Chapter 7

Reflexive constructions in Luganda

Alena Witzlack-Makarevich
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Erika Just
University of Kiel

Saudah Namyalo
Makerere University

This chapter describes the reflexive construction in Luganda, a Great Lakes Bantu language spoken in Uganda. The reflexive construction in Luganda is formed with the invariable reflexivizer *ee-*, a verbal prefix immediately preceding the stem, which can be reconstructed to Proto-Bantu. There are no reflexive pronouns in Luganda. The prefix is obligatorily used to express coreference between the subject and the patient object in transitive verbs and there is no difference between introverted and extroverted verbs. The reflexivizer is also employed in case of coreference between an applied beneficiary and the subject. Apart from morphologically and semantically transparent reflexive constructions, Luganda also has a considerable number of fossilized reflexive verbs.

1 Introduction

Luganda (or Ganda) is a Bantu language. It belongs to the West Nyanza branch of the Great Lakes Bantu languages of the East Bantu branch (on genealogical classification see Schoenbrun 1994, 1997). It is spoken by the Baganda people primarily in the Central region of Uganda, which is coterminous with the Kingdom of Buganda (see Figure 1). As of 2014, 5.56 million Ugandans identified themselves as being ethnically Baganda (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2016). In addition

© OpenStreetMap contributors and Hammarström et al. (2022)

Figure 1: Map of the Kingdom of Buganda

to English, Luganda is also used as a lingua franca across Uganda (Isingoma & Meierkord 2016; Namyalo et al. 2016).

The basic word order of Luganda is SVO, as is the case for the vast majority of Bantu languages, however, information structure considerations motivate various deviations from this basic word order (see e.g. Downing & Marten 2019). Nominal and verbal inflectional morphology is primarily prefixing. Nominal morphology is characterized by a system of noun class prefixes. Each noun in singular and plural belongs to one of the 23 noun classes. The noun classes are numbered from 1 to 23 corresponding to the reconstructed Proto-Bantu noun classes (see e.g. Van de Velde 2019: 237–239). The nominal prefixes on the nouns are not segmented in the examples, the gloss indicates the inherent noun class in round brackets after the respective noun gloss. For instance, we do not segment the class 2 prefix *ba-* in *abakazi* 'women' in (1a) but we indicated that this noun belongs to noun class 2 in the gloss 'women(2)'. Luganda nouns regularly carry an augment, also known as pre-prefix or initial vowel (see e.g. Van de Velde 2019: 247–255). The augment appears before the noun class prefix and has the forms *a-*, *o-*, or *e-*, e.g. *a-ba-kazi* [AUG-2-woman] 'women' in (1a). The augment is neither

segmented nor glossed in the examples in this paper. The noun class determines the shape of the agreement prefixes on dependents in a noun phrase, on the verb, as well as on a number of other constituents of the clause. We indicate the noun class agreement prefixes on dependents by segmenting them and providing the respective class number in Arabic numerals, as in the case of the subject prefix *ba-* [2SBJ] on the verb *ba-n-walan-a* [2SBJ-1SG.OBJ-hate-FV] in (1a). Most examples have class 1 or 2 subject agreement prefixes on the verb which index human singular and plural referents respectively. We also use Arabic numerals to indicate person indexing on the verb, as well as person information on pronouns. Note that in this case the Arabic numerals are always followed by the indication of number [SG or PL], for instance, *n-* [1SG.OBJ] in (1a). Verbs have multiple slots for inflectional morphology. Prefixes express such inflectional categories as negation, tense and aspect, as well as argument indexing (subject and optionally one or more objects). Suffixes express most voice categories, such as the causative and applicative, as well as some other inflectional categories, such as aspect and mood.

Luganda is a tone language and the tone of the reflexive prefix is reported to have different properties than the tone of object prefixes in many Bantu languages (e.g. Marlo 2015a), including closely related ones, such as Nkore (Poletto 1998), but it goes beyond the scope of this paper to consider the tonal properties of the Luganda reflexive prefix and its effect in the tone of the verb form. Tone is not marked in the standard orthography and we omit it from the examples.

The data used in the present study come primarily from elicitations with two native speakers carried out in 2019–2020. They were supplemented with authentic examples from a corpus of naturalistic spoken language (over 50,000 words collected in 2019 in Kampala) and written language (over 200,000 words). Each example is indicated as coming from one of these sources with the labels 'elicited', 'spoken' and 'written'. The article is organized as follows. §2 discusses the basic uses of the reflexive prefix *ee-*. §3 addresses the contrast between body-part and whole-body actions. §4–§6 describe various aspects of coreference properties. §7 outlines the uses of the specialized reflexive form in other functions. A conclusion is given in §8.

2 The reflexive prefix *ee-* and its basic uses

Luganda does not have reflexive pronouns. The Luganda reflexive prefix *éé-* (*ee-* in the rest of the paper) is used independently of the person or noun class of the subject. It derives from the common Bantu reflexive marker, reconstructed in

Proto-Bantu as *-(*j*)*i*- (Meeussen 1967: 109–110). The reflexive marker is a prefix and immediately precedes the verb stem. Its position thus differs from all other Luganda affixes used to express the grammatical category of voice (often called *extensions* in Bantu literature), such as applicative, causative, passive and reciprocal, which are suffixes (see e.g. Schadeberg & Bostoen 2019: 173).

The reflexive prefix *ee-* is obligatorily used when the patient argument of a transitive verb is coreferential with its agent argument in the subject function. The examples in (1a–1b) have non-coreferential agents and patients. In (1a) the pronominal patient is expressed by the pronominal index *n-* [1SG.OBJ] in the object slot, whereas in (1b) the nominal patient is expressed by the noun *abalokole* 'born-again Christians' following the verb. The examples in (2) have coreferential agents and patients and employ the prefix *ee-* in the object slot of the verb. As these examples illustrate, the same prefix is used with various person and number categories. Examples in (3) support this point by providing an illustration with a different verb.

(1)   a.   *Abakazi   bampalana.*
          abakazi   ba-n-walan-a
          women(2) 2SBJ-1SG.OBJ-hate-FV
          'Women hate me.' [written]

      b.   *Muwalana   abalokole.*
          mu-walan-a abalokole
          1SBJ-hate-FV born_agains(2)
          'He hates born-again Christians.' [spoken]

(2)   a.   *Neewalana.*
          n-ee-walan-a
          1SG.SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
          'I hate myself.' [elicited]

      b.   *Weewalana.*
          o-ee-walan-a
          2SG.SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
          'You hate yourself.' [elicited]

      c.   *Mukwano gwange   yeewalana.*
          mukwano gu-ange   a-ee-walan-a
          friend(1)   1-1SG.POSS 1SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
          'My friend hates himself/herself.' [elicited]

    d. *Tweewalana.*
       tu-ee-walan-a
       1PL.SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
       'We hate ourselves.' [elicited]

    e. *Mweewalana.*
       mu-ee-walan-a
       2PL.SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
       'You hate yourselves.' [elicited]

    f. *Beewalana.*
       ba-ee-walan-a
       2SBJ-REFL-hate-FV
       'They hate themselves.' [elicited]

(3) a. *Neerabye*   *mu*   *ndabirwamu.*
       n-ee-labye   mu   ndabirwamu
       1SG.SBJ-REFL-see.PFV 18.LOC mirror(9)
       'I saw myself in the mirror.' [elicited]

    b. *John*   *yeerabye*   *mu*   *ndabirwamu.*
       John   a-a-ee-labye   mu   ndabirwamu
       John(1) 1SBJ-PST-REFL-see.PFV 18.LOC mirror(9)
       'John saw himself in the mirror.' [elicited]

Following Haiman (1985) and König & Vezzosi (2004) we distinguish between introverted verbs, which denote an action typically performed on oneself, such as grooming verbs, and extroverted verbs, which denote an action typically performed on others. The Luganda construction with the reflexive prefix *ee-* is used to express autopathic situations with a wide range of extroverted verbs including 'hate' in (2) above, 'see' in (3), 'kill' in (4), 'bite' in (5), 'criticize' in (6), and 'praise' in (7).

(4) *Omusajja yetta.*
    omusajja a-ee-tta-a
    man(1)   1SBJ-REFL-kill-FV
    'The man killed himself.' [elicited]

(5) *Embwa yeeruma.*
    embwa e-a-ee-rum-a
    dog(9) 9SBJ-PST-REFL-bite-FV
    'The dog bit itself.' [elicited]

(6) *Peter   yeekolokota.*
     Peter   a-ee-kolokot-a
     Peter(1) 1SBJ-REFL-critisize-FV
     'Peter criticizes himself.' [elicited]

(7) *Ssaalongo atandika   okwewaana   nga bwali*
     ssaalongo a-tandik-a   oku-ee-waan-a   nga bu-a-li
     husband(1) 1SBJ-start-FV INF-REFL-praise-FV how 14SBJ-PST-COP
     ssemaka.
     ssemaka
     head_of_household(1)
     'The husband starts to praise himself for being the head of the family.'
     [written]

Introverted actions are expressed either by intransitive verbs or transitive verbs with a reflexive prefix. A few intransitive grooming verbs denote situations where the agent and the patient of an action have the same referent. These are *naaba* 'wash (oneself), clean up, bathe', as in (8a), and *yambala* 'dress, get dressed', as in (8b).

(8) a. *Yabadde   afulumye   okunaaba.*
         a-a-badde   a-fulumye   oku-naab-a
         1SBJ-PST-AUX 1SBJ-go_out.PFV INF-bathe-FV
         'She had gone outside to bathe.' [written]

     b. *Omukyala anyirira   ayambala   bulungi.*
         omukyala a-nyirir-a   a-yambal-a   bulungi
         wife(1) 1SBJ-look_good-FV 1SBJ-dress-FV nicely
         'The wife looks good, she dresses nicely.' [spoken]

To express other introverted actions, transitive verbs with the reflexive prefix are employed. These include the reflexive *ee-yambula* 'to undress (oneself)' derived from the transitive *yambula* 'undress (somebody), take off (a piece of garment)', the reflexive *ee-mwa* 'shave (oneself)', as in (9a), derived from the transitive *mwa* 'shave (somebody or something)', the reflexive *ee-sanirira* 'comb (one's hair)', as in (10a), derived from the transitive *sanirira* 'comb (e.g. hair)', as well as *ee-naaza* 'wash (oneself)' in (9b), which is the reflexive of the transitive causative verb *naaza* derived from the intransitive verb *naaba* 'wash (oneself)', illustrated above in (8a).

(9) a. *Yeemwa.*
        a-a-ee-mwa-a
        1SBJ-PST-REFL-shave-FV
        'He shaved (himself).' [elicited]

   b. *Embwa yali   yeenaza.*
        embwa e-a-li   e-ee-naaz-a
        dog(9) 9SBJ-PST.be 9SBJ-REFL-wash.CAUS-FV
        'The dog was washing itself.' [elicited]

3 Contrast between body-part and whole-body actions

With most grooming verbs Luganda encodes whole-body actions (washing, bath-ing, getting a shave, scratching) using the reflexive construction outlined in §2, as in (10a), (11a), and (12a). Body-part actions (e.g. combing or shaving hair or scratching a body part) allow a range of constructions: a transitive construction with the respective body part expressed as the object, as in (10b), (11b), and (12b), a reflexive construction with a body part expressed as an oblique and marked by the locative preposition (nominal class 18) *mu*, as in (11c), and a reflexive construc-tion with a body part expressed as an object, as in (11d) and (12c). The respective body parts in (11d) and (12c) retain at least some of the properties of the morpho-syntactic object: apart from not being flagged, they can be indexed on the verb when fronted, as in (11e).

(10) a. *John   yeesaniridde.*
         John   a-a-ee-saniridde
         John(1) 1SBJ-PST-REFL-comb.PFV
         'John combed his hair (lit. combed himself).' [elicited]

    b. *John   yasaniridde   enviiri (ze).*
         John   a-a-saniridde   enviiri ze
         John(1) 1SBJ-PST-comb.PFV hair(10) 10.1POSS
         'John combed his hair.' [elicited]

(11) a. *Yeetakula.*
         a-a-ee-takul-a
         1SBJ-PST-REFL-scratch-FV
         'He scratched himself.' [elicited]

b. *Yatakula   omugongo (gwe).*
a-a-takul-a   omugongo gwe
1SBJ-PST-scratch-FV back(3)   3.1POSS
'He scratched his back.' [elicited]

c. *Yeetakula   mu   mugongo.*
a-a-ee-takul-a   mu   mugongo
1SBJ-PST-REFL-scratch-FV 18.LOC back(3)
'He scratched himself on the back.' [elicited]

d. *Yeetakula   omugongo.*
a-a-ee-takul-a   omugongo
1SBJ-PST-REFL-scratch-FV back(3)
'He scratched his back.' [elicited]

e. *Omugongo agwetakula   buli kiro.*
omugongo a-gu-ee-takul-a   buli kiro
back(3)   1SBJ-3OBJ-REFL-scratch-FV every night(7)
'He scratches his back every night.' [elicited]

(12) a. *Yeemwa.*
a-a-ee-mwa-a
1SBJ-PST-REFL-shave-FV
'He shaved (himself).' [elicited]

b. *Abasajja baamwa   ebirevu byabwe.*
abasajja ba-a-mw-a   ebirevu bi-abwe
men(2)   2SBJ-PST-shave-FV beards(8) 8-2POSS
'The men shaved their beards.' [elicited]

c. *Abasajja beemwa   ebirevu.*
abasajja ba-a-ee-mw-a   ebirevu
men(2)   2SBJ-PST-REFL-shave-FV beards(8)
'The men shaved their beards.' [elicited]

In contrast to the patterns outlined above, the intransitive verb *naaba* 'wash (oneself), clean up, bathe' illustrated in (8a) allows for only one way to express the relevant body part, viz. as an oblique phrase with the preposition *mu*, compare (13a–13b).

(13) a. *Nanaaba.*
n-a-naab-a
1SG.SBJ-PST-bath-FV
'I bathed/took a bath/washed myself.' [elicited]

b. *Nanaaba mu ngalo.*
n-a-naab-a mu ngalo
1SG.SBJ-PST-bath-FV 18.LOC hands(10)
'I washed my hands.' [elicited]

4 Coreference properties

This section discusses coreference properties of the reflexive construction. In §4.1 we discuss the coreference of the subject and various semantic roles. §4.2 discusses the coreference between non-subject arguments.

4.1 Coreference of the subject with various semantic roles

In this section we discuss the marking of the coreference of the subject and various semantic roles. We first consider the coreference between the subject and the possessor, as well as spatial referents, which is not overtly indicated in Luganda. We then discuss the coreference of the subject with the recipient with lexical ditransitive verbs and with the beneficiary of applicative verbs, which both use the regular reflexive prefix *ee-*.

The coreference of the subject and of a possessor is not overtly indicated in Luganda: regular possessive pronouns are used and result in ambiguity between a coreferential reading and the reading with disjoint reference, as in (14). For instance, the example from the corpus in (14c) is open to multiple interpretations and only the context resolves the ambiguity: the house belongs to the official of the king.

(14) a. *Yatwala manvuuli ye.*
   a-a-twal-a manvuuli ye
   1SBJ-PST-take-FV umbrella(9) 9.1POSS
   'He$_i$/she$_j$ took his$_i$/$_k$/her$_j$/$_l$ umbrella.' [elicited]

  b. *John asoma ekitabo kye.*
   John a-som-a ekitabo kye
   John(1) 1SBJ-read-FV book(7) 7.1POSS
   'John$_i$ reads his$_i$/$_j$/her$_j$ book.' [elicited]

  c. *Omukungu wa Kabaka ali mu kattu oluvannyuma*
   omukungu wa Kabaka a-li mu kattu oluvannyuma
   official(1) 1.GEN king(1) 1SBJ-COP 18.LOC dilemma(12) after

lw' *omukazi omukadde okufiira* *mu* *maka* *ge.*
lw' omukazi omukadde oku-fiir-a mu maka ge
11.GEN woman(1) old(1) INF-die.APPL-FV 18.LOC house(6) 6.1POSS
'An official$_i$ of the King is in dilemma after the death of an old lady$_k$ in his$_{i/j}$/her$_k$/$_l$ house.' [written]

The coreference of the subject and a spatial referent is not overtly coded either. Regular pronominal forms, such as the nominal class 1 pronoun *we* 'he/she' in (15), are used and the interpretation of their reference is determined by the context.

(15) a. *Yalaba* *omusota wabbali we.*
a-a-lab-a omusota wabbali we
1SBJ-PST-see-FV snake(3) besides 1
'She$_i$ saw a snake beside her$_{i/j}$/him.' [elicited]

b. *Yaleka* *emikululo emabega we.*
a-a-lek-a emikululo emabega we
1SBJ-PST-leave-FV traces(4) behind 1
'She$_i$ left traces behind her$_{i/j}$/him.' [elicited]

With ditransitive lexical verbs, both objects are not overtly flagged and can be indexed on the verb, as in (16). The first token of the verb *wa* 'give' indexes only the recipient, the theme is expressed by the noun *olukusa* 'permission(11)', whereas the second token of *wa* 'give' indexes both objects, in this case the theme prefix *lu-* [11OBJ] (indexing *olukusa* 'permission(11)') precedes the recipient prefix of noun class 1 *mu-* [1OBJ]. When the recipient is coreferential with the subject, the respective person index is replaced with the regular reflexive prefix *ee-*, as in (17). The theme can either be expressed by a noun phrase, e.g. *ekirabo* 'present(7)' in (17a), or by a theme index which precedes the reflexive prefix, as e.g. the class 7 prefix *ki-* in (17b).

(16) [...] *ng'amuwadde* *olukusa* *oba talumuwadde.*
nga a-mu-wadde olukusa oba ti-a-lu-mu-wadde
when 1SBJ-1OBJ-give.PFV permission(11) or NEG-1SBJ-11OBJ-1OBJ-give.PFV
'...whether he has given him a permission, or he has not given it to him.' [written]

(17) a. *Omuwala yeewa* *ekirabo.*
omuwala a-a-ee-w-a ekirabo
girl(1) 1SBJ-PST-REFL-give-FV present(7)
'The girl gave herself a present.' [elicited]

b. *Omuwala yakyeewa.*
omuwala a-a-ki-ee-w-a
girl(1)   1SBJ-PST-7OBJ-REFL-give-FV
'The girl gave it to herself.' [elicited]

Luganda has a productive applicative construction formed by the suffix *-ir* and its variants. One of its functions is to introduce a beneficiary of an action expressed by the verb into the clause, as is illustrated twice in (18). Pronominal beneficiaries are then expressed by the regular object prefixes on the verb, as e.g. class 2 object prefix *ba-* on the last verb in (18).

(18)   *Nga   mugogola   enzizi,   okuzimbira   abakadde amayumba*
nga   mu-gogol-a   enzizi   oku-zimb-ir-a   abakadde amayumba
when 2PL.SBJ-clean-FV wells(10) INF-build-APPL-FV elderly(2) houses(6)
n'   okubalimirako.
ne   oku-ba-lim-ir-a=ko
and INF-2OBJ-dig-APPL-FV=PART
'You would clean the wells, constructing a house for the elderly and digging for them a bit.' [written]

When the applied object is coreferential with the subject, the regular reflexive prefix replaces the object prefix to encode the beneficiary, as in the autobenefactive construction in (19).

(19)   a. *Yeegulira   ekitabo.*
a-a-ee-gul-ir-a   ekitabo
1SBJ-PST-REFL-buy-APPL-FV book(7)
'She bought a book for herself.' [elicited]

b. *Omulenzi yeefumbira   ekyeggulo.*
omulenzi a-a-ee-fumb-ir-a   ekyeggulo.
boy(1)   1SBJ-PST-REFL-cook-APPL-FV dinner(7)
'The boy cooked himself dinner.' [elicited]

c. *Beezimbira   ennyumba.*
ba-a-ee-zimb-ir-a   ennyumba.
2SBJ-PST-REFL-build-APPL-FV houses(10)
'They built themselves houses.' [elicited]

d. *Bampa*   *ekirala kya kuzannya nga*
   ba-m-p-a   eki-lala kya   ku-zanny-a nga
   2SBJ-1SG.OBJ-give-FV 7-other 7.REL INF-act-FV as

   neekwanira   *omulenzi.*
   n-ee-kwan-ir-a   omulenzi
   1SG.SBJ-REFL-seduce-APPL-FV boy(1)

   'I was given another role of seducing a boy for myself.' [written]

4.2 Coreference between non-subject arguments

No dedicated means exist in Luganda to express the coreference between two non-subject participants of the same clause. Regular possessive pronouns are used both in cases of the coreference of the possessor with one of the referents in the clause but also in case when the possessor is not mentioned in the clause at all, as the various readings in (20) indicate.

(20) *John   yalaga   Mary   ekifaananyi kye.*
      John   a-a-lag-a   Mary   ekifaananyi ki-e
      John(1) 1SBJ-PST-show-FV Mary(1) photo(7)   7-1POSS
      'John_i showed Mary_j a photo of himself_i/herself_j/him_k/her_l.' [elicited]

Attempts to obtain other cases of coreference between two non-subject participants following the questionnaire (Janic & Haspelmath 2023 [this volume]) resulted in constructions with a relative clause, as in (21a), and are ambiguous with 3rd person referents, as the various readings of (21b) suggest.

(21) a. *Yatubuulira*   *ebitukwatako.*
         a-a-tu-buulir-a   e-bi-tu-kwat-a=ko
         1SBJ-PST-1PL.OBJ-tell-FV REL-8SBJ-1PL.OBJ-concern-FV=17.LOC
         'She told us about ourselves.' [elicited]

      b. *Yagogera*   *ne John*
         a-a-gog-er-a   ne John
         1SBJ-PST-speak-APPL-FV COM John(1)
         ebimukwatako.
         e-bi-mu-kwat-a=ko
         REL-8SBJ-1OBJ-concern-FV=17.LOC
         'He_i spoke with John_j about himself_i/_j/him_k/her_l.' [elicited]

5 Contrast between exact and inclusive coreference

In this section we briefly outline the structural difference between constructions used for exact coreference and constructions employed for inclusive coreference. The exact coreference between the agent and the patient arguments is expressed by the use of the regular reflexive prefix *ee-*, as in many examples above, as well as in (22). In case of inclusive coreference, the verb also carries the reflexive prefix *ee-*. The patient argument coreferential with the agent can be optionally expressed overtly with a personal pronoun followed by the self-intensifier particle *kennyini* (see below). The non-coreferential patient is expressed by a prepositional phrase with the preposition *ne* 'with'. Furthermore, the adverb *wamu* 'together' can precede the prepositional phrase, compare (22a–22b).

(22) a. *Yeekolokota.*
a-a-kolokot-a
1SBJ-PST-critisize-FV
'He criticized himself.' [elicited]

   b. *Yeekolokota   (ye kennyini) (wamu) n'   abalala.*
a-a-kolokot-a   ye kennyini wamu   ne   abalala
1SBJ-PST-critisize-FV 1 self   together with others(2)
'He criticized himself and the others.' [elicited]

The self-intensifier particle *kennyini* used in (22b) or its agreeing forms ("emphatic pronoun" in Murphy 1972: 178, 439)[1] is otherwise used to emphasize the exclusive participation of the noun phrase it follows, as e.g. *omulwanyi kennyini* 'the fighter himself' in (23a) or *ffe kennyini* 'we ourselves' in (23b).

(23) a. *Naye omulwanyi kennyini ye yasabye   nti*
naye omulwanyi kennyini ye a-a-sabye   nti
but   fighter(1)   self   1 1SBJ-PST-ask.PFV QUOT
tasobola   musajja.
ti-a-sobol-a   musajja
NEG-1SBJ-cope_with-FV man(1)
'But it was the fighter himself who said that he can't defeat the man.' [written]

---

[1]What conditions the use of agreeing vs. non-agreeing forms is a topic for further investigations.

b. *Eky' ennaku   mu   ffe kennyini*
   eky' ennaku   mu   ffe kennyini
   7.REL sadness(9) 18.LOC 1PL self(2)

   abaakukusanga   emmwaanyi,
   a-ba-a-ku-kus-a-nga   emmwaanyi
   REL-2SBJ-PST-PROG-smuggle-FV-HAB coffee_berries(10)

   mwabeerangamu   bambega ba   gavumenti.
   mu-a-beer-a-nga=mu   bambega ba   gavumenti
   18SBJ-PST-be.APPL-FV-HAB=18.LOC spies(2)   2.GEN government(9)

   'What is sad is that among us ourselves, the ones who smuggled coffee, there also used to be government spies.' [written]

6 Long-distance coreference

No dedicated means are used to express coreference across clauses, compare (24a), where the agents of the two clauses have disjoint reference, with (24b), where the agents of the two clauses are coreferential.

(24) a. *Agambye   nti   batandikira   Ggulu   mu   Septembe.*
      a-gambye   nti   ba-tandik-ir-a   Ggulu   mu   September
      1SBJ-say.PFV QUOT 2SBJ-start-APPL-FV Ggulu(9) 18.LOC September(9)
      'He said that they start from Gulu in September.' [written]

  b. *Ababaka   baagambye   nti   bateekateeka*
     ababaka   ba-a-gambye   nti   ba-teekateek-a
     representatives(2) 2SBJ-PST-say.PFV QUOT 2SBJ-arrange-FV

     okusisinkana   Pulezidenti Museveni.
     oku-sisinkan-a Pulezidenti Museveni
     INF-meet-FV   president(1) Museveni(1)

     'The representatives said that they are organizing to meet President Museveni.' [written]

7 Specialized reflexive form in other functions

This section focuses on two functions of the specialized reflexive prefix *ee-*. We will first outline its use to express the reciprocal meaning (§7.1). We then briefly outline the impressive set of fossilized reflexives in Luganda (§7.2).

7.1 Reflexive-reciprocal polysemy

Apart from the functions outline above, as in many other Bantu languages, the Luganda reflexive prefix is polysemous and can be used to express the reciprocal meaning (cf. the detailed study by Dom et al. 2017 of the polysemy of the Bantu reflexive marker, as well as other markers involved in the semantic domain of the middle; see also Polak 1983 and Marlo 2015b). Luganda has two dedicated reciprocal suffixes, viz. *-an* (called "associative" in the Bantu inventory of extensions, see Schadeberg & Bostoen 2019: 173) and *-agan*,[2] both illustrated in (25). Of the two markers, *-agan* is more productive, though the exact conditions of the distribution of the two markers is a topic for future research (see also McPherson 2008: 44–45).

(25) *Ffe mu   kkanisa bwe tuba   tugatta   abafumbo*
     ffe mu   kkanisa bwe tu-ba   tu-gatt-a   abafumbo
     we 18.LOC church(9) when 1PL.SBJ-AUX 1PL.SBJ-join-FV married_couple(2)

     tubagamba   baagalanenga,
     tu-ba-gamb-a   ba-yagal-an-e-nga
     1PL.SBJ-2OBJ-say-FV 2SBJ-love-RECP-SBJV-HAB

     bakuumaganenga.
     ba-kuum-agan-e-nga
     2SBJ-protect-RECP-SBJV-HAB

     'As for us, when in church we are joining married couples, we tell them to love each other, to protect each other.' [written]

In addition to the dedicated reciprocal markers, the reflexive prefix *ee-* is occasionally used to render the reciprocal meaning, as in (26).

(26) a. *[B]atandise   okwebba.*
         ba-tandise   oku-ee-bb-a
         2SBJ-start.PFV INF-REFL-steal-FV

         '(Some Ugandans in South Africa have no job so) they started stealing from each other.' [written]

    b. *Twewalana.*
         tu-ee-walan-a
         1PL.SBJ-REFL-hate-FV

         'We hate each other/ourselves.' [elicited]

---

[2]This is a historically complex suffix made up of the repetitive **-ag/-ang* and associative **-an* (Schadeberg & Bostoen 2019: 173, see also Dom et al. 2017 on the origin of the reciprocal suffix *-angan* in Cilubà). With monosyllabic roots and roots in /g/ the suffix is realized as *-aŋŋan*, see Ashton et al. (1954: 356).

In some cases, the reflexive is used in combination with the fossilized reciprocal stems, as in (27) (see also Murphy 1972: 122).[3] The functions and distribution of this construction remains a topic for further research.

(27)   *Bejjukanya.*
ba-ee-jjukany-a
2SBJ-REFL-remind.RECP.CAUS-FV
'They remind each other.'

7.2 Lexicalized reflexive verbs

The discussion in §2–§6 focused on the reflexive construction proper, i.e. on a grammatical construction with a special form (the reflexivizer *ee-*) employed when two participants of a clause are coreferential (as defined in Haspelmath 2023 [this volume]), as well as on the use of *ee-* to express the reciprocal meaning (§7.1). However, when one considers the distribution of the reflexive prefix *ee-* in the corpus, these two constructions do not account for the most frequent types of constructions with the reflexive prefix *ee-*. What are then these other uses of the reflexive prefix *ee-*?

Geniušienė (1987: 31) makes a distinction between reversible reflexive verbs, which are usually in the focus of studies of reflexive vs. the less studied class of non-reversible reflexive verbs.[4] The following criteria of reversibility are suggested by Geniušienė (1987: 145–148) to distinguish between the two: (1) morphological reversibility, i.e. a situation when a derived unit is formally related to a base word, morphological non-reversibles are traditionally known as reflexiva tantum; (2) syntactic reversibility, viz. a change of reversible reflexive properties according to one of the regular patterns; (3) lexical reversibility, viz. the identity of lexical distribution relative to the corresponding syntactic positions in a non-reflexive construction and related reflexive construction; (4) semantic reversibility, viz. a regular, standard change of the meaning of a reflexive, thus, semantic non-reversible reflexive verbs have the meaning which is related to that of the base non-reflexive way in some idiosyncratic way. We will first consider reflexiva tantum, and then we will proceed with what Goto & Say (2009) call "non-reversible reflexive verbs proper", these are the verbs that are non-reversible according to one or often several of the criteria (2) to (4).

---

[3]McPherson (2008: 46) reports that one of her consultants used the reflexive prefix *ee-* and the reciprocal suffix *-agan* productively with the same verbs. Such examples are found unacceptable by the speakers we consulted and we did not find a single attestation of such a combination in our corpus.

[4]These are originally Nedjalkov's (1997: 10–15) terms.

Reflexiva tantum and semantic non-reversible reflexive verbs proper are widespread in Bantu languages (see Marlo 2015b for examples from a range of Bantu languages). Polak (1983) notes that this widespread pattern of reflexive lexicalization and fossilization may have already existed in Proto-Bantu. Ashton et al. (1954: 132–133) in their grammar of Luganda list a small number of non-reversible reflexive verbs of various types, whereas a quick skim through (Murphy 1972) yields hundreds of candidates.[5]

Luganda reflexive tantum verbs include e.g. the intransitive *eedubika* 'get stuck in the mud; be immersed', and *eegoota* 'walk with a stiff, erect or proud gait', as well as transitive *eekeka* 'suspect, beware of', *eebagala* 'mount, ride (an animal)', and *eesigama* 'lean on, rely on'.

Non-reversible reflexives have idiosyncratic relations to the corresponding non-reflexive verbs. An example for a Luganda semantic non-reversible reflexive verb is given in (28). The reflexive tantum verb *eesiga* 'trust, rely on' has a formally non-reflexive counterpart *siga* 'sow, plant'.

(28) *Basobola   okukwesiga   okukuwola?*
      ba-sobol-a oku-ku-eesig-a   oku-ku-wol-a
      2SBJ-can-FV INF-2SG.OBJ-trust(REFL)-FV INF-2SG.OBJ-lend-FV
      'Can they trust you and lend you (money)?' [written]

Some non-reversible reflexives are semantically nearly identical with their non-reflexive counterparts and thus do not follow the standard change of the meaning of a reflexive, as e.g. *gaana* (29a) and *eegana* (29b): they both mean 'reject, refuse, deny' and in one of their senses entail an abstract patient (an idea, a proposal, a statement).

(29) a. *Kino   baakigaana.*
          ki-no   ba-a-ki-gaan-a
          7-PROX 2SBJ-PST-7OBJ-reject-FV
          'They rejected it (the divorce proposal).' [written]

      b. *kyokka China   yo   ebyegaana.*
          kyokka China   yo   e-bi-eegaan-a
          but   China(9) 9.MED 9SBJ-8OBJ-deny(REFL)-FV
          '(…) but China denied them (the reports).' [written]

Other verbs are non-reversible with respect to several criteria at once. For example, the reflexive verb *eetegereza* 'comprehend, grasp, analyze, observe, recognize, make out' derives from *tegereza* 'listen to, pay attention to'. Apart from the

---

[5]Murphy (1972) also lists frequent non-lexicalized reflexives.

semantic non-reversibility, this, as well as many other Luganda reflexive verbs, are syntactically non-reversible, as both *tegereza* and its morphologically reflexive counterpart *eetegereza* are transitive, as the object prefix *mu-* [1OBJ] in (30b) indicates.

(30)   a.   *Agambye*   *nti*   *agenda*   *kusooka*   *kwetegereza*
          a-gambye   nti   a-gend-a   ku-sook-a   ku-eetegerez-a
          1SBJ-say.PFV QUOT 1SBJ-AUX-FV INF-do_first-FV INF-revise(REFL)-FV
          tteeka.
          tteeka
          bill(5)
          'He has said that he is going to revise the bill first (before signing it).'
          [written]

      b.   *Oluvannyuma lw'*   *okumwetegereza*
          oluvannyuma lwa   oku-mu-eetegerez-a
          after   11.GEN INF-1OBJ-observe(REFL)-FV
          namutuukirira.
          n-a-mu-tuukirir-a
          1SG.SBJ-PST-1OBJ-approach-FV
          'After observing her, I approached her (and made a marriage
          proposal).' [written]

Another example of non-reversibility with respect to several criteria is provided in (31b). The non-reflexive ditransitive verb *buuza* 'ask' takes two arguments, viz. the person being asked and the question, as in (31a). Its reflexive counterpart *eebuuza* means 'ask oneself, wonder' but also 'inquire, consult'. In this second usage, in addition to mild semantic non-reversibility, we also observe a change of valency properties, as another participant – the one enquired from – can be added to the clause, though the argument role is in principle already occupied by the reflexive prefix.

(31)   a.   *Baamubuuzizza*   *lwaki tayagala*   *kusooka*
          ba-a-mu-buuzizza   lwaki ti-a-yagal-a   ku-sook-a
          2SBJ-PST-1OBJ-ask.PFV why   NEG-1SBJ-want-FV INF-do_first-FV
          kugattibwa.
          ku-gattibw-a
          INF-marry-FV
          'They asked him why he does not want to do the wedding first.'
          [written]

b. *Mukyala wange takyampuliriza   era buli*
   mukyala wa-nge   ti-a-kya-n-wuliriz-a   era buli
   wife(1)   1-1SG.POSS NEG-1SBJ-PERS-1SG.OBJ-listen_to-FV and every
   kimu   ky'   akola   yeebuuza   ku   mikwano
   kimu   kye a-kol-a   a-eebuuz-a   ku   mikwano
   thing(1) 7.REL 1SBJ-do-FV 1SBJ-consult(REFL)-FV 17.LOC friends(4)
   gye.
   gye
   4.1POSS
   'My wife no longer listens to me and she first consults her friends on whatever she does.' [written]

8 Conclusions

This chapter addressed some questions regarding reflexive constructions in the Bantu language Luganda. It was shown that the prefix *ee-* is used as a general reflexivizer, and that it does not show morphosyntactic agreement with person-number or noun class features of the subject. It is used productively to express coreference between the subject and the patient object in transitive verbs, and there is no difference between introverted or extroverted verbs. Although Luganda has two dedicated reciprocal suffixes, *ee-* can also be used to express reciprocal meaning, which is not uncommon for Bantu languages. The Luganda reflexivizer cannot be used to render coreference between the subject and a possessor, nor between the subject and a spatial referent, and ambiguity has to be resolved by context. This is also true for the coreference between two non-subject arguments within the same clause, for which there is no dedicated marker in Luganda. Despite its productivity, reflexive constructions proper do not account for the most frequent usage of the prefix *ee-* in the corpus: it is noteworthy that the Luganda lexicon has quite a number of lexicalized reflexive verbs. In addition to reflexiva tantum, which are morphologically irreversible and cannot occur without the prefix, there are also non-reversible reflexives that have idiosyncratic (syntactic, lexical and/or semantic) relations to the corresponding non-reflexive verbs. The reflexivizer can also be used in combination with other verbal extensions, such as fossilized reciprocals, which remains a topic for future research.

Abbreviations

This chapter follows the Leipzig Glossing Rules (Comrie et al. 2008). Additional abbreviations used are:

1sg, etc.	person and number (only when followed by sg or pl)	hab	habitual
		med	medial demonstrative
1 to 23	noun classes	part	partitive
fv	final vowel	pers	persistive

References

Ashton, Ethel O., Enoch M. K. Mulira, E. G. M. Ndawula & Archibald Norman Tucker. 1954. *A Luganda grammar*. London: Longmans, Green & Company.

Comrie, Bernard, Martin Haspelmath & Balthasar Bickel. 2008. *The Leipzig glossing rules: Conventions for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses*. Department of Linguistics of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology & Department of Linguistics of Leipzig University. Leipzig.

Dom, Sebastian, Leonid Kulikov & Koen Bostoen. 2017. The middle as a voice category in Bantu: Setting the stage for further research. *Lingua Posnaniensis* 58(2). 129–149.

Downing, Laura J. & Lutz Marten. 2019. Clausal morphosyntax and information structure. In Mark Van de Velde, Koen Bostoen, Derek Nurse & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu Languages*, 2nd edn., 270–307. London: Routledge.

Geniušienė, Emma Š. 1987. *The typology of reflexives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Goto, K. V & Sergey Say. 2009. Častotnye xarakteristiki klassov russkix refleksivnyx glagolov [Frequency profiles of classes of Russian reflexive verbs]. In Ksenia L. Kiseleva, Vladimir A. Plungian, Ekaterina V. Raxilina & Sergej G. Tatevosov (eds.), *Korpusnye issledovanija po russkoj grammatike* [*Corpus-linguistic studies of Russian grammar*], 184–221. Moscow: Probel.

Haiman, John. 1985. *Natural syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hammarström, Harald, Robert Forkel, Martin Haspelmath & Sebastian Bank. 2022. *Glottolog 4.7*. Leipzig. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7398962.

Haspelmath, Martin. 2023. Comparing reflexive constructions in the world's languages. In Katarzyna Janic, Nicoletta Puddu & Martin Haspelmath (eds.), *Reflexive constructions in the world's languages*, 19–62. Berlin: Language Science Press. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7874925.

Isingoma, Bebwa & Christiane Meierkord. 2016. Ugandan English: Challenges to, and food for, current theories. In Christiane Meierkord & Bebwa Isingoma (eds.), *Ugandan English: Its sociolinguistics, structure and uses in a globalising post-protectorate*, 1–16. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Janic, Katarzyna & Martin Haspelmath. 2023. Questionnaire on reflexive constructions in the world's languages. In Katarzyna Janic, Nicoletta Puddu & Martin Haspelmath (eds.), *Reflexive constructions in the world's languages*, 847–853. Berlin: Language Science Press. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7874992.

König, Ekkehard & Letizia Vezzosi. 2004. The role of predicate meaning in the development of reflexivity. In Walter Bisang, Nikolaus Himmelmann & Björn Wiemer (eds.), *What makes grammaticalization? A look from its fringes and its components*, 213–244. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Marlo, Michael R. 2015a. Exceptional properties of the reflexive in Bantu languages. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 24(1). 1–22.

Marlo, Michael R. 2015b. On the number of object markers in Bantu languages. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 36(1). 1–265.

McPherson, Laura. 2008. *A descriptive and theoretical account of Luganda verbal morphology*. Claremont: Scripps College. (Doctoral dissertation).

Meeussen, Achille E. 1967. Bantu grammatical reconstructions. *Africana Linguistica* 3. 79–121.

Murphy, John D. 1972. *Luganda-English dictionary*. Washington, DC: Consortium Press, Catholic University of America Press.

Namyalo, Saudah, Bebwa Isingoma & Christiane Meierkord. 2016. Towards assessing the space of English in Uganda's linguistic ecology. In Christiane Meierkord, Bebwa Isingoma & Saudah Namyalo (eds.), *Ugandan English: Its sociolinguistics, structure and uses in a globalising post-protectorate*, 19–50. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nedjalkov, Igor. 1997. *Evenki*. London: Routledge.

Polak, Louise. 1983. Le réfléchi en bantou [The reflexive in Bantu]. *Africana Linguistica* 9. 270–304.

Poletto, Robert. 1998. *Topics in Runyankore phonology*. Columbus: Ohio State University. (Doctoral dissertation).

Schadeberg, Thilo C. & Koen Bostoen. 2019. Word formation. In Mark Van de Velde, Koen Bostoen, Derek Nurse & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages*, 2nd edn., 172–203. London: Routledge.

Schoenbrun, David L. 1994. Great Lakes Bantu: Classification and settlement chronology. *Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* 15. 91–152.

Schoenbrun, David L. 1997. *The historical reconstruction of Great Lakes Bantu: Etymologies and distributions*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics. 2016. *The national population and housing census 2014: Main report.* Tech. rep. Kampala.

Van de Velde, Mark. 2019. Nominal morphology and syntax. In Mark Van de Velde, Koen Bostoen, Derek Nurse & Gérard Philippson (eds.), *The Bantu languages*, 2nd edn., 237–269. London: Routledge.