

Endangerment of Ruruuli-Lunyala language: Past and current trends

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Abstract

Ruruuli-Lunyala (JE.103; Glottocode: ruul1235, ISO 639-3: ruc) is the native language of the Baruuli and Banyala ethnic groups of Uganda. It is one of the most endangered and under-described languages in Uganda (see Namyalo et al. 2021; Nakayiza 2013). This paper analyses the factors that caused the endangerment of Ruruuli-Lunyala from a historical perspective. It further provides an overview of its current status and the steps that have been taken by the community towards its revitalisation. The data for this paper were collected using oral interviews, observations, and document analysis. The results of the study indicate that the main cause of Ruruuli-Lunyala endangerment stems from the Buganda colonial administration. Under the Buganda rule, Ruruuli-Lunyala language as well as the Kiruuli-Kinyala culture were abandoned. This and other factors explain why this language remains one of Uganda's under-described minority languages. The study concludes by observing that, although there are some support efforts towards the revitalisation of Ruruuli-Lunyala, the young population is shifting to Luganda, Runyoro and Lusoga.

Keywords: Language endangerment; vitality; intergenerational transmission; language empowerment; institutional status

1. Introduction

This paper aims at assessing the degree of endangerment of Ruruuli-Lunyala¹ language. It specifically analyses the factors which account for its endangerment, its current status and the steps that have been taken towards its revitalisation. Data for this paper were collected using oral interviews, observations and document analysis. The interviews were carried out between March 2017 and April 2019. The people interviewed included elders and chiefs from Bunyala and Buruuli Kingdoms, religious leaders, teachers and individuals. A total of 30 respondents, including both adult males and females aged 18–85 years, were included in the study. The data

¹ Like many Bantu languages in Uganda, *ru-/lu-* is the noun class prefix of class 11 used to denote language names, e.g., Ruruuli-Lunyala (JE.103; Glottocode: ruul1235, ISO 639-3: ruc). The *bu-* prefix (class 14) is used as a noun prefix for the kingdom e.g., Bunyala and Buruuli while prefix *mu/ba-* (noun class 1/2) denote the people belonging to the respective ethnic group e.g., Munyala/Banyala, Muruuli/Baruuli, Muganda/Baganda, etc. The prefix *ki-* where used denote the culture of these two ethnic groups e.g., Kinyala or Kiruuli culture.

from the interviews were supplemented by observations. Churches, schools, markets and courts of law were specifically visited in order to establish if Ruruuli-Lunyala continues to be used in all these contexts. In addition to interviews and observation, the literature on the history of Baruuli and Banyala in Uganda was analysed.

This paper is divided into four main sections. Section 1 outlines the scope, methodology and structure of the article. Section 2 defines key concepts and highlights the theoretical underpinnings of language endangerment and development. Section 3 discusses the causes of language endangerment of Ruruuli-Lunyala from a historical and synchronic perspective. Section 4 reviews the support efforts that have been undertaken by the community to combat language extinction. In section 5, the discussion turns to the community-gearred steps towards the revitalisation of Ruruuli-Lunyala while in section 6 the conclusions of this study are drawn.

1.1 Ruruuli-Lunyala: Linguistic, demographic and geographic information

Ruruuli-Lunyala (also referred to as Ruuli) is a Nyoro-Ganda language (JE.103; Glottocode: ruul1235, ISO 639-3: ruc). It is a Bantu language belonging to the Niger-Congo language phylum and the native language of the Baruuli and Banyala ethnic groups of the Republic of Uganda. Like the other 65² languages spoken in Uganda, Ruruuli-Lunyala is officially recognised as one of Uganda's indigenous minority languages (Uganda Constitution 1995). Eberhard, Simons and Fennig (2023) categorises it as "6a" (vigorous). However, as I argue in this paper, Ruruuli-Lunyala is an endangered language with status "7" (shifting). Native speakers of Ruruuli-Lunyala mainly occupy the districts of Kayunga, Nakasongola, Kiryandongo, Amolator, Buyende, Masindi, Hoima and Luwero. There are also a few speakers of Ruruuli-Lunyala in the Apac and Kamuli districts. The population of Baruuli and Banyala is estimated to be 237,821 (see Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2014). The Baruuli and Banyala are two different indigenous communities (see The Constitution of Uganda 1995; Ladefoged, Glick & Criper 1972). Nakayiza (2013) observes that the Baruuli and Banyala speak a similar language referred to as Ruuli with alternate names such as Luduuli, Ruli, Ruluuli, Rurulim and Ruruuli-Lunyala. Mwogez (2004:14) notes that in 2005 the Baruuli and Banyala formed a *Council of Elders* which, among other things, agreed to have a name which represents both communities. This gave birth to a new language label Ruruuli-Lunyala. Since then, the Banyala and Baruuli use Ruruuli-Lunyala, as a language which merges the previously two language varieties, Ruruuli and Lunyala. This new name, according to the members of *Council of Elders*, was coined for political reasons and the need to form a stronger alliance that would enable them reclaim their independence from the Buganda kingdom (see also Nakayiza 2013). Ladefoged et al. (1972:74) estimate that Lunyala and Ruruuli share 91% mutual intelligibility in terms of words considered in the survey. Similarly, to Ladefoged et al. (1972), Vander Wal and Vander Wal (2005) report a 90% mutual intelligibility between these two language varieties. According to Vander Wal and Vander Wal (2005), Ruruuli-Lunyala has three dialects, including Western

²*The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995*, in combination with *The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2005*, Uganda recognises 65 distinct indigenous groups, assuming that each of these ethnic groups is characterised by distinct traditions, arts and social practices. These ethnic groups include: Acholi, Aliba, Alur, Aringa, Baamba, Babukusu, Babwisi, Bafumbira, Baganda, Bagisu, Bagungu, Bagwe, Bagwere, Bahehe, Bahororo, Bakenyi, Bakiga, Bakonzo, Banyabindi, Banyabutumbi, Banyankore, Banyala, Banyaruguru, Banyarwanda, Banyole, Banyoro, Baruli, Barundi, Basamia, Basoga, Basongora, Batagwenda, Batoro, Batuku, Batwa, Chope, Dodoth, Ethur, Gimara, Ik (Teuso), Iteso, Jie, Jonam, Jopadhola, Kakwa, Karimojong, Kebu (Okebu), Kuku, Kumam, Langi, Lendu, Lugbara, Ma'di, Mening, Mvuba, Napore, Ngikutio, Nubi, Nyang'ia, Pökot, Reli, Sabinu, Shana, So (Tepeth), and Vonoma.

Ruruuli spoken in Masindi district, Eastern Ruruuli spoken in Nakasongola district, and Lunyala mainly spoken in Kayunga district.

1.2 The Baruuli and Banyala indigenous communities

The Baruuli and the Banyala are a Bantu group from Central Uganda who live generally near the Nile River-Lake Kyoga basin to the west of the Nile and to the south of Lake Kyoga (see Vander Wal and Vander Wal 2005). According to Mwogezi (2004:16), the Baruuli and Banyala are reported to have migrated from Bahr El Ghazel in southern Sudan after the Luo invasion around the 15th century. As a result of the Luo invasion, the Baruuli-Banyala dispersed breaking into two indigenous communities, namely the Baruuli and Banyala.

Commenting on the distribution of Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers, Vander Wal and Vander Wal (2005:4) add that the Baruuli first settled in northern Uganda (Apac District) but, as a result of conflict with the Luo, they migrated to the western parts of Uganda. Some Baruuli migrated to the central region and settled in Buruuli County (now Nakasongola District). Some occupied Mukono and Kamuli and some remained in Kiryandongo, Masindi and Apac districts.

Before their annexation to Bunyoro Kingdom in the 15th century, Buruuli and Bunyala were independent chieftaincies. Buruuli had its capital in Kamunina in Kwigeri, while Bunyala's capital was in Ibaale the present day Bbaale County (see Kato 2005 and Kiwanuka 1972). After prolonged wars between Buganda and Bunyoro, Buruuli and Bunyala were annexed to Buganda in a deal that was sealed by the 1900 Buganda Agreement. The Buganda Agreement, which was signed by Sir Apollo Kagga and Sir Harry Johnson, officially incorporated Buruuli and Bunyala into Buganda Kingdom as a reward from the British. This was understood as an act of gratitude for the help they had received from the Buganda during the war that led to the defeat of Kabalega in 1899 (see Kiwanuka 1972). After the annexation of Buruuli and Bunyala to Buganda, the Baganda colonial agents took over full administration and management of these chieftaincies. Semei Kakungulu took over Bugerere, the present-day Kayunga District, and Andereya Luwandagga took over Buruuli, the present-day Nakasongola District, as colonial agents. Most of the causes of the current status and degree of Ruruuli-Lunyala endangerment stem from the political, social and economic situation which the Banyala and the Baruuli went through during the colonial and post-colonial days. These causes are discussed in Section 2.1.

Currently, the Baruuli are found in the present-day Masindi, Kiryandongo, and Nakasongola districts, as well as in parts of Luwero districts. In Luwero district, they mainly reside in the sub-counties of Butuntumula, Kikyusa and Kamira. Other sub-counties are mainly occupied by the Baganda. The Banyala reside primarily in Kayunga and Buyende districts. However, as with other indigenous groups in Uganda, they are also scattered in other districts, as well as in the diaspora. Note further that the Banyala and Baruuli share the same ancestors and that their cultures are almost the same. Slight differences in culture are said to be due to influences from other tribes.

2. Language endangerment and development: Definitions and theoretical highlights

Language endangerment and development has been, and continues to be, an area of interest among linguists. The two notions, i.e., language endangerment and language development, have

been widely discussed in literature (see e.g., Ferguson 1968; Fishman, 1991; Wolff 2002; UNESCO 2003, among others). Firstly, language endangerment has been defined by UNESCO (2003:1) as a situation where “speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, adults or children”. In relation to UNESCO’s definition of language endangerment, Lewis, Simons and Fenning (2015) note that language endangerment is a matter of degree. At one end of the scale are languages that are vigorous, and perhaps are even expanding in numbers of speakers or functional areas of use, but exist under the shadow of a more dominant language. At the other end are languages that are on the verge of extinction (that is, loss of all individuals who continue to identify the language as part of their identity). In-between these two poles are many degrees of greater or lesser vitality.

Secondly, language development, according to Lewis et al. (2015), concerns itself with the result of the series of on-going planned actions that language communities take to ensure that they can effectively use their languages to achieve their social, cultural, political, economic, and spiritual goals, thus leading to language development. Thus, a developed language, according to Wolff (2002:141), is one

with a viable orthography, substantial literature and is used in domains such as education, broadcasting, print media, administration and law. For the language to be considered undeveloped, the criteria include (i) lack of orthography (the language is said to be good only for oral communication), (ii) inadequacy of vocabulary (the language is said to be unfit for ‘modern communication’), and finally, (iii) paucity or total absence of reading materials.

As I discuss in Section 4, the characteristics of an underdeveloped language, as outlined by Wolff (2002), clearly define the current status of Ruruuli-Lunyala in terms of its development.

Based on the above definitions of language endangerment and language development, the present paper assesses the current state of Ruruuli-Lunyala in order to establish to what degree it is endangered and developed. In assessment of language endangerment and development, a number of researchers have come up with different criteria or parameters. Earlier studies, such as Ferguson (1968), propose three parameters which can be used to evaluate the degree of language development. These parameters include (i) graphisation, or the development of a system of writing, (ii) standardisation, i.e. the development of a norm that overrides regional and social dialects, and (iii) modernisation, or the development of the ability to translate and carry out discourse about a broad range of topics in ways characteristic of industrialised, secularised, structurally differentiated, “modernised” societies.

In 2003, UNESCO, in its efforts to preserve world languages and cultures, came up with a list of nine factors which can be employed to assess a language’s degree of endangerment and vitality. These include (i) intergenerational language transmission, (ii) absolute number of speakers, (iii) proportion of speakers within the total population, (iv) response to new domains and the media, (v) governmental and institutional attitudes toward language and language policy, including official status and use, (vi) materials for language education and literacy, (vii) community members’ attitude towards their own language, (viii) trends in existing language domains and amount, and (ix) quality of documentation. Although these parameters have been widely used to assess the degree of language endangerment and vitality or the degree of

development of a given language, they have been seen as not being comprehensive enough to paint a vivid picture of a language’s degree of endangerment and vitality as well as assessing the degree of language development. In fact, Lee (2016) observes that the more the features there are, the more comprehensive the assessment of the language is. In relation to this, Lewis and Simons (2010), borrowing from Fishman (1991), come up with an Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS). Lewis and Simons (2010) provide levels and characteristics which determine whether the language is international, national, provincial, wider communication, developed, vigorous, threatened, shifting, moribund, nearly extinct, dormant or extinct. Each level is identified, labelled, and characterised, as summarised in Table 1 below. These descriptions are used to determine the status of Ruruuli-Lunyala in relation to its degree of engagement.

Table 1: Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) (Lewis & Simons 2010)

LEVEL	LABEL	DESCRIPTIONS
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the national level.
2	Provincial	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within major administrative subdivisions of a nation.
3	Wider Communication	The language is used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region.
4	Educational	The language is in vigorous use, with standardisation and literature being sustained through a widespread system of institutionally supported education.
5	Developing	The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardised form being used by some, though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
6	6a Vigorous	The language is used for face-to-face communication by all generations, and the situation is sustainable.
7	6b Threatened	The language is used for face-to-face communication within all generations, but is losing users.
8	Shifting	The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves, but it is not being transmitted to children.
9	8a Moribund	The only remaining active users of the language are members of the grandparent generation and older.
10	8b Nearly Extinct	The only remaining users of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.
11	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community, but no one has more than symbolic proficiency.
12	Extinct	The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

3. The causes of Ruruuli-Lunyala endangerment: A historical perspective

Scholars such as David and Nambiar (2003) and Baldauf and Kaplan (2007) have extensively discussed different factors as probable causes of language endangerment. Among others, they include colonialization, intermarriage, migration, assimilation, national education policies, and the attitude of individuals towards their language. Many of these factors are among the causes of Ruruuli-Lunyala endangerment. First, we observe that as soon as Buganda took over

Nakasongola and Bugerere³ in 1900 (these are the present day Buruuli and Bunyala kingdoms respectively), the colonial agents embarked on a deliberate campaign to make these two indigenous communities poor minorities. Gale (1959:170) reports that once the Baganda colonial agents took over Buruuli and Bunyala, they, as part of their colonial administration, reduced the people of these communities to a slave status. He emphasises that “the Baganda looked at them as a tribe of slaves. They seem to have long since been deprived of all power in their own country and treated as subjects by the superior race, the Baganda, who live in the same province.” The Baruuli and Banyala were subjected to forced labour, locally known as *kakara*. Those who could not stand these conditions chose to flee to other parts of the country. Bintubizibu (1996) reflects on the Baruuli-Banyala plight in the legendary “Rwampondo” folk song which the Baruuli-Banyala would sing while fleeing from the Baganda masters:

Ebya Buganda bindemere – Purukucai
 I can't put up with Buganda brutality – I run away
Balinyaja Rwampondo – Purukucai
 They will find me at Rwampondo – I run away
Otambula Bagaadiika – Purukucai
 They push you as you walk – I run away
Airagura ayera amaino – Purukucai
 A black person has white teeth – I run away
N'okalyateyera amaino – Purukucai
 Even those who eat have white teeth – I run away
Mugimbegimbe twabire – Purukucai
 Hurry and we sail and go – I run away
Atakatungire aduula – Purukucai
 One who is not yet rich brags – I run away
Eitungo lyambuli bisodyo – Purukucai
 Having goats is like having chicken droppings – I run away
Eitungo lya mbuli nkondo – Purukucai.
 Having goats is like having poles – I run away

In this song, the Banyala and Baruuli used a figurative language to lament what was happening to them during this time. According to the narratives of the interviewed elders, the Baganda agents' brutality forced many Baruuli and Banyala to flee to different parts of the country, leaving behind a small population of the Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers. Those who remained were deprived of their traditional rights to land, making the Baruuli-Banyala the poor minority and squatters on their own land.

In addition to the indirect pressure caused by forced labour and forced migration, language use was targeted directly as well. For instance, Mwoegezi (2004:42) reports that,

in their push for assimilation, or to *Bugandanise* the lost counties, under threat of jail or other punishments, all indigenous languages spoken in these counties were banned.

³ Nakasongola and Bugerere, before their annexation to Buganda by the 1900 agreement, were predominantly occupied by the Baruuli and Banyala. They spoke Ruuli-Lunyala and practiced their own culture which identified them as Baruuli and Banyala.

Luganda was made compulsory in all the counties that were colonised by the Buganda Kingdom.

Thus, Baganda colonial agents made it a policy to use Luganda in all public domains, such as in churches, mosques, schools, courts of law, as well as in administrative/government offices. Ruruuli-Lunyala was confined to a “home” language, as it was illegal to speak Ruruuli-Lunyala in public; anyone found speaking it would be severely punished. One of the interviewees recalls:

One day, my father and I were heard speaking Lunyala in a market. We did not know the chief was near. A day later, he [my father] was summoned to go to the court for trial. I was also told to go with my father. We were both found guilty of speaking Lunyala in a public place. My dad was sentenced to two months in jail. As a child, I was told to draw water and fill a drum every day for seven days.

(Field Interview, January 2018)

The Baruuli and Banyala who failed to master Luganda were denied access to many public services, such as medical care, education and church services. Thus, the reduction in the number of Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers due to migration, their impoverishment, and the language policy that was imposed by the Baganda forced the Banyala and Baruuli to adopt Luganda as a language of wider communication, thus reducing Ruruuli-Lunyala to a home language.

In their efforts to assimilate the Baruuli and Banyala, the Baganda administrators deliberately employed psychological weapons to totally brainwash their colonised subjects. One of the respondents in Bbaale sub-county narrates:

The Baganda colonial agents called us all sorts of names. They, for example, labelled us cannibals, night dancers⁴, people who are slow thinkers. Even today one hears people saying that the Banyala are ‘the people who urinated on Kakungulu’s house’. This is related to the word *kunyaala* ‘to urinate’ in Luganda.

(Field Interviews, January 2018).

Thus, being a Muruuli or Munyala was tantamount to being backward and a range of inappropriate behaviours was attributed to the members of these colonised groups. Mwogezi (2004:42) adds that if any non-Muganda did something worth praising, he would be “rewarded by being told that you have acted like a Muganda”. Thus, many Baruuli and Banyala strived to act and think like Baganda.

In addition to using psychological weapons, the Baganda colonial masters used their legal system to punish those who did not behave as per the Ganda customs and norms. Doyle (2009:289) notes:

At the heart of the Ganda strategy for dealing with the new minorities was Buganda’s legal system, which was used not only to discipline immigrants and regularise their relations with employers and landlords, but also to transmit Ganda *empisa* or ‘rules of proper behaviour’.

⁴ (In Uganda) a night dancer is a person believed to employ the help of the dead or to use witchcraft in destroying other people’s lives or property.

It therefore followed that whoever, for example, did not eat Ganda food, or a woman who did not kneel down while greeting elders, among other customs, was taken to court. All those found guilty were imprisoned. Treating the Ganda culture as superior to other cultures created a new Baganda generation which grew up believing that they belong to a superior tribe and that the rest are inferior. Such circumstances forced many of the Baruuli and Banyala to adopt the Ganda ways of living. Eventually, this led the Baruuli-Banyala to not only devalue their language but also to drop their ethnic identity, which would result in the loss of their culture.

Furthermore, Buganda colonial administrators systematically ensured that the culture of the Baruuli and Banyala completely vanished. To enforce this, they used different strategies. As Stonehouse (2012:100) elaborates:

For the wider Nyoro, Ruuli and Nyala populations, [...], Buganda developed other strategies to stimulate assimilative change. These tactics ranged from enforced re-naming to the suppression of cultural practices. [...] [W]idespread pressure exerted on Nyoro, Nyala and Ruuli to take Ganda names formed a baseline for successful integration. More than a quarter of all witness statements to the Privy Council Commission alleged that the complainants had to alter their name, or were required to give a Ganda name to their children. The necessity of taking such a name was usually emphasised by Ganda officials at a juncture when the individual involved required something from the kingdom. Prime examples included needing to register a birth, attend school or pay taxes. As has been noted, it was also often necessary to take the name of a Ganda clan when buying or seeking to inherit land.

The renaming of the colonised population was done in two ways. One was either to take a new name or to modify the Ruruuli-Lunyala name so as to sound like a Luganda one. One of the elders interviewed narrates:

One called Mubworo would be forced to take on Lubega as his name which belongs to the Ngabi clan among the Baganda, or a person called Maitek would be asked to modify it to Matte which fits into the Luganda pronunciation as well as the clan system.

(Field Interview, February 2018 at Nakasongola Trading Centre)

Along the same lines, the Baruuli-Banyala were asked to denounce their clans and totems and forced to embrace those of the Baganda. Consequently, the majority of the Baruuli and Banyala adopted many aspects of the Kiganda culture.

Other Baruuli-Banyala chose to identify themselves with Banyoro, switching to speaking Runyoro, and even adopting Nyoro pet names commonly known as *empaako*. As with other indigenous communities in Uganda, one's ethnic identity is reflected in one's name. Furthermore, in indigenous communities with clan systems, one's identity is closely linked to one's clan and totems. Destroying these two cultural pillars, i.e. the naming system of the Baruuli and Banyala, as well as their clan systems, was tantamount to destroying the cultural identity of these two indigenous communities.

In addition to eliminating the naming and clan system of the Baruuli-Banyala, most of the traditions and cultural practices of the Baruuli-Banyala were also banned. It was an offence to do anything that identified a group as Banyala or Baruuli. Thus, traditional religious practices,

child initiation, and wedding ceremonies, among other cultural practices and ceremonies, were banned by the Buganda colonial agents. Moreover, as Stonehouse (2012:111) observes,

Banyala and Ruruuli traditions also appear to indicate that they suffered from the same undermining of local cultural practices as their western neighbours as Buganda sought to instil Baganda custom at the heart of the *Lost Counties* communities. As part of this process, non-Ganda marriage, death and birth rites alongside music and dancing were actively discouraged and sometimes punished by the authorities.

In its final report, the Molson Commission of 1962 concluded that while there was no “official ban on Banyoro dancing within the counties, it is possible that the Buganda authorities may from time to time take justifiable exception to the scurrilous or seditious words which may accompany the dancing”. In an interview with elders among the Banyala and Baruuli, it was reported that, apart from the language which is still spoken by mainly the elderly and a few members of the younger population especially among the Banyala, the Kiruuli-Kinyala culture is completely extinct. Nevertheless, there are efforts to revive some of these cultural practices, as discussed in detail in Section 4.

Missionaries also had a role to play in the endangerment of Ruruuli-Lunyala.

The role of missionaries in propagating and codifying languages often remains understood as a key determinant of twentieth-century linguistic associations. In Buganda, the extension of Luganda through missionary education, Bible texts and church services facilitated the processes of assimilation.

(Stonehouse 2012:87)

In an interview with one of the chiefs in Bunyala kingdom, he notes that “working hand in hand with the missionaries, the Baganda colonial agents passed a policy refusing the Baruuli and Banyala to receive baptism without having a name from the Baganda clan names”. He further observes that many of the Banyala and the Baruuli who wanted to get Christian baptism were forced to first learn Luganda. This also forced some of the Banyala and Baruuli to learn Luganda, as well as to teach it to their children at the expense of Ruruuli-Lunyala.

The Buganda Kingdom further embarked on the proliferation of Baganda settler communities in both the Buruuli and the Bunyala areas. This was executed through the Ndaiga Development Scheme and Ndaiga General Agency initiated by Kabaka Muteesa II in 1963. The aim, according to Lunyigo (2011), was to re-settle ex-service men in this area to ensure that the Baganda population would dominate the area. This was also true for Bugerere county through the Kiseveni project which was established for the same purpose of growing the Baganda population in this area. It seems to have been achieved successfully as, according to *Entanda ya Buganda* Magazine volume 18 (2005), the Baruuli constituted 12,967 (4.4%) of the population and the Banyala only 7,964 (2.7%), whereas the number of the Baganda reached 94,276 (32%). The increase in the Baganda population was also supplemented by intermarriages (see also Doyle 2009). The Baganda colonial administrators strategically encouraged Baganda women to marry Baruuli-Banyala men. This was to ensure that the Baganda women would indirectly influence the choice of the language used in homes. As discussed in Section 4, this worked well for the colonisers, as many of the men interviewed in

the present study married Baganda women, and thus, Luganda dominates in many such mixed homes.

The geographical location of Ruruuli-Lunyala-speaking communities also disadvantaged the development and growth of Ruruuli-Lunyala. The Ruruuli-Lunyala survives under the shadow of larger language communities, such as the Baganda on the southern side, the Banyoro on the western side, and Basoga to the east. Specifically, this location disadvantaged them in two ways. On the one hand, the Baruuli and Banyala were forced to learn these languages to be able to socialise and conduct business with the larger communities. This situation has led to steady bilingualism among the Baruuli and Banyala in many of the rural communities. They speak either Ruruuli-Lunyala and Luganda or Ruruuli-Lunyala and Runyoro. However, the majority of the Banyala and Baruuli, especially the young generation in urbanising centres, have switched to the dominant languages, such as Luganda, Runyoro and Lusoga. The Baruuli and Banyala have found themselves slowly integrating into these communities and thus losing their own cultural identity. In an interview one of the interviewees notes:

The majority of middle-aged Banyala cannot speak Lunyala. This is because many of their parents grew up in the era when speaking Ruruuli-Lunyala was a crime. But they also thought that learning Luganda was the best option at that time. And a few who speak it cannot speak fluently.

(Field Interview, December 2017).

Thus, the observed situation supports the claim made by Ridler and Pons-Ridler (1984) that people choose a language that will benefit them in the long run. Moreover, in many circumstances, individuals usually shift to other languages which they think will help them improve their socio-economic status and social mobility (see Schiffman 1998). Because of this, the majority of the Banyala and Baruuli speak neighbouring dominant languages such as Luganda, Lusoga, and Runyoro, in addition to English, which is the official language of Uganda.

Thus, from the missionary days up to the late 1990s, no efforts for developing Ruruuli-Lunyala were carried out. For example, the orthography of Ruruuli-Lunyala was developed and standardised much later (2012) than for the dominant languages such as Luganda, Runyoro, Langi and Lusoga.

The above historical description of the causes of language endangerment is in agreement with what earlier researchers have claimed. For example, UNESCO (2003) highlights that a language may become endangered or extinct due to external factors such as military, economic, religious, cultural or educational subjugation. However, at times, factors may be internal, including, but not limited to, the community's negative attitude towards its own language, broken or limited intergenerational transmission of linguistic and cultural traditions, or disadvantaged social position due to speakers' numbers. Batibo (2005) emphasises that in such circumstances, people abandon their languages and culture with the hope of overcoming discrimination to secure a livelihood and enhance social mobility, or to assimilate the global marketplace. These factors explain the current state of Ruruuli-Lunyala in terms of its endangerment and development, as further discussed in Section 4.

4. The current state of Ruruuli-Lunyala's endangerment

This section examines the current state of Ruruuli-Lunyala in order to determine its degree of endangerment. The following factors are examined: the constitutional status and institutional support of the language (Section 4.1), the availability of a complete, working orthography as well as the availability of quality of literature for educational purposes (Section 4.2), the use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in formal domains (Section 4.3), and intergenerational transmission of the language (Section 4.4). Section 4.5 provides an overview of the number of Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers, Section 4.6 discusses the attitude of the Baruuuli-Banyala towards their language, and Section 4.7 discusses the use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in specialised discourses.

4.1 The constitutional status and institutional support for Ruruuli-Lunyala

Sterwart (1968) notes that, for a language to be considered as standard, it should fulfil the vitality criteria (cf. Section 2). Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) build on Sterwart's (1958) criteria by coming up with one of the earliest ethno-linguistic frameworks, known as "ethno-linguistic vitality". According to Giles et al. (1977), vitality of a language is primarily determined by the institutional support it receives for its development. With respect to the institutional support and official status of Ruruuli-Lunyala, Article 6 of the Constitution of Uganda (2005:4) states that "any other of Uganda's indigenous languages may be used as a medium of instruction in schools or other educational institutions or for legislative, administrative or judicial purposes as Parliament may, by law prescribe". The recognition of Uganda's indigenous languages in the constitution provides a legal framework that allows the government, non-government organisations (both international and local), and communities to develop all indigenous languages of Uganda, including Ruruuli-Lunyala. However, as history demonstrates, such constitutional and other policy statements have largely remained public relation statements rather than blueprints for action (see Namyalo & Nakayiza 2014; Namyalo, Isingoma & Meierkord 2017). Ruruuli-Lunyala, like other minority languages, currently does not receive any support from the government. The few initiatives that have been started to develop Ruruuli-Lunyala are implemented by non-governmental organisations. The USAID, for example, develops primers for primary school pupils; SIL International oversees the development of a Bible translation; and academic researchers spearhead the compilation of a Ruruuli/Lunyala-English dictionary. As stated by UNESCO (2003):

The linguistic ideology of a state may inspire linguistic minorities to mobilise their populations towards the maintenance of their languages, or may force them to abandon them. These linguistic attitudes can be a powerful force both for promotion and loss of their languages.

Thus, the failure of the government to support the development of Ruruuli-Lunyala explains in part its current state of endangerment.

4.2 The availability of an orthography and quality literature

It is not impossible for a language to be robust without an orthography or quality literature (see Eberhard et al. 2023). This lack has for years impeded the use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in formal domains, such as education, the media, and courts of law, among others. The few story books which have been written by community members are written without proper orthographical

guidelines. The absence of an orthography has hampered the writing of books as well as corpus development, both of which play a role in the development of adequate vocabulary for the teaching of e.g., mathematics, biology and other subjects, including those taught in the lower primary classes. To resolve this challenge, in 2012, SIL Uganda – in close collaboration with the community – came up with a working draft of a Ruruuli-Lunyala orthography. Unfortunately, as of 2020, it has not been finalised, and therefore has not yet been passed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), that is, the government’s regulating body on matters related to instructional and learning materials used in education.

As mentioned earlier, Ruruuli-Lunyala is still largely oral, with very limited written literature. Apart from self-published booklets, primary school readers, and hymn books, there is no established literary tradition in this language. The absence of quality literature is one of the factors contributing to the absence of Ruruuli-Lunyala in education, as further explained in Section 4.3.1.

4.3 The use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in formal domains

The domains in which a language is used partly determine the relative degree of either vitality or endangerment. UNESCO (2003) posits that factors such as “where, with whom, and the range of topics for which a language is used directly affects whether or not it will be transmitted to the next generation”. Thus, a language is said to be safe if members of its community consider it as a symbol of their identity, using it on a daily basis in both informal and formal contexts. The following subsections discuss the extent to which Ruruuli-Lunyala is used in formal domains.

4.3.1 Ruruuli-Lunyala in education

The status of a language’s endangerment is reflected in how it is used in education. When a language is used in educational settings, it is easily transmitted to the next generation. Ruruuli-Lunyala is yet to be used in education. Although Uganda’s language in education policy (Uganda’s Amendment Act of 2005) recommends that mother tongues should be used as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 to Primary 3 and that English be taught as a subject from Primary 1 to Primary 5, Ruruuli-Lunyala has not yet successfully been applied to this model. In 2012, an attempt to introduce Ruruuli-Lunyala in schools was piloted. However, this initiative failed due to the lack of (i) teaching materials, (ii) corpus development for the standardisation of vocabulary (especially for mathematics, biology, and social studies), and (iii) qualified teachers. Consequently, Baruuli and Banyala children are taught in one of the three dominant languages (i.e., Luganda, Lusoga or Runyoro) before transitioning to English in P4. Thus, Ruruuli-Lunyala is neither taught in schools as a subject nor used as a medium of instruction under the mother tongue-based curriculum. The continued use of dominant languages in schools affects the growth and development of Ruruuli-Lunyala.

4.3.2 The use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in religious circles, entertainment industry and the market

Ruruuli-Lunyala is not used in most religious institutions and contexts. In the twelve churches and five mosques visited by the author, there was very little use of Ruruuli-Lunyala. Either Luganda or Runyoro are still used for preaching in churches and mosques, despite the initiatives

that have been undertaken to translate portions of the Bible into Ruruuli-Lunyala. Vander Wal and Vander Wal (2005:7) emphasise:

Luganda is the language of the church and the Bible in most parts of Nakasongola and Kayunga districts while Runyoro is the language of the church and the Bible for most parts of Masindi District. However, Ruruuli-Lunyala hymn books have been written and church choirs are slowly incorporating some of these hymns in some of the churches.

In relation to entertainment, most popular music, local dramas and films are in Luganda. Comedies, as well as translated or dubbed films, are also in Luganda, or occasionally Lusoga. By and large, the entertainment industry in Uganda is dominated by the use of Luganda, which serves as a lingua franca and language of wider communication in the country. Ruruuli-Lunyala as a minority language hardly features in the entertainment industry.

The observations made in the markets visited in Kayunga, Nakasongola, Masindi and Buyende districts, as well as at the landing sites on Lake Kyoga, indicate that Ruruuli-Lunyala is rarely used in businesses and day-to-day errands of the market. This observation is supported by Vander Wal and Vander Wal (2005:7), who report:

Surrounding languages and languages of wider communication are used at the market centres. Luganda, Swahili, Runyoro and Langi were all said to be market languages throughout the Ruruuli-speaking area. However, in Nakasongola and Kayunga, Luganda is more common, while Langi and Runyoro are the more common market languages in Masindi.

However, as mentioned earlier, Ruruuli-Lunyala is – especially in rural areas – still used alongside the area languages. This allows a steady bilingualism in rural communities. However, many of the youths and children who migrate to urban areas either for work or education tend to abandon the language. Sylvia Naluyulu, a journalist and speaker of Ruruuli, observes:

Quite often when the youths leave the village, they abandon their mother tongue. They still feel stigmatised to be associated with Baruuli or Banyala as their ethnic tribes. For example, I always told my schoolmates that I am a Muganda and all my official documents indicate so. In fact, a number of my friends were surprised to hear me speak Ruruuli on the radio.

(Field interview, April 2018)

4.3.3 The use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in courts of law

Ruruuli-Lunyala, like all other Uganda's indigenous languages, cannot be used by the presiding judge in courts of law (see Namyalo & Nakayiza 2014, Namyalo et al. 2017). English remains the sole language used in courts of law. However, it is the constitutional right of the accused to use Ruruuli-Lunyala to defend him- or herself if so desired. In such circumstances, an interpreter has to be hired to translate into and from English, even if the presiding judge speaks or understands Ruruuli-Lunyala or any other indigenous language spoken in Uganda. However, although this is true theoretically, there is not a single case recorded where the accused used Ruruuli-Lunyala. In an interview with the Grade-1 Magistrate in Kayunga, he explains:

Most of the accused brought in this court speak Luganda. There are a few who speak other languages, such as Kinyarwanda, Ateso, Lusoga and Runyankore among others. However, I have never presided over a court session where the accused spoke Lunyala or Ruruuli.

(Field interview, February 2018)

This shows that even those who can speak Ruruuli-Lunyala fluently choose to use one of the dominant languages in public places or formal domains.

4.3.4 The use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in the media

In the media, Ruruuli-Lunyala is hardly ever used. No television station airs in Ruruuli-Lunyala. Thus, all television programs watched in Ruruuli-Lunyala speaking area are either in Luganda or in English. Currently, there are no newspapers published in Ruruuli-Lunyala. Recently, three community FM radio stations, namely UBC Buruuri 107.0 FM, Kamuli FM, and Radio Sauti were launched. These radio stations cover the geographical areas where Ruruuli-Lunyala is mainly spoken. Nakayiza (2012:97) reports:

Another opportunity that the ‘Ruruuli-Lunyala’ language has received, which is hoped will boost the language and its use by the public, is the establishment of a radio station, UBC Buruuri 107.0 FM. The radio station aims at giving a voice to the Baruuuli, and time to broadcast using their language.

However, although these radio stations offer some content in Ruruuli-Lunyala, they predominantly air in Luganda. For example, Ruruuli-Lunyala is given only two hours on UBC Buruuri per week. In a 2018 interview, the radio manager of UBC Buruuri, described the situation in the following way:

It is difficult to air in Ruruuli-Lunyala all the time. This is because most of the people in the area speak Luganda. If we air all the programs in Ruruuli-Lunyala, it means we will hardly get people to advertise with us.

Some of the young people interviewed indicated that they switch to other stations when the Ruruuli-Lunyala weekly program starts. This is because many of them do not speak the language or prefer to listen to other programs. The program is mainly listened to by a few older individuals who (i) have radios, (ii) can speak the language, and (iii) have a positive attitude towards their language.

4.4 Intergenerational transmission of the language

Although Ruruuli-Lunyala is used by people of all ages (see Eberhard et al. 2023), few children between the age of 3 and 17 years speak Ruruuli-Lunyala. This is especially the case in urbanising centres, as well as in areas adjacent to Luganda- or Runyoro-speaking communities. In focus group discussions, teachers at Bbaale Primary School reported that most of the children in their schools cannot speak Ruruuli-Lunyala. A secondary school teacher in Kayunga observed on one occasion that he wanted to have students sing in Ruruuli-Lunyala but failed to find enough pupils who were able to sing in the language. Furthermore, I did not manage to find even ten pupils to audio-record when visiting three schools of about 2300 students in

Kayunga District. The few who can speak the language cannot openly come out because they fear to be bullied by their fellow pupils. One of the pupils interviewed said that “it doesn’t matter whether you are going to pay them or not, many Banyala students do not want to reveal their identity” (Field Interview, September 2018). He also added that “some genuinely do not speak the language because it is hardly used by their parents at home, and at school they use Luganda outside classrooms, and English during the teaching and learning sessions” (Field Interview, September 2018). Ruruuli-Lunyala is mainly spoken by elders in limited communication contexts. For example, the elders hardly use the language in marketplaces or on landing and fishing sites visited in 2017 (see Section 4.3.2). Surprisingly, during the official meetings of the Bunyala Kingdom, there was a lot of code-switching between Ruruuli-Lunyala, Luganda and English. Quite often, Luganda dominates in such meetings, even though one may have expected that, in such cultural meetings, only Ruruuli-Lunyala were to be used.

4.5 Number of Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers

According to UNESCO (2003), the number of speakers in relation to the total population of a group is a significant indicator of language vitality, where “group” may refer to the ethnic, religious, regional, or national group with which the speaker community identifies. Uganda has about forty million people (see Uganda Population Census 2014). Out of the forty million people, only 237,821 claim to be Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers. This is based on the assumption that each Muruuli or Munyala speaks Ruruuli-Lunyala. However, there is always a danger of associating speakers of a language with their ethnic identity. For example, there is an increasing population of Luganda speakers in Uganda, though not all are necessarily Baganda. In this connection, Nakayiza (2012:176) observes:

The ethnicity data is sometimes used to estimate the linguistic population, yet the two features, language and ethnicity, may not necessarily have a direct one to one relationship. This therefore means that the mentioned speakers of Ruruuli-Lunyala may not actually all be speakers of this language, and because a significant number of ethnic Baruuli-Banyala have shifted to speaking Luganda and Runyoro. The number of speakers of Ruruuli-Lunyala is likely to be much smaller than estimated.

It should be emphasised that, although there might be a higher number of people who identify themselves as Banyala or Baruuli, many of them have, as mentioned earlier, shifted to speaking Luganda, Runyoro or Lusoga.

4.6 Attitude of the Baruuli-Banyala towards their language

Although language attitudes cannot be observed directly, they can often be demonstrated through behaviour. Such behaviour includes how people treat speakers of other languages or their desire to learn that language. On the one hand, if individuals are proud to use a given language and are using it as a symbol of their identity, it may suggest a positive attitude. On the other hand, avoiding the language and feeling ashamed of speaking it may suggest that that community has a negative attitude towards its language. In relation to this, the report on Language Vitality and Endangerment by UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (UNESCO 2003:14) explains:

Members of a speech community are not usually neutral towards their own language. They may see it as essential to their community and identity, and promote it; they may use it without promoting it; they may be ashamed of it and, therefore, not promote it; or they may see it as a nuisance and actively avoid using it.

The Ruruuli-Lunyala-speaking community's attitude towards their language has for a long time been a negative one. As mentioned in Section 3, the Banyala and Baruuli's attitude towards their language was affected by the Baganda colonial policy, which made them believe that their language and culture was inferior. This mark left by colonial masters has persisted up to today, especially among the children and youths. Moreover, this negative attitude is further augmented by the fact that there is generally no market for the teaching of indigenous languages in Uganda. Students who have studied local languages find it hard to compete in the job market. This is true especially for minority languages that are not used in any formal contexts. However, as is further elaborated in Section 5, there is renewed patriotism towards the Ruruuli-Lunyala language and culture.

4.7 The use of Ruruuli-Lunyala in specialised discourses

The use of language in specialised discourses entails its ability to translate and carry on discourse about a broad range of topics in ways characteristic of industrialised, secularised, structurally differentiated, "modernised" societies (see UNESCO 2003). Terminological empowerment of languages in particular has been described as the planned extension of the lexical fund of a language to fit additional functions required (see e.g., Kiingi 1998). This is facilitated by corpus development, among other strategies, which serves as the source for vocabularies needed in different specialised discourses. Modernisation of terminology encompasses the extension of language forms and usage in science and technology to express new functions. Ruruuli-Lunyala, similar to many African languages in general and Uganda's indigenous languages in particular, is still terminologically underdeveloped. Ruruuli-Lunyala – as well as all other Uganda's indigenous languages – remains predominantly oral and still far from being used in modern discourses.

5. Community activities geared towards the revitalisation and development of Ruruuli-Lunyala

Language development, according to Lewis et al. (2015), encompasses a series of on-going planned actions that language communities undertake to ensure that they can effectively use their languages to achieve their social, cultural, political, economic, and religious goals. In the case of Ruruuli-Lunyala, the community has set up a range of initiatives geared towards their linguistic and cultural rights. Though many of the Baruuli and Banyala were successfully assimilated into the Buganda Kingdom and adopted Ganda ways of living, as discussed in Section 2, Kato (2017:6) highlights that "there is a small group of the Baruuli and Banyala who refused to denounce the Ruuli and Nyala culture and norms regardless of whether they remained in Buganda, Bunyoro, Busoga, Buruuli, Bunyala, Lango or Teso". These diehards maintained their names and continued to speak Ruruuli-Lunyala in their homes. They also continued following the traditional way of naming their children and loyally followed their clans and maintained their totems. It is this group that continues fighting quietly. Their first achievement was the inclusion of the Banyala and Baruuli in the 1995 constitution as an independent ethnic group in Uganda. From the 1900 Buganda Agreement until 1965, the Baruuli and Banyala were

assumed to be part of the Baganda and thus did not appear as an independent indigenous community in the 1965 Uganda constitution. In 1995, when Uganda's constitution was revised, both the Banyala and Baruuli were entered as independent ethnic groups for the first time in the history of Uganda. Mwogezi (2004:117) adds:

The Baruuli took advantage of new developments to also seek for a district status. A common feature of the new districts was that they were mostly composed of minority tribes that were being marginalised by the larger majorities. Hence the minorities sought administrative powers to enable them to cater for their special interests.

This demand was granted in 1997. Later, other areas with high populations of Baruuli and Banyala were also given district status, including the present-day districts of Kiryandongo, Nakasongola, Kayunga, and Buyende. The Banyala and Baruuli in these areas used this new administrative opportunity to secede from the Buganda Kingdom.

Another important development has been the establishment of Baruuli/Banyala Cultural Trust in 2002. This trust has worked hand in hand with the community to ensure that Kinyala and Kiruuli culture is revived. The first achievement of Baruuli/Banyala Cultural Trust was the enthronement of the kings, known as *Isabaruuli* for the Buruuli Kingdom and *Isabanyala* for the Banyala Kingdom.⁵ Mwogezi Butamanya was crowned king of the Buruuli on 10 December 2004, followed by Nathan Ngasaki Mpagi on 23 July 2006 for the Banyala Kingdom. The installation of these kingdoms was not well received by the Buganda Kingdom, which continued to claim that these two kingdoms were not constitutional. On Thursday, 10 September 2009, the *Kabaka* ("king") of Buganda was denied a visit to the Bugerere County (present day Kayunga district) by the Banyala. This not only left the Baganda offended, but also resulted in the death of ten people (see Nakayiza 2013). Despite this, the Banyala and Baruuli did not stop fighting for their cultural rights. Consequently, the prolonged conflict led to the signing of an agreement with Buganda in 2013, in which the *Kabaka* of Buganda agreed to respect the Baruuli on the one hand, and Banyala on the other, as distinct ethnic groups and to cede all ownership of land on which all former Buganda County and sub-county administrative centres are located. However, this agreement has not been fully implemented. Until now, the Buganda Kingdom still uses these administrative centres.

In the fight to revitalise their language, a Ruruuli-Lunyala language board was founded in 2005. This board is responsible for overseeing the revitalisation of Ruruuli-Lunyala. SIL International, working together with the Ruruuli-Lunyala language board, came up with a trial orthography. However, as mentioned in Section 4.2, it is yet to be finalised. In addition, the Seed Company through the Luke Partnership has trained some Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers in literacy and basic translation skills. Using these skills, they are now translating portions of the Bible into Ruruuli-Lunyala and writing Bible story books for children in their mother tongue. A Ruruuli-Lunyala dictionary has been compiled along with a grammatical sketch (see

⁵ Like other kingdoms such as Buganda and Busoga, the established cultural institutions have no political powers. The cultural leader according to the Traditional or Cultural leaders Act of (2011), the sole objectives of these leaders are: (i) Promote and preserve the cultural values, norms and practice which enhance the dignity and well-being of the people where he or she is recognised as such; and (ii) Promote the development, preservation and enrichment of all the people in the community where he or she is recognised as such.

Namyalo et al. 2021). In the course of the dictionary project⁶, close to fifty community members have been trained in literacy, translation skills, lexicographic techniques, and computer literacy. To further promote research on and in Ruruuli-Lunyala, a research centre known as Bugema Ruruuli Research Centre was established in 2001. Through this research centre, community members have written and self-published books on Ruruuli-Lunyala proverbs, idioms, folktales, history, culture, songs, as well as hymn books and easily readable primers. There is hope that such self-published materials will attract researchers to write quality books which can be used in education.

As mentioned in Section 4.3.3, some community radio stations have been launched in the Ruruuli-Lunyala speaking region, namely UBC Buruuli 107.0 FM, Kamuli Broadcasting, Radio in Kamuli and Radio Sauti in Kayunga, as well as three others in Kiryandongo and Masindi. These radio stations give the Baruuli and Banyala the opportunity to teach their language and culture. Although the time allocated to the Baruuli and Banyala is only about two hours per week, there is hope that this time can be used to change the attitudes of the younger generation who have grown up neither speaking the language nor practising their culture. In fact, the attitude towards Ruruuli-Lunyala is improving, especially among the older generation. Kato (2017) reports that the Baruuli-Banyala identity and self-esteem are slowly being restored. The Baruuli and Banyala are constitutionally recognised as an ethnic group; thus, Ruruuli-Lunyala speakers are now free to use their language and are protected by the Constitution of Uganda (see The Constitution of Uganda 1996).

The Government of Uganda has set up a program to pay off all absentee and present landlords so that the Baruuli and Banyala can acquire land titles and regain the right to use the land for economic gains. The Government of Uganda has helped these two communities to re-acquire the land which they lost to Buganda in the 1900 Buganda Agreement. Although this has helped some of the community members, many Banyala and Baruuli remain without land. The few who have gotten land from the government end up selling it off to new developers due to financial need. Kayunga district has also been engulfed in endless conflicts related to land grabbing, allegedly by government officials. These internal conflicts continue to negatively impact on the steady growth of both kingdoms.

6. Conclusions

Based on the discussions in Sections 2 and 3, it is maintained that Ruruuli-Lunyala is an endangered language with status 7-Shifting. This is based on the observation that the use of Ruruuli-Lunyala is questionably diminishing mostly among the younger generation, which find themselves using Luganda, Runyoro or Lusoga because of social and economic advantages. Research shows that most of the Banyala and the Baruuli of the childbearing ages, especially in urbanising centres and the larger language communities, either cannot speak the language fluently or cannot speak it at all. With increased intermarriages, migration of the youths and children for work and furthering their studies, intergenerational transmission of the language has been and will continuously be curtailed. Although there are community-supported efforts to revitalise the language, its survival will depend on the market value of the indigenous languages in general and of Ruruuli-Lunyala in particular. The attitude of the younger

⁶ A comprehensive bilingual Luruuli/Lunyara-English talking dictionary with a basic descriptive grammar for language revitalisation and enhancement of mother-tongue based education.

generation towards their language in conjunction with the government's commitment to develop the language, among other factors, are crucial in reviving Ruruuli-Lunyala in Uganda.

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