder, Doris M. 2009. *A comprehensive guide to Rufumbira grammar.* Kisoro: privately published.

———. 2010. *Rufumbira writing rules.* Kisoro: privately published.

Sauder, Doris M. & Rev. Canon Muruta (eds.). 2010. *Hitamo ubwenge* [Decide taking knowledge]. Kisoro: privately published.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1959. *Course in general linguistics.* New York: Philosophical Library.

Scalise, Sergio. 1984. *Generative morphology.* Dordrecht: Foris.

Schadeberg, Thilo. 2003. Derivation. In Nurse, Derek & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages,* 71–89. London: Routledge.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 2007. *Sequence organization in interaction – Volume 1: A primer in conversation analysis.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press5

Schieffelin, Bambi B., Kathryn A. Woolard & Paul V. Kroskrity (eds.). 1998. *Language ideologies. Practice and theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schumacher, Pierre P. 1931. La phonétique du Kinyarwanda, *Anthropos* 26,3/4: 413–433.

Sebahizi, Fidele. 2014. Ubushakashatsi ku myandikire y'ururimi rw'i Kinyamurenge (Igice ca 1) [http://www.imurenge.com/readnews.php?id=251] (accessed 01 January 2015).

Sebasoni, Servilien. 1967. La préfinale du verbe bantou, *Africana Linguistica* 3: 123–135.

Shalita, Ernest M. 2005. *Iga gusoma urufumbira* [Learn to read Rufumbira]. Kisoro: Buntu House.

———. 2007. *Amago yifuzwa* [Homes that are needed]. Kisoro: Buntu House.

———. n.d. *Ubuntu* [Being kind]. Kisoro: privately published.

Sharman, John C. & Achille Emile Meeussen. 1955. The representation of structural tones with special reference to the tonal behavior of the verb, in Bemba, Northern Rhodesia, *Africa* 25: 393–404.

Sibiloni, Michele. 2016. *Fuck it.* Zurich: Edition Patrick Frey.

Sibomana, Léonidas. 1974. *Deskriptive Tonologie des Kinyarwanda.* Hamburg: Buske.

Silverstein, Michael. 1976. Shifters, linguistic categories, and cultural description. In Basso, Keith & Henry A. Selby (eds.), *Meaning in anthropology,* 11–56. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

———. 1993. Metapragmatic discourse and metapragmatic function. In Lucy, John A. (ed.), *Reflexive language. Reported speech and metapragmatics,* 33–58. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Simmel, Georg. 1903. Soziologie des Raums. In Schmoller, Gustav (ed.), *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich,* 27–71. Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot.

Singhal, Nishant. 2013. Study of acoustic properties of nasal and nonnasal vowels in temporal domain, *Computer Science & Information Technology (CS & IT)* 2013: 305–314.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? In Nelson, Cary & Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture,* 271–313. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Ssentanda, Medadi Erisa & Allen Asiimwe. 2015. A comparative study of Runyankore-Rukiga and Luganda noun class system. [http://typecraft.org/tc2wiki/A_comparative_analysis_of_ Runyankore-Rukiga_and_Luganda_ pronominal_agreement] (accessed 8 April 2016).

Staum, Laura. 2008. *Experimental investigations of sociolinguistic knowledge.* Stanford University: PhD thesis.

Stearns, Jason. 2012. *North Kivu: The background to conflict in North Kivu Province of Eastern Congo (Usalama project).* London/Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute.

Storch, Anne. 2011. *Secret manipulations. Language and context in Africa.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2015. *A grammar of Luwo: An anthropological approach.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Storch, Anne & Nico Nassenstein. Forthcoming. Introduction. In Nassenstein, Nico & Anne Storch (eds.), *Swearing and cursing.*

Stroud, Christopher. 2001. African mother tongue programs and the politics of language: Linguistic citizenship versus linguistic human rights, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 22,4: 339–355.

Suleiman, Yasir. 2006. Constructing languages, constructing national identities. In Omoniyi, Tope & Goodith White (eds.), *The sociolinguistics of identity*, 50–74. London: Continuum.

Tamashita, Karen Tei. 1997. *Tropic of orange.* Minneapolis: Coffee House Press.

The Geographer (Office of the Geographer, Office of Intelligence and Research). 1965. *International Boundary Study No. 54 – 1 July 1965. Rwanda-Uganda boundary.* Washington: Department of State.

Thomason, Sarah G. 1999. Speakers' choices in language change, *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 29,2: 19–43.

———. 2007. Language contact and deliberate change, *Journal of Language Contact* 1: 41–62.

Thomassen, Bjørn. 2016. *Liminality and the modern. Living through the in-between.* London/New York: Routledge.

Thurston, William R. 1987. *Processes of change in the languages of North-Western New Britain.* Canberra: Australian National University.

Traugott, Elizabeth. 1973. Some thoughts on natural syntactic processes. In Bailey, Charles-James N. & Roger W. Shuy (eds.), *New ways of analyzing variation in English,* 313–322. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Treis, Yvonne. 2005. Avoiding their names, avoiding their eyes: How Kambaata women respect their in-laws, *Anthropological Linguistics* 47,3: 292–320.

Trudgill, Peter. 1974. Linguistic change and diffusion: Description and explanation in sociolinguistic dialect geography, *Language in Society* 2: 215–246.

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. 1999. *Decolonizing methodologies. Research and indigenous peoples.* London: Zed.

Turamyomwe, Justus. 2011. *Tense and aspect in Runyankore-Rukiga.* Norwegian University of Science and Technology: MA thesis.

Turner, Victor. 1967. *The forest of symbols.* New York: Cornell University Press.

van der Spuy, André & Lwazi Mjiyako. 2015. Zulu. In Grandi, Nicola & Lívia Körtvélyessy (eds.), *Edinburgh handbook of evaluative morphology,* 281–302. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Vansina, Jan. 2004. *Antecedents to modern Rwanda. The Nyiginya kingdom.* Oxford/Kampala: James Currey/Fountain.

Verschueren, Jef. 2004. Notes on the role of metapragmatic awareness in language use. In Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland & Dariusz Galasiński (eds.), *Metalanguage. Social and ideological perspectives*, 53–74. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

———. 2012. *Ideology in language use. Pragmatic guidelines for empirical research.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vertovec, Steven. 2007. Super-diversity and its implications, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30: 1024–1054.

Vlassenroot, Koen. 2002. Citizenship, identity formation & conflict in South Kivu: The case of the Banyamulenge, *Review of African Political Economy* 29,93/94: 499–515.

Vorbichler, Anton. 1967. Die tonale Struktur der Verbalklassen in den Waldneger- und Pygmäensprachen des Ituri-Urwaldes, Ost-Kongo, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 116: 21–26.

———. 1974. Das interdialektale Sprachverhalten zwischen sesshaften Balese-Hackbauern und nomadisierenden Wildbeutern. Analyse des Balese-Obi, *Afrika und Übersee* 52: 144–145.

Wee, Lionel. 2016. Are there zombies in language policy? Theoretical interventions and the continued vitality of (apparently) defunct concepts. In Coupland, Nikolas (ed.), *Sociolinguistics: Theoretical debates,* 331–348. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whorf, Benjamin Lee. 1956. *Language, thought, and reality. Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. 1922. *Tractatus logico-philosophicus. With an introduction by Bertrand Russell.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company.

———. 1966. *Lectures and conversations on aesthetics, psychology, and religious belief.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Woolard, Kathryn A. & Bambi B. Schieffelin. 1994. Language ideology, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23: 55–82.

Wright, Sue (ed.). 1998. *Language and conflict: A neglected relationship.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Zeller, Jochen. 2008. On the subject marker in Kinyarwanda, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 26,4: 407–428.

Zeller, Jochen & Jean Paul Ngoboka. 2015. On parametric variation in Bantu, with particular reference to Kinyarwanda, *Transactions of the Philological Society* 113: 206–231.

Zorc, R. David & Louise Nibagwire. 2007. *Kinyarwanda and Kirundi comparative grammar.* Hyattsville: Dunwoody Press.

MUSICAL WORKS

The Eagles (Donald William Felder, Don Henley & Glenn Frey). 1977. "Hotel California".

Mbabazi, Lilian & Kitoko. 2012. "Yegwe weka/Ni wowe gusa".

Radio & Weasel. 2012. "Fittinga".

Radio & Weasel feat Pallaso & The Mess. 2014. "Amaaso".

For data derived from Facebook, Soundcloud, and Wikipedia, see the respective footnotes.

APPENDIX 1: A SHORT RUFUMBIRA TEXT

Imipaka n'indimi ('Borders and languages')

The following interlinearized text was provided by the journalist Capher Nsabiyumva in November 2015, after I had met him at the local radio station Kisoro FM. I asked him to give a short spontaneous statement in relation to the borders and languages spoken in the borderlands.

(1) *Njye nd' umufumbira, nvuka hano Kisoro muri Uganda*

njye   n-*ri   u-mu-fumbira   m-vuk-a   hano Kisoro muri Uganda

1sg   1sg-be   AUG-cl1-Fumbira 1sg-be.born-FV here K.   LOC   U.

aríko Kisoro yakuwe kuri Rwanda mu (i)gihe

aríko Kisoro   i-a-*kur-*w*ye   kuri U-rw-anda   mu i-gi-he

but   K.   cl9-PST1-get-PASS-PFV   LOC   AUG-cl11-Rw. LOC AUG-cl7-time

cyashize.

ki-a-*shir-*ye

cl7-PST1-pass-PFV

1: 'I am a Mufumbira, I was born here in Kisoro within Uganda but Kisoro was got from Rwanda some time ago.'

(2) *Aríko eh, twárituri abanyarwanda ni ko navuga.*

aríko eh   tu-á-ri-tu-ri   a-ba-nyarwanda   ni   kó   n-á-vug-a

but   INTERJEC 1pl-PST2-be-1pl-be   AUG-cl2-Rwandan   COP that 1sg-POT-speak-FV

2: 'But, hm, we were Banyarwanda, that's what I can say.'

(3) *Aríko bigezehó kó báribari gufafa ubutaka*

aríko bi-*ger-*ye＝hó   kó   ba-á-ri-ba-ri   gu-fafa   u-bu-taka

but   cl8-arrive-PFV＝ENCL   that 3pl-PST2-be-3pl-be   INF-mark AUG-cl14-land

kugira ngo bakóre imipaka n'iki byóse igezahó

ku-gira ngo ba-kór-e   i-mi-paka   ni   iki   bi-óse   i-geza＝hó

INF-have that 3pl-make-SUBJ AUG-cl4-border and cl7:DEM cl8-QUANT cl9-reach＝ENCL

isigara muri Uganda, so dusigara turavuga ururimi

i-sigar-a   muri Uganda so du-sigar-a   tu-ra-vug-a   u-ru-rimi

cl9-stay-FV LOC   U.   so 1pl-stay-FV 1pl-PRG-speak-FV AUG-cl11-language

rwo bíta urufumbira rudahuuye n'izíndi

rwo	ba-ít-a	u-ru-fumbira	ru-*ta-*huur-*ye	na	i-zi-índi
cl11:REL	3pl-call-FV	AUG-cl11-Fumbira	cl11-NEG-meet-PFV	COM	AUG-cl10-other

indimi.

i-n-*rimi
AUG-cl10-language

3: 'But then it happened they were demarcating land so that they could make borders and everything [all these], later on it remained in Uganda, so we remained speaking a language that we call Rufumbira, which is different from other languages.'

(4)   *Rwenze guhuura n'urunyarwanda aríko ntaabwo*

ru-*end-*ye	gu-huura	na	u-ru-nyarwanda	aríko	ntaabwo
cl11-be.about-PFV	INF-meet	COM	AUG-cl11-Kinyarwanda	but	NEG

bihuuye cyane

bi-*huur-*ye	cyane
cl8-meet-PFV	very

4: 'It is like Kinyarwanda, but not the same.'

(5)   *Turavuga bakumva natwe bakavuga tukumva.*

tu-ra-vug-a	ba-ku-mv-a	na-twe	ba-ka-vug-a	tu-ku-mv-a
1pl-PRG-speak-FV	3pl-cl15O-hear	COM-1pl	3pl-CONS-speak-FV	1pl-cl15O-hear-FV

5: 'We speak and they understand/hear [the way we speak] and they speak, and we also hear/understand.'

(6)   *Kuko byenze guhuura aríko ukuntu bavuga,*

kuko	bi-*end-*ye	gu-huura	aríko	u-ku-ntu	ba-vug-a
because	cl8-be.about-PFV	INF-meet	but	AUG-cl15-way	3pl-speak-FV

ukuntu bajyana ururími rwabo, ntaríko

u-ku-ntu	ba-jyan-a	u-ru-rími	rw-abo	ntaa-rí-ko
AUG-cl15-way	3pl-take-FV	AUG-cl11-language	cl11-POSS:3pl	NEG-be-LOC

ukuntu turujyana.

u-ku-ntu	tu-ru-jyan-a
AUG-cl15-way	1pl-cl11O-take-FV

6: 'Because it is like the same but the way they speak, the way they take (see) their language is not the way we take (see) it.'

(7) *Ndetse ukuntu batewe cyangwa se culture zabo*

ndetse	u-ku-ntu	ba-terw-*ye	cyangwa	se	culture	za-abo
even	AUG-cl15-way	3pl-be.set-PFV	or	else	cl10.culture	cl10-POSS:3pl

cyangwa se imibereho yabo uko babaho n'ukuntu

cyangwa	se	i-mi-bereho	ya-abo	uko	ba-ba=hó	na	u-ku-ntu
or	else	AUG-cl4-well.being	cl4-POSS:3pl	how	3pl-be-ENCL	and	AUG-cl15-way

batwaza ndetse ntaabwo duhuuye cyane

ba-twaz-a	ndetse	ntaabwo	tu-*huur-*ye	cyane
3pl-take.oneself-FV	even	NEG	1pl-meet-PFV	very

nubwo ibyinshi byenda guhuura.

nubwo	i-bi-inshi	bi-end-a	gu-huura
even.though	AUG-cl8-QUANT	cl8-be.about-FV	INF-meet

7: 'For example/Even the way they are [set/arranged], or their culture or (principles of) wellbeing, just how they live, they way they take themselves, we are thus not the same, even though most things are very similar.'

(8) *Aríko twenda gusa mu gake nk'uko wájya muri*

aríko	tu-end-a	gu-sa	mu	ga-ke	nka	uko	u-á-jy-a	muri
but	1pl-be.about-FV	INF-resemble	LOC	cl12-small	like	how	2sg-POT-go-FV	LOC

Congo barimó benshi bavuga ikirími cyenda

Congo	ba-ri=mó	ba-inshi	ba-vug-a	i-ki-rími	ki-end-a
C.	3pl-be=ENCL	cl2-QUANT	3pl-speak-FV	AUG-cl7-language	cl7-be.about-FV

gusa n'icyacu, harímo abavuga ikinyabwisha.

gu-sa	na	i-ki-acu	ha-rí=mo	a-ba-vuga	i-ki-nyabwisha
INF-resemble	COM	AUG-cl7-POSS1pl	cl16-be=ENCL	AUG-cl2-speak	AUG-cl7-Bwisha

8: 'But we are alike in small things, as you possibly go to Congo, there are many people who speak a language that resembles ours, there are the ones who speak Kinyabwisha.'

(9) *Aríko ntaruhuuye n'urwácu so twe ntaabwo duhuuye*

aríko	ntaa=ru-*huur-*ye	na	u-ru-acu	so	twe	ntaabwo	tu-*huur-*ye
but	NEG=cl11-meet-PFV	COM	AUG-cl11-POSS1pl	so	1pl	NEG	1pl-meet-PFV

nabo kuko inyambere ntaabwo tuvuga ururimi rumwe.

na-abo	kuko	i-nya-mbere	ntaabwo	tu-vug-a	u-ru-rimi	ru-mwe
COM-3pl	because	AUG-cl9-first	NEG	1pl-speak-FV	AUG-cl11-language	cl11-one

9: 'But it is not the same as ours, so we are not the same as them because first of all we do not speak the same language.'