



MAKERERE

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**EXAMINING ANKOLE TOPONYMS: ETYMOLOGY, EVALUATIVE
MORPHOSEMANTICS AND EVOLUTION**

BY

LEONARD BIKORWOMUHANGI

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Examining Ankole toponyms: Etymology, Evaluative morphosemantics and Evolution” is my original work and has never been presented to any academic institution for any award.

Signature  Date 13/05/2026

Name LEONARD BIKORWOMUHANGI

APPROVAL

This dissertation has been submitted with the approval of the following supervisors:

Signature: *Asiimwe* Date: *13/05/2026*

Allen Asiimwe (PhD)

Signature: *Gumoshabe* Date: *13/05/2026*

Gilbert Gumoshabe (PhD)

DEDICATION

To my parents, Tumwebaze Julius & Ashabahebwa Agripina, whose unwavering example taught me values of hard work and perseverance. And to my siblings and all who have offered support during my graduate studies, I drew strength from your words of encouragement and a reminder to work diligently toward the aspirations I hold in life.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AUG	Augment
NCP	Noun Class Prefix
ANO	Anonymous

ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on examining Ankole toponyms particularly their origin, evaluative morphosemantics and their evolution. Although evaluative morphology has been largely studied as an independent linguistic feature, this research examined it within a context of toponymic formation of Ankole. The aim of the study was to show how language is crucial in shaping people's perspectives in the formation of Ankole toponyms. The specific objectives of this study were; i) to explore the etymology of the selected Ankole toponyms; ii) to investigate the role of evaluative markers in the selected Ankole toponyms; iii) to examine the changes in selected Ankole toponyms. In this study, I used a qualitative approach involving data collection methods of interviewing, text analysis and note taking. I used the thematic based triangulation approach; the findings were cross referenced for validity and reliability. Out of 26 toponyms available in my designated scope, 15 toponyms were purposively selected for analysis. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, it attested to the radial models of the broad Cognitive Semantics Theory and Social Cultural Dynamic Theory. The two cognitive semantic approaches, namely, Radial Model Category of Diminutive by Jurafsky (1996) and Radial Model of Augmentative by Prieto (2005), were adopted to establish the semantic extensions in the evaluative morphological markers in Ankole toponyms. Likewise, the social cultural dynamic theory also guided in explaining how historical experience, cultural values, community perception influence naming, reinterpretation and the continued use of Ankole toponyms. The findings reveal that beyond encoding quantitative attributes of size, intensity or magnitude, these evaluative markers convey emotional attitudes associated with a place in Ankole society. The findings further provide evidence that Ankole place names can be traced back to a variety of sources, including the environment, the economic activities of Ankole people, the systems of governance used in Ankole society, and the spiritual and mythological traditions of Ankole society. Furthermore, the findings from this study indicate that due to changes in the environment, sacred reinterpretation or recasting, migration, urbanization and socio-economic developments over different periods of time, the names and meanings given to Ankole toponyms shift and develop through these various processes and events. The study contributes to the broad field of onomastics by showing how evaluative markers embedded in the structure of toponyms can encode people's judgements toward a place name. The study however recommends a comparative study on evaluative morphology involving toponyms from languages closely related to Runyankore like Runyoro-Rutooro, Lusoga and Luganda to see whether they share some features.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Etymology refers to the study of origins of words or names (Lieberman, 2009). According to Kuliomina (2023), evaluative morphological markers are linguistic elements such as prefixes, descriptive roots, and metaphors that explain the positive and negative judgement of an entity. These evaluations range from size to other connotations of beauty, fertility, danger, fondness, importance, and others (Pansonnet, 2018). Evolution refers to the historical change of an entity overtime (Rizzolo et al., 2009). This study examines how culture and language interrelate to form toponyms in the Ankole subregion of southwestern Uganda. Onomastics is the study of names, incorporating their origins, meanings, and how they are used (Hough, 2016). As an interdisciplinary field, it bridges linguistics, anthropology, history, geography, and other subjects. Within the onomastics field, several subfields exist, namely, anthroponymy, which refers to the study of personal names together with their social linguistic practices, and zoonymy which deals with the study of names of animals, focusing on how animals are named in different cultures and the scientific names that are used. Onomastics also includes ethnonymy, which is concerned with the study of ethnic groups' names. Phytonymy is another subfield under onomastics, and it is concerned with the study of names of different plants and their scientific classification (Vakhobova et al., 2023). According to Leidner (2008), toponyms, or place names, are words that are used to refer to a geographical location. Ankole society, originating from the historic Nkore Kingdom, has a cultural and linguistic relationship with the neighbouring Kiga society. The two communities have two mutually intelligible languages, Runyankore and Rukiga, with 94% lexical similarity (Asiimwe, 2024). Due to this, the two regions speak a language cluster called Runyankore-Rukiga marked by codes JE13 and JE14, respectively, as indicated in Maho's (2009) New Updated Guthrie's List (NUGL). Both Nkore and Kiga are culturally rooted in both agrarian and pastoral tradition, both with strong kinship systems, clan-based societal structures, cultural customs such as naming beliefs, oral traditions, and rituals associated with land and ancestors (Oberg, 1938). These cultural aspects that they both share heavily, influence how names are given and how places are remembered, thus forming connections between language and culture, which is a central focus of this study.

This study investigated the motives of evaluative markers, which played a vital role in the formation of toponyms in the Ankole subregion with an emphasis on how they reflect people's perspectives, shared history, and their changing patterns. By examining how language and

culture combine in toponym formation, the study unveils unique linguistic structures, underlying cultural logics, and historical narratives.

In the proceeding section of background, I discuss the broad field of onomastics and briefly indicate studies conducted on the evaluative morphology. The purpose of this section is to contextualise the current study.

1.2 Background

According to Abdikhalikovna (2020), the study of toponyms largely investigates their heritages, meanings, linguistic constructions, and cultural significance. Reszegi (2020) asserts that toponyms frequently embody vivid significances originating from geographical features, historical occurrences, or cultural customs. Additionally, as Cacciafoco & Cavallaro (2023) observe, toponyms convey profound implications, shaping and reflecting identity beyond mere geographic, historic, and cultural identification.

Various studies in the field of onomastics have been carried out, ranging from social linguistics, morphosemantics, historical linguistics, pragmatics, and discourse-based studies. These studies portray an interdisciplinary nature of the field of onomastics. The field of sociolinguistic studies shows how the language relates to the society, investigating how factors like social class and gender, among others, influence language use. Woudhuizen (2020) posits that an ancient Indo-European language layer, the Old Indo-European layer, can be traced along the northern Mediterranean coasts using ancient place names, river names, and ancient names for ethnic groups. Using approximately 26 Proto-Indo-European roots, he demonstrates works that show identifiable patterns: i.e., river names ending in *-apa* ‘water’; place names ending in *-st-*; and ethnonyms, or names for ethnic groups that preserve an original *p-*.

According to Woudhuizen, these identifiable linguistic patterns demonstrate that the area of the original Indo-European settlement can be traced from Iberia all the way through the Adriatic and to Anatolia in approximately 3100 BC. Additionally, pragmatics and discourse-based studies analyse how names are used in the communication process (Dijk, 2010). All these diverse approaches demonstrate that the study of names is not merely about labelling, but a pivot to conceptualising language in its socio-cultural, and historical dimensions.

Crljenko (2020) provides a comprehensive context for the sociolinguistic analysis of toponyms in Croatia. She highlights the rich cultural, historical, and spatial information embedded in the geographical names of Croatia. Her findings reveal that while toponyms are rich in historical, cultural, and linguistic information, they have been long under-utilised in Croatian

geographical research. Toponyms were historically treated primarily for their practical function, like in communicating mainly in cartographic and educational contexts. However, this narrative has since changed over the past decades, where geographers have increasingly recognised the deeper interpretative ability of the study of toponyms as sources of information that reflect the social, political, and cultural nuances of Croatian communities. In a similar vein, Rusu (2021) offers significant insights for a morpho-semantic analysis of toponyms through his comprehensive assessment of street naming conventions in Romania. His work discusses the semantic diversity of street names, investigating their role as “city-texts” that convey layered meanings tied to history, identity, and power.

In the African context, studies on the morphosemantics of place names have been carried out to show how morphological markers shape the meaning of toponyms. Mandillah (2022) illustrates several morphological processes that are essential in the creation of Luhya place names in Bungoma County, Kenya. The initial process observed is the use of the locative prefix *e-*, which is used to indicate a place or location by attaching it to the root name such as ‘*e-mabanga* - Emabanga’. The second process is the use of the possessive prefix *wa-*, which signifies possession or affiliation with a person, as in the toponym *wa-dina* – Wadina. She also argues that compounding is a common strategy in the formation of Luhya place names, where words from different lexical classes are combined to create metaphorical names for places. For example, Emakina Masilu (*e- + makina + masilu*) which means ‘A place with stupid stones,’ blends a noun and an adjective. This illustration shows how morphological operations play a significant role not only in the formation of place names but also in determining their evolution and meaning.

The colonial influence has affected local naming in Uganda (Kirumira & Musinguzi, 2023). Historically, naming practices resulted from people’s languages and their oral histories. This includes myths and folklore, which serve as symbols of heritage and identity. However, with the influence of the European colonial masters, indigenous place names of interest were substituted with colonial names. For example, Lake Nalubaale was renamed Lake Victoria, and Omugga Kiyira as *River Nile* by John Hanning Speke in 1858. Lake Mwitanzigye was also renamed to Lake Albert by Samuel Baker in 1864 and others (Kirumira & Musinguzi, 2023). These and other shifts represent a significant trend in erasing the indigenous names and the naming practices, satisfying the interests of the colonial masters (Williamson, 2023). On February 27th 2025, Justice Musa Ssekaana ruled in favour of petitioner John Ssempebwa’s case of renaming all the colonial-era names in Uganda (NTV, March 2025). This ruling aligns

with the Makubuya's petition, whose view was to have all indigenous names together with the naming practices restored and contextualised.

A preliminary study of a few Ankole toponyms indicates that toponyms possess an internal structure, exhibiting culturally nuanced meanings. For example, the toponym Kabingo (*ka-bingo*) is derived from the noun 'orubingo' (*o-ru-bingo*) which means 'elephant grass'. This name undergoes morphological transformations involving important morphological processes, which include the loss of the augment *o-* as well as changing a noun class, which modifies both the name's composition and meaning. In addition, the rules of evaluative morphology work well not only in proper names, adjectives, or objects but also in place names (Calvo, 2022). According to Calvo (2022), evaluative morphology is a branch of morphology that studies how words are formed to express subjective evaluations whose meanings reflect cultural attitudes through subtle evaluative markers. ¹Evaluative markers as reported in Borkowska and Kleparski (2007) often serve to express amelioration or pejoration. Borkowska and Kleparski (2007) state that amelioration is interpreted as a positive evaluation often expressed through familiarity, sympathy, or endearment, while pejoration accounts for negative evaluations, which range from contempt to disapproval. Each of these evaluative expressions transgresses culture to reveal an aversion to particular behaviors in places (Calvo, 2022).

The cultural dimensions of Ankole toponyms are anticipated to offer a means to reflect these worldviews with evaluative morphology. Based on the morphological structure of the place name Kabingo with the diminutive *ka-* marker, the study is envisioned to uncover the frequently used positive evaluative markers and their cultural meanings in the context of the Ankole culture. In addition, the study uncovers the negative evaluative markers used in the toponyms of Ankole and their cultural meanings. During the preliminary study, it was evident that most Ankole toponyms bear these evaluative markers, which should be rigorously studied.

By systematically documenting how evaluative morphological markers shape the perception and identity of toponyms, etymology and changes in toponyms of Ankole, the study provides cultural and linguistic archives that are essential for understanding place names and for future scholarship.

¹ See Ndoleriire (2020: page 46) for the table on noun classes in Runyankore-Rukiga.

1.3 Research Problem

Toponyms are not only symbols of cultural heritage but also depict the linguistic structure of a given language. The motives of these linguistic elements, particularly evaluative markers, extend beyond denotation. Likewise, toponyms evolve. There is a potential risk that the historical and cultural knowledge embedded in them may be lost. These losses have effects, such as the loss of indigenous identity, the weakening of the transfer of cultural knowledge from one generation to the next, and the loss of understanding of how language reflects societal values and perceptions of a place. Aware of this, the purpose of the study was to explore etymology of Ankole place names, investigate the role of evaluative markers in their structure and examining changes they have experienced. This study supports the efforts in cultural preservation, linguistic documentation, and education for the benefit of future generations.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General objective

To examine etymology, evaluative markers and the evolution of Ankole toponyms within their social cultural context.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To explore the etymology of meanings embedded in selected toponyms in Ankole.
- ii. To investigate the role of evaluative markers in selected toponyms in Ankole.
- iii. To examine the changes in selected Ankole toponyms.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the etymology of the meanings embedded in toponyms in Ankole?
- ii. What is the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms?
- iii. How have toponyms in Ankole changed over time?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is envisioned to contribute to the understanding of linguistic, cultural, and historical dynamics of the Ankole culture as depicted in toponyms. From the examination of the morphological structure of place names, the study aims to uncover how evaluative morphological markers are used in shaping meaning, which will enable an understanding of the language system of the Ankole people. Besides, the study could unveil the processes of creating toponyms in Ankole region, which contributes to the broader discipline of linguistics by documenting and analysing indigenous naming practices. Furthermore, exploring how place names in Ankole have evolved is an indicator of sociopolitical developments and language evolution. Ultimately, this study is a valuable resource for linguists, historians, anthropologists,

teachers, and cultural preservationists seeking to study and conserve the area's linguistic heritage.

1.7 Justification of the study

Toponyms often reflect the dynamic relationship between identity, language, and culture, serving as linguistic markers that capture the historical experience, environmental context, and cultural background of people who name them. Ankole toponyms are not just labels but embed long established meanings of shared memory and socio-cultural values passed on from one generation to another. Knowing that compels a motive to analyse toponyms, focusing on internal structure, etymological background, and changes toponyms have undergone over time. While significant, most of these place names have not been rigorously studied within a linguistic framework, especially from a morphological perspective. Lack of comprehensive research on the evaluative markers in place names, also provides me a basis to examine how such features represent local realities and worldviews. This study is therefore justified not only as a scholarly exercise but also as a useful contribution to the documentation and preservation of the Ankole linguistic and cultural setting.

1.8 Theoretical framework

In order to trace the etymological background, the evaluative morphological markers and the changes that have taken place in place naming in Ankole, this study employed two theories: the Radial Category Models of Jurafsky (1996) and Prieto (2005) under the broad cognitive semantic theory by Fillmore (1988) and the social cultural dynamics theory by Pitirim A. Sorokin (1937).

Sorokin's theory posits that sociocultural phenomena change as a result of outside pressures. Buried in the long-term culture are transformations that are plainly evident in language, especially the meanings specific to place names (Roymans, 1995). With respect to objective one, which seeks to trace the origin of the meanings in place names, Sorokin's theory enables the discussion of conditions in naming reflecting the dominant world view, values, or social conditions at the time places were named. In the time of an ideational worldview, place names often offer more sacred meaning, revealing spiritual beliefs of reality (Geertz, 1957). If naming was more coincidental to sensate worldview, where economic and contextual meanings were more prevalent, naming would align more coincidentally to a materialist view of the world. These distinctions help document why a name not only originated linguistically but was created in a cultural sense (Allerton, 1987).

In investigating the role evaluative markers in Ankole, it was informed by the radial category models discussed by Jurafsky (1996) and Prieto (2005). Jurafsky's radial model on diminutives demonstrates that diminutive forms are not just indications of size; they expand both metaphorically and metonymically to convey a variety of meanings. The differing layers of meaning, or values, highlight the different meanings speakers intend when using overlapping diminutive forms, and the meanings radiate from one core prototype meaning (i.e., "small") to more peripheral meanings through cognitive processes. Similarly, Prieto's radial model for augmentatives illustrates how augmentative forms, which typically associate with largeness of concept meaning, have evolved semantically to refer to a saturated sense of excess, exaggeration, or admiration acutely coloured by the relevant social and cultural contexts. In their respective ways, Jurafsky's and Prieto's cognitive models were both adopted in this study to show how the evaluative morphological markers extend beyond grammatical function to carry meanings relevant to the society's socio-cultural setting.

Regarding examining the mechanisms of toponymic change in Ankole toponyms, Sorokin's theory directly lends itself to looking at how toponyms change as a form of social change through a framework of progress, decline, or simply evolution. For Sorokin, the evolution of toponyms can be regulated by tenets that reveal the facets of historical forces and the patterned changes within toponym evolution. For example, on one hand, externalistic changes in toponyms could be introduced through the effects of colonialism or inter-ethnic contact, which either change existing toponyms or insert new toponyms (Giraut, 2022). The mechanistic changes, on the other hand, relates to toponym evolution through culturally patterned processes, like phonetic simplification like in toponym abbreviation, semantic shifting, for example, when a new meaning displaces an old meaning; and cultural reinterpretations of consensus, typecasting or local legacies (Li et al., 2025). In both externalistic change and mechanistic change, Sorokin provides a framework that considers the variations of toponyms through their evolution, not simply as signs or labels out of context, but to understand toponyms as cultural artifacts that evolve in structure and value alongside the ever-evolving society with which they are affiliated.

1.9 Scope of the study

The study was conducted in Western Uganda specifically in the Ankole sub-region with a geographical focus of Bushenyi District within Kizinda town council. The sample size of 26 place names from Kizinda Town Council were considered for analysis. The content scope focused on places containing evaluative markers (diminutives and augmentatives) in their structure. The study explored their etymology, evaluative morphosemantics and how they have evolved overtime. The study tested two theories that is the Radial Models on Diminutives and Augmentatives by Jurafsky 1996 and Prieto 2005 and the Social Cultural Dynamic theory by Sorokin 1937-194. The two theories provided a framework for understanding how meanings of place names are cognitively structured, culturally interpreted, and socially transformed across time. The time scope covered place names which were in use from the 19th century to 21st century.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of literature on the sociolinguistic nature of toponyms in different contexts. This review focuses on three areas of analysis that relate to; exploring the etymology of the selected toponyms in Ankole, investigating the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms and examining how toponyms have changed in Ankole.

2.2 The etymology of meanings embedded in toponyms

This section aims to explore the etymological roots of toponyms, focusing on how their original meanings reflect cultural, historical, and linguistic influences embedded in toponyms.

Blažek (2010) focuses on the etymological analysis of toponyms from Ptolemy's Description of Central Europe, which demonstrates the agency of ethnicity and culture in the construction of place names. Blažek traced the toponyms through multiple linguistic layers that began with what he labeled the "old European" layer associated with pre-Celtic Indo-European hydronyms and included evolution through Celtic phases and ultimately Germanic influences. The most revealing examples, such as 'Boiohaimon' and 'Albis' show how the ancient naming practice revealed linguistic legacy embodying adherent socio-political realities. Some other studies, especially in northern Tajikistan particularly in the Sughd region, emphasise that the internal structure of most toponyms have been neglected. This shows a disparity in understanding the etymology of the toponyms in the area. Blažek resolves this disparity by explicitly giving a folk explanation of major toponyms like *Patar*, *Kalpasa* and others. This study analysed Ankole toponyms by giving their evidenced explanation of their origin.

Garcia-Quera (2025) suggested a different methodology, arguing that the nineteenth-century methods have weak phases in their procedures in research. Instead of starting with the language of origin and tracing its development through the modern language context, Garcia-Quera unpacked what these toponyms referred to originally by taking a cognitive-geographical stance. By utilizing corpus methods and principles, they then developed a corpus of 464 toponyms of Pyrenean settlements, which included 180 opaque toponyms. These toponyms had place name attestations in medieval documents, which could be closely referenced. Garcia-Quera (2025) explored those opaque place names while taking a close and critical analysis of their segments. She identified 1179 and from each of the segments, they analysed the geographical variables of the segments such as identifying 133 landscape elements. The statistical analysis generated

systematic relationships between the segments and landscape features. It also led to a reconstruction of five prototypical ancient cognates with some narratives similar to notions of ‘something that is cut’, ‘does not move’, or ‘is on top’. These findings suggest that opaque place names in Europe, often considered linguistic remnants that have fossilized over time because of their temporal stability, may contain fragments of cognates that preserve ancient origins from a common ancient language, possibly Proto-Indo-European. Garcia-Quera (2025) proposed and exemplified a cognitive-geographical approach to toponymy that can shed light on the linguistic deep past and possible cultural formations that traditional etymological methodologies cannot reach. Although Garcia-Quera (2025) uses the cognitive-geographical framework, the framework does not explain how social agents of power, relations, identity and others shape the creation of Pyrenean place names. In establishing the etymology of Ankole place names, this difference was accounted for through the use of the social cultural dynamic theory.

David and Glogarová (2022) argue that when reviewing the rationale for newly worn municipal coats of arms, a wealth of folk etymologies of place names often is revealed. David and Glogarová (2022) observe that these are usually drawn from their local folklore. Such justifications illustrate how unscientific interpretations of toponyms become visually materialised in heraldries. For example, the coat of arms for Doubice represents a broken oak branch, which alludes to a local legend involving three knights who sheltered from a storm under a broken branch of a virgin oak. Similarly, various folk references associated with beavers, giants, or ancient settlers were taken into account for the coat of arms for Bobruvka, which was then portrayed in heraldries. These examples show how heraldic design often tells cultural stories and helps build memory and identity.

Moscal (2016) investigates where the toponym Dorna originates from and how it has linguistically developed, noting that Dorna relates to several places in Romania. Moscal (2016) argues that Dorna is a prime example of how diverse layers of language can interact with one another, in this case Latin, Slavic, and possibly Albanian/pre-Roman substrates, and that the Dorna toponym has a history steeped in linguistic relativity. Through the comparative-historical method and etymological research, the researcher hypothesises that the word could be traced back to the common characteristics of a palace. For example, *urna* ‘water vessel’, Albanian *durrë* ‘flow’, and Slavic *dorŭna* ‘valley’ or ‘watercourse’ with the origins of the name reflecting both hydronymic (waterway-related). Similarly, Moscal (2016) illustrates how the recurring name Dorna in toponyms denoting Vatra Dornei, Dorna Candrenilor, and Dorna

Arini indicates that people have historically inhabited landscapes and villages in the region because of the proximity to water. This study addressed connotations behind the linguistic markers in the place names of Ankole.

Furthermore, Абишева et al. (2025) investigated how ancient Turkmen place names embody historical, linguistic, and cultural legacies of Turkic people. By using Arabic, Persian, and Chinese historical records, they analyzed 328 toponyms and classified many of them, such as Dargan, from darga ‘boatman’; Daukesken, ‘city beside a canal’; Daya-Khatyn, an 11th-12th century caravanserai linked to the Tahirid dynasty; and Koneurgenish, from Gurganj or Jurjaniya in modern scripts, as of Turkic origin. The authors argue that these place names depict the deep-rooted interactions among the Turkic, Iranian, Arabic, and Chinese cultures. As such, the toponyms record ancient human interactions based on migration and trade, as well as sharing linguistic connections. This study not only made a contribution to Абишева’s study but also examined toponyms in a different geographical scope of Ankole.

In addition, Kurbonov (2022) collected evidence regarding the evolution of toponyms across languages, such as Persian, Sanskrit, and Chinese. While considering previous literature on this subject from Uzbek and Russian academics, he dismisses folk allegations asserting that Fergana derives from the Persian words *pari* ‘fairy’ and *khona* ‘house’. Instead, he provides evidence that Fergana is of Sanskrit origin, specifically *brhat-ghata*, which translates to ‘great pot’ or ‘great vat,’ a metaphor for describing the valley's bowl-like landscape forming a setting that is enveloped by nearby mountains and expansive plateaus. The article also interprets the ancient recorded account of the Chinese name Day-Yuan (大苑) as translating to ‘great bowl’ or ‘great plain encircled by mountains,’ consistent with the same visual imagery. In his conclusion, Kurbonov states that both toponyms, Fergana and Dawan, describe the shared geography of the valley region and share the common conceptual meaning of ‘a great bowl,’ signifying the landscape topography and acknowledgment of history's cultural-linguistic connections of Central Asia and Chinese. This is not different from the Ankole toponyms; for example, the place name Kashaka was as a result of many grasslands (ebishaka) in place. This supports the idea that the topographical landscape of a locality significantly shapes place names. By examining the Ankole toponyms, this study discovered the etymology of place names from the evaluative perspective.

Cacciafoco (2019) investigated the etymological origins of three Italian place-names, that is, Vinchio (Piedmont), Laignueglia, and Lingueglietta (Liguria) with an aim of reconstructing

some of the linguistic transitions during the pre-Indo-European and Indo-European periods. His study adopted a comparative approach and engaged both Indo-European and earlier possible substrates for the analysis. He ascertained that *Laigueglia* derives from *aquila*, the Latin word for ‘small water’, possibly reflecting the Sarosa stream that runs through the town; *Vinchio*, attested as *Viginti* and *Vincium*, appears to be related to Latin word *viginti* ‘twenty’ and may also be linked to a pre-Indo-European or Celtic **uěntā_h* which means ‘hill’ or ‘higher ground’. In addition, *Lingueglietta*, formerly *Vinguilia*, may have been derived from Celtic *U̇ndō-gu̇llīā* ‘of the white edge’ or from the same **uěnt-* root as *Vinchio*. These linguistic reconstructions demonstrate how the physical geography surrounding these towns, hills, cliffs, and waterways contributed to ancient naming practices. While Cacciafoco offers helpful information regarding the etymology of Italian place names, his work offers useful ways of understanding naming practices which informed exploration of etymology of the selected toponyms in Ankole.

Furthermore, Pál (2023) studied how geographical names (toponyms) signify land use change and cultural heritage in the village of Váraszó, Northern Hungary. He examined 16 historical and contemporary sources. These included Habsburg Military Surveys, cadastral and topographic maps, textual materials, and oral testimony. These sources came about by listing approximately 250 individual toponyms, many of which varied over time and among their sources. The variation usually represented changes in land use, such as conversion from agricultural and forestry activities to abandonment due to industrial decline and migration to urban centres. The findings aligned with three classes of toponyms, based on natural features, e.g., streams like Tarna and Hangony, or hills, like Ökör Hill, human activity like agriculture and livestock breeding. The differences and similarities were presented as an analogue map at a scale of 1:20,000 and with a digital Open Layers-based map. This map allowed the user to see the toponyms presented as searchable points with polygons. The digital map can be accessed online and maintains municipal language and cultural identity while connecting place names to the physical geography. Pál’s approach is entirely quantitative which shields the descriptive interpretation of individual names, which was essential for this study.

In addition, Ghalekhani and Doroodi (2020) examined several ancient toponyms in Shiraz, Iran, to account for words from Old and Middle Persian preserved in the local dialect, which exhibit intriguing features. Specifically, Ghalekhani and Doroodi (2020) contend that toponyms are especially resistant to change because they are part of collective memories and thus unlikely to lose old phonological and morphological features. They examine place names

using the history of documents, Persian philology, and comparative linguistics. As examples, the authors discuss toponyms like *Bâlâkaft*, *Pâyēkutâ*, *Tâq-e Ôskurû*, *Talxdâš*, *Dirâk*, *Fahandiž*, *Qalât*, *Qomšæ*, and *Katasbes*. For example, *Bâlâkaft* is likely from Middle Persian *bâlây-kat* meaning ‘upper settlement’, while *Dirâk* is derived from Middle Persian *darrak* meaning ‘valley’. In the same way, *Fahandiž*, which is the name of an ancient Sasanian fortress, is associated with *diz* ‘fort’, which may correspond to ‘*stronghold on the hill.*’ The authors further describe the etymological histories and provide explanations for these toponymic names, respectively, and as related to the history of the Shirazi dialect. In relation to this study, this is important because names in African context tend to persist in order to reflect the explanations of their meaning (Buberwa, 2012).

Tsitsagi and Kekenadze (2023) investigated etymologies of toponyms, their evolution, and their spatial contexts of German place names and the place names of Georgia in the early 19th and 20th centuries. Based on historical maps, census data, and GIS-based geodatabases, Tsitsagi and Kekenadze (2023) identified 23 German colonies, which were established in Georgia between 1817 and 1956. This study began with Marienfeld (Sartichala) and finished with Neu-Botanika (Gardabani). According to Tsitsagi and Kekenadze (2023), during the first wave of settlement, between 1817-1818, the settlers were mainly Swabians who came from the province of Württemberg, beginning their colonies such as *Katharinenfeld* ‘Bolnisi’, *Elisabethtal* ‘Asureti’, and *Alexandersdorf* ‘Tbilisi’. Many of the toponyms referred to a political or imperial relationship; for example, *Marienfeld* ‘Maria's Field’ was a reference to Empress Maria Feodorovna. Other toponyms highlighted landscape features or agriculture, and included toponyms such as *Traubenberg* ‘Grape Mountain’ and *Wiesendorf* ‘Meadow Village’. Tsitsagi and Kekenadze (2023) ‘s work revealed valuable cultural and historical insights into German place naming practices. Informed by Tsitsagi and Kekenadze (2023), this study explored the etymology of Ankole place names guided by the social cultural dynamic theory which provided a framework for understanding the origins of Ankole place names.

In African context, Oyètáté (1997) presents a linguistic and cultural investigation into the etymology of selected town names in Àkókó, a region in eastern Yorubaland. Oyètáté acknowledges that names in Yoruba culture have rich meanings and are context driven. This belief is an important assertion because names usually reflect the environmental surroundings and life events. Oyètáté distinguishes between “proper” etymology, which is grounded in phonology, morphology, and syntax, and ‘folk’ etymology, which relies more on associative reasoning than historical linguistic grounds. The author further uses both approaches to present

the social-historical, and linguistic significance of place-names in an area. According to Oyètáté (1997) many names stem from verbs or phrases, which capture collective experiences, mobility, spatiality, or unification. For example, Ajowa is derived from *a + dojo + wa* meaning ‘we came together’ reflective of the town being founded by groups coming from different hill communities; Afin, from *a fin*, which means ‘we settled,’ Akungba from *a kún gbà*, meaning ‘we burnt and cleared the land,’ symbolizing settlement involved during the preparation of land. Unlike the phonology approach, which Oyètáté’s study used, this study examined the Ankole toponyms using an evaluative morphological approach. For example, it explicitly examined the motives behind the evaluative linguistic markers.

Batoma (2006) investigates how African names, especially ethnonyms (names of ethnic groups) and toponyms (place names), contain records of culture, history, and politics. He argues that names are not simply short-hand labels; rather, they are thick texts comprising geography, language, symbolism, and socio-political circumstances. This issue is very crucial because most of the names in Ankole reflect the topography of the area. For example, the toponym Kabira reflects many forests in the locality. To illustrate this point, Batoma uses names like Mau Mau, which can act as both a name and a cry of solidarity, and as a point of reference in history. He stresses the importance of restoring original names through linguistic, historical, and cultural analysis, and presents ethnonyms and toponyms as essential tools for reconstructing African heritage.

Relatedly, Chamo (2016) studied the names of the Hausa village from the Maradi region of Niger. He found out that toponyms are tied to both physical and socio-cultural realities. Chamo (2016) posits that these names were not randomly chosen without thought; instead, they were rooted in a variety of complex structures traced from the linguistic and religious worldviews of the local Hausa communities. In the end, by categorising the names in accordance with the modes of derivation and analyzing their etymological and semantic significance, Chamo (2016) illustrates that toponyms can represent cultural texts that encode historical and socio-cultural significance. For example, Kamilu Sani *Fagge*, which was named after Kamilu Sani. Similarly, Muhammad et al. (2020) reveal that toponyms are tied to the cultural, social, environmental, and historical landscape of the Nupe ethnic community in central Nigeria. Their findings classify toponyms into five themes. They include leadership representations, environmental landforms, historical transactions, professions, and functional designations. For example, some toponyms preserve the memory of the ancestral leadership, while others

reference distinct ecological features. Some of these features are unique trees and topographic elements. Others derived from past religious practices and local professions of community.

In the communities that speak Xhosa in South Africa, the origins of place names illustrate an abiding connection with history, culture, and the environment (Moyo & Nombembe, 2022). According to the authors, several toponyms have either descriptive locatives, usually linked to a clan of people in an area, or a geographical feature. For example, village place names can be traced to the predominant clan in an area, such as EmaZizini ‘the place of the Zizi clan’, or from a geographical feature like Emaqeni ‘place of the hill’. Some toponyms also commemorate historical figures like Chief Nqakala and give rise to names like KwaNqakala ‘Chief Nqakala's place’. These toponyms act as reservoirs of historical data revealing the origins, cultural practices, and social organisation of the Xhosa people. In this study, these intricacies of etymologies of Ankole toponyms were expounded.

In his study of the sociolinguistic meaning of place names in the Ruhaya language, Buberwa (2012) argues that toponyms are not chosen randomly without a reason but are rather motivated by society. His assertion is important because the inhabitants of a place determine its name based on various factors or experiences. In his study, Buberwa shows that Ruhaya place names emerge from several sources, such as, animals e.g. *Kyenjuba* named after ‘hippopotamus’, plants e.g., *Mishasha* which also relates to ‘trees’, crops e.g., *Kyaitoke* named after ‘bananas’, and settlement habits e.g., *Buyango* ‘Bayango’ clan. Moreover, the author discovered the toponyms whose etymology lies in the past events. These include, among others *Kifamutima* named after ‘dead heart’, *Bunywambele* ‘where people drink from’, Omwizinga a place of ‘the island’, *Kyamabele* related to ‘breasts. Buberwa also notes that some toponyms have been borrowed from other languages as a result of migration and language contact. These include *Bagidadi* ‘Baghdad’ and *Kasalabani* from Swahili language. He argues that place names in the Ruhaya language summarise collective memory, identity, and worldview, illustrating that language and society are interlocked. In relation to this study, Ankole place names are believed to have origins that reflect the society. One of the objectives of this study was to investigate how the etymology of Ankole toponyms emerges cognitively and culturally.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature from both African and non-African contexts (such as, Kurbonov, 2022; Blažek, 2010; Garcia-Quera, 2025; Buberwa, 2012) demonstrate that toponyms are not arbitrary labels but are deeply embedded in etymological, cultural, and historical contexts. The literature reviewed provided a compelling argument for the importance

of interpreting indigenous place names as windows to preserving cultural identity and understanding minority communities' socio-environmental dynamics. Building on the findings of the aforementioned researchers, this study uncovered Ankole's hidden heritage by examining how its regional naming conventions mirror underlying sociocultural structures and past events.

2.3 The role of evaluative markers in toponyms

Evaluation as a morphological element deals with quantification and qualification (Garvey, 2016). Quantification is mainly about augmentation and diminution, while qualification means amelioration and pejoration. In their study of morphological processes in contemporary Greek slang, Christopoulou et al. (2022) introduce four important characteristics of augmentatives. These include expressing the intensified degree of a base word such as size, degree, duration, or spatial extent without necessarily using a traditional augmentative form. They also mention that some prefixes can be used to convey qualitative enhancement or pejoration. With regard to diminutives, Morshed (2019) describes the similarity and difference in the diminutive forms of English and Bangla. She confirms that diminutive markers appear to be related to the representation of smallness, endearment, or being familiar. Both languages utilized synthetic methods such as prefixation and suffixation and analytic processes, such as adding adjectives before nouns, i.e., 'Little Prince' in English and as with Bangla 'Khude gayak' (miniature singer), can also be an example of an analytic process. However, Bangla further displays unique processes in diminutivisation via enclitic definitives and numeral classifiers. While English often uses multi-word expressions for diminutives, Bangala includes more lexicalised forms. Kondrashova and Shustrova (2021) investigated the evaluative-characterizing role of toponyms in English language genre literature. They looked beyond geographic reference to consider the multiple meanings inherent in toponyms. For example, they included the multiple pejorative and ameliorative connotations present in romance, thriller, and detective fiction genres that typically employ toponyms as focal points for establishing time and place. The authors suggest that toponyms are more than just character references; they are linguistic and cultural markers that embed layers of meaning, which can, in turn, be used to create an emotional tone or atmosphere. Toponyms may refer to social class, for instance, Park Avenue, signifying wealth, Mount Rushmore, which signifies emotional rigidity, or serve as aesthetic exaggerations of size, distance, or quantity. The authors describe five main functions (socio-cultural, psychological, aesthetic, quantitative, and physical) that show how toponyms are attached to associations, stereotypes, and values connected with the cultural knowledge of the reader at the time. Stylistically, toponyms appear as metaphors, hyperbole, allusions, and wordplay (Kondrashova and Shustrova, 2021). They further argue that toponyms, when taken

literally, typically can only be valued for their geographic function. Drawing on these insights, this study extends the analysis by investigating the motives of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms using the cognitive semantic framework.

In the Mingrelian language in Georgia, Хобелія (2025) discusses the predominance of Georgian morphological structures in her examination of Samurzaqano toponyms. Specifically, she discusses how the derivational affixes of possession *-ish*, *-sh* and locatives *-on*, *-oni*, *-e* provide a concise way to express relationships of ownership and location. This assertion is in agreement with Mandillah (2022) who used the same parameters to examine the Luhya names in Bungoma County in Kenya. For example, the locative prefix *a-* and possessive prefix *wa-* are attached to the root word that is usually derived from a common entity in a place. Besides, according to Хобелія (2025), Abkhaz toponyms often depend on compound and synthetic structures that utilize prefixes like *a-* and such suffixes as *-ra* and *-tra*. Abkhaz toponyms that ended up being used, despite Georgians' attempts to change the names of places, most commonly utilized Georgian affixation or roots, thus creating hybrid toponyms. This process of place naming reflects the residue of a Georgian language influence in the naming of place lexicons in the territory.

Relatedly, Bichlmeier (2020) study on the morphology of Lithuanian toponyms highlights different morphological processes, such as derivation and syntactic structures, and how these processes are used in toponym formation. Bichlmeier (2020) posits that the derived forms are more common in lake names like *samana + iu = samanius* which means 'the place with moss'. The compound forms are more frequent in river names, as in the toponym Šventupė which means 'Holy River,' where *šveñtas*, 'holy,' an adjective, is combined with *ùpė* 'river' which is a noun, to form a place name. Both Хобелія and Bichlmeier did credible work in regard to identifying the morphological processes which are crucial in naming practices. They also conducted a semantic analysis of the linguistic markers expressed in place names. This study therefore added to their contribution by specifically looking at the people's cognitions that are embedded in the evaluative markers used in Ankole place names.

Katapang and Navarra (2025) studied the toponymic heritage of Dinalupihan, Bataan: Pre-Colonial Names and Indigenous Origins. According to them, toponyms not only serve as geographic indicators but also as cognitive sensors. Their argument lies in the fact that toponyms reflect the way people or communities think about, value, and relate to their surroundings. This proclamation is important because Ankole toponyms, which are a focus of

this study, demonstrate how communities reflect their values, perceptions, and relational attitudes in naming practices. In the case of the Dinalupihan, names provide an encoded representation of memory, attitudes, and perceptions toward the natural and cultural landscape. Toponyms like Layac (marshland), Pita (muddy soil), and Sapang Balas (river with sand) all demonstrate how the original settlers mentally map and evaluate their surroundings. They reflect an attitude of adaptation and attentiveness to the environment. Names like those of Rizal, Bonifacio, and Del Pilar reflect a remembrance and respect for a collective national identity and commemorative identity/values; these show that naming is a way that communities express pride, memories, and ideals. Place names tied to indigenous languages, such as community-building names like Bayan-bayanan or Ayta Ambala soil-based terms like pita (fertile soil) and balas (sandy), may suggest place location in Dinalupihan. They also act as cognitive beacons preserving traditional ecological knowledge and attitudes toward stewardship and belonging. In this study, such values, perspectives, and attitudes are accounted for through the lens of cognitive semantic theory models on diminutives and augmentatives. These models provided instruments for revealing the evaluative significance inherent in toponymic morphology.

Шустрова (2021) conducted a comparative study of the evaluative and characteristic functions of toponyms in English and Russian fictional discourse. The author argues that toponyms convey cultural and pragmatic meaning. He further argues that toponymic references do not solely identify place but also reflect emotional stances, social judgments, and cultural stereotypes. This notion counters the misconceptions held by some societies in Africa and beyond. For example, in English, Mayfair and 'a villa in the South of France' are indicative of wealth and prestige, whereas Russian toponyms like *Кабанск* or *Курск* indicate provinciality and less prestige. In justifying his stand, Шустрова identifies three evaluative functions of toponyms as located within the referential, the expressive, and the descriptive. In Russian fiction, toponyms with the referential function, such as *Москва* 'Moscow' and *провинция* 'province,' convey an internal distinction within the 'own–alien' opposition, distinguishing the capital city from the larger country, while in English discourse, contrasts such as 'This isn't Russia' or to reference *Могадिशю* (Mogadishu) carry a stereotype of restrictions or danger. The emotional states are vividly depicted through the place imagery, for example, contrasting the cold of *Воркута* (Vorkuta) with the sunniness of *Сочи* 'Sochi' and *Рио-де-Жанейро* 'Rio-de-Janeiro' to evoke happiness and excitement. This study builds on

Шустрова's work by providing a more detailed analysis of naming practice in a different geographical scope of Ankole.

Relatedly, in their study, Стрій and Сеник (2025) reviewed over one hundred connotative toponyms from the realm of common usage, youth slang, and the online environment in their study of the structural aspects of connotative toponyms in the modern Ukrainian language. They did this to demonstrate how official place names develop creative, emotionally charged replacements. Toponyms of this type may be structurally represented as one-word, compound, and phrasal, such as *Лохнеса* and *перлина біля моря* 'pearl by the sea' for Odesa or *Чорноморська Пальміра* 'Black Sea Palmyra' as a metaphor reflecting the city's beauty near the water. Productive word-formation processes include shortenings like *Крам* for *Kramatorsk*, *Херс* for *Kherson*, *Фруско* for *Ivano-Frankivsk*, abbreviations like *ЗП* for *Zaporizhzhia*, and the use of expressive suffixes, such as *-ук/ік*, *-к(а)/-івк(а)* for *Марік*, *Кремасторівка*, or *-імі Кривбасімі*. The authors illustrate how humorous and ironic names derive from linguistic play, which reflects the prestige of toponyms for places and cities in the English-speaking world, such as Rio de Janeiro or Las Vegas. However, contrary to Katapang and Navarra (2025), Стрій and Сеник's study restricts itself to only fictional texts, excluding the community-based meanings and oral interpretations. This restriction creates a need to understand how these toponyms emerge organically within indigenous communities, which this study addressed.

The Metaphorical Toponyms of present-day Vilnius County were described in a study by (Skorupa, 2025). The study was an expansion of toponymic research through the lens of cognitive metaphor theory (CMT). The author described how place names in Lithuania are representations of mind, culture, and perception. The study analyzed thirty-eight metaphorical toponyms, with sixteen being limnonyms (lake names), fourteen potamonyms (river names), and nine oikonyms (settlement names). Skorupa provides a range of conceptual models that explore how humans perceive, understand, and eventually, name their surroundings. One of the most interesting models presented is called Landscape is a Sound, in which some limnonyms, such as *Ciras*, *Vilbė*, and *Kaukysa*, represent or even mimic the chirping, babbling, or howling sounds produced by moving water. The author also describes the model, Landscape is a Container, as it relates to the names of hydronyms used to describe lakes or streams that signify bowls or basins, 'Bliūdinėlis' and 'Praustuvė.' The author further describes Landscape as a Mystical Creature as the model is linked to names like 'Laumena' and 'Velniukas' from Lithuanian folklore concerning witches and devils, which conveys mystery or fear. Other

models mentioned less often included Landscape is a tool (Vintara, Šaukščiukas), Landscape is a Body Part (Papis, Kačianagis), Landscape is a Transaction (Pirktinė, Padūmė), and Landscape is a Road (Birvėta). Skorupa uses a good theory to measure the perceptions and attitudes of toponyms in present-day Vilnius County. However, his study primarily explores the metaphorical and cognitive dimensions of toponyms. Adding to his work, this study explicitly explored evaluative markers together with their positive and negative connotations in the geographical context of Ankole.

In the context of Africa particularly in the Luhya languages, Anindo (2016) confirms that the structure of words is important in creating place names in the Lulogooli culture in Sabatia constituency in Kenya. The findings from this study indicate that Lulogooli toponyms (formed from Lulogooli language) follow distinct morphological patterns of formation, with derivation being the main method of formation, followed by inflection and compounding. Similarly, Mugyabuso (2022) affirms the relevance of evaluative morphology in understanding the formation of toponyms in the African context. In his study, Mugyabuso (2022) assesses evaluative morphology in the Ruhaya-speaking area toponyms in Tanzania, revealing that Ruhaya speakers express evaluation of their surrounding entities through place naming using augmentative and diminutive markers that carry pejorative and ameliorative connotations. Anindo and Mugyabuso's analysis of morpho-semantics in the toponyms of Kenya and Tanzania, respectively, demonstrate that African naming practices are rich in morphological patterning. This study examined the evaluative markers in Ankole, a Runyankore-speaking community.

Similarly, Masanja (2025) carried out a study on the morphosemantic and morphosyntactic analysis of place names on Zanzibar Island in Tanzania. He argues that the names of places have linguistic markers, which express something about people in relation to their environment. His analysis shows that the majority of the thirty place names in the Unguja Region emerge from roots or stems, and those meanings become incorporated into the entire word. This is to say that the construction of each place name relates specifically to its meaning. He further argues that place names were constructed using different processes. For example, the derivation process (noun + adverbial of place) such as Muembe 'mango' and ni 'at,' which makes Muembeni (at the mango). The other was a compounding process (root noun + root noun) such as Mto + Pepo to mean 'Demon + River' which makes Mto Pepo. Another one was the prepositional phrase process (preposition + proper noun) such as 'kwa' + 'Sefu' to mean 'to + Sefu,' which makes 'Kwa Sefu.' Adding to Masanja's work, objective one of this study aimed

at discovering the evaluative connotations which are embedded in the structure of Ankole place names.

Furthermore, Temba, Ligembe & Mpobela (2025) examined the socio-semantic analysis of place names in Chagga-Uru. They suggest that place names have both linguistic and cultural significance, as they represent the people's attitudes, social life, environment, and customs. The findings suggest that Chagga-Uru place names signify villages, hamlets, farms, worship sites, and water streams; all these names had meanings reflecting a combination of social, geographical, and cultural realities in Chagga-Uru place names. For instance, the village names such as *Kishumundu* 'knife sickle', *Materuni* 'in Materu clan', and *Mruwia* 'water source' illustrate how naming reflects physical features and group identity. Likewise, hamlet names such as *Kisarika* 'name of chief', *Mariocha* 'roasted bananas', and *Wasale* 'a kind of green snake' signify aspects of socially relevant behaviors and attitudes, food, and nature. Temba, Ligembe & Mpobela (2025) further observe that some names signify people and their deeds, such as *Kokinyasha* 'at home of Kinyasha', a well-known traditional healer believed to control rain; and *Kofarabu* 'at home of Farabu' a white settler's large coffee farm. Finally, place names such as *Kifuni* ('at the deaths'), and *Moromeni* 'at the fig tree' suggest a sacred or ritual space where traditions of an ancestral figure are practiced, such as ancestral worship or sacrifices which are all expressed through the linguistic markers. While drawing the above conclusions, Temba and colleagues grounded their work in referential theory of meaning and the causal theories of names. These two theories focus on the relationship between names and their referents, limiting focus on how social cultural factors influence meaning and the formation of place names. Guided instead by social cultural theory and semantic cognitive theory, this study explores how language encodes cultural values and societal values. This perspective fueled more comprehensive analysis of place names as cultural artifacts that embody social values, community worldviews, and attitudes.

Shigini (2023) demonstrates how Sukuma place names function as markers of language as well as cultural and historical identity in northwest Tanzania. Notably, however, while many other scholars emphasize that traditional African onomastics focused almost entirely on the semantic-meaning related to names, the recent research demonstrates that Sukuma toponyms exhibit a rich and diverse morphological structure. In particular, Shigini (2023) argues that most Sukuma place names consist of minimal stems or also consist of noun-class prefixes, final vowels, and even derivational morphology, demonstrating the general indicated noun-class system in Bantu languages. In their work, Shigini describes Sukuma toponyms in both simple

and complex forms. The simplest names may exhibit a bare stem, such as *Gembe* ‘mahogany tree’ or *Solwa* ‘be taken’ as in a ‘prefix + stem model’, like *Ng'wamkanga* ‘ng'wa- + -kanga’ at ‘Mkanga's place,’ where the locative prefix "ng'wa-" indicates that an ancestor originally settled in the area. Derivational nominalisation according to Shigini (2023) also occurs in Sukuma place names like *Mishepo* ‘mi- + shep- + -o," which means ‘escaping frequency’ from the verb *shepa* ‘escape’. According to Mandillah (2022), in Kenya, place names formed as a result of compounding also exist in Sukuma place names. For example, *Mawemilu* (ma- + -we ‘stones’ + milu ‘white’ refers to salient environmental features. Although Shigini (2023) uses a qualitative approach, his analysis was structural and form-based. On the contrary, this study increased the depth by interpreting the social meaning and analysing evaluative expressions portrayed in the Ankole place names.

Like any other Bantu language, Runyankore-Rukiga is an agglutinative language cluster with a noun class system (Bamutura, 2021). According to Byamugisha (2022), Runyankore-Rukiga uses noun class (NP) to mark animacy, objects, gender, evaluation, infinitives, locatives, augmentatives, diminutives and others. This is in agreement with Weiberg-Johansen and Asiimwe (2024) views on noun classification in Bantu languages generally. Table 1 below shows the noun class system in Runyankore with their semantic categories.

Table 1: Classification of Runyankore nouns into noun classes with their semantic categories

Noun class	Noun class prefix (NP)	Example noun	Grossing	Semantic domain
1	-mu-	omwojo	o-mu-ojo Aug-1-boy	people and kinship
2	-ba-	Abojo	a-ba-ojo Aug-2-boy	
3	-mu-	omukono	o-mu-kono Aug-3-kono	plants, nature, and some parts of the body.
4	-mi-	emikono	e-mi-kono ug-4-hand	
5	-i/ri-	eriisho	e-ri-isho Aug-5-eye	fruits, liquids, and some parts of the body.
6	-ma-	amaisho	a-ma-isho Aug-6-eye	
7	-ki-	ekitakuri	e-ki-takuri Aug-7-potato	inmate objects and some foods. Diminutive class
8	-bi-	ebitakuri	e-bi-takuri Aug-8-potato	
9	-n-	ente	e-n-te Aug-9-cow	animals and tools.
10	-n-	ente	e-n-te Aug-9-cow	
11	-ru-	oruhabyo	o-ru-habyo Aug-11- billhook	long and thin stringy objects, languages. Augmentative class
12	-ka-	akacumu	a-ka-cumu Aug-12-pen	instruments Diminutive class
13	-tu-	otucumu	o-tu-cumu	Plural

			Aug-13-pen	diminutives class
14	-bu-	obusingye	o-bu-singye Aug-14-peace	abstract concepts
15	-ku-	okushoma	o-ku-shom-a Aug-15-study- FV	infinitives
16	-ha-	hanu	ha-nu LOC-here	locative classes
17	-ku-	muriya	mu-riya LOC-there	
18	-mu-	kunu	ku-nu LOC-here	
19	-	-	-	-
20	-gu-	ogubwa	o-gu-bwa Aug-20-dog	Augmentative classes
21	-ga-	agabwa	a-ga-bwa Aug-21-dog	

Runyankore noun class system adapted from Katshemererwe, 2013.

The bolded noun classes in Table 1 indicate the classes that serve the evaluative function (diminutives and augmentatives) in the Runyankore noun class system and other grammatical functions.

Asiimwe (2022) recounts that personal names are grammatically structured following morphological processes. She posits that diminutives and augmentatives in the structure of personal names carry social /cultural meanings. For example, the diminutive prefix *ka-* in the personal names *Karungi* and *Kahimakazi* encodes smallness and affection which is often used in women's names. In contrast, the largeness is expressed through the names with augmentative prefixes like *ru-* in the name *Rubogo* and *ma* in the name *Magambo*. Asiimwe's (2022) study provides a morphosyntactic analysis of personal names limited to the geographical area of Kabale, a Rukiga-speaking area. The current study stretches the discussion to the analysis of evaluative markers in Ankole place names.² On the use of diminutive *ka-* in personal names,

²The name *Karungi* is derived from the adjective 'ekirungi' (something good/beautiful) by dropping the augment 'e-' and substituting the NCP *ki-* in class 7 with the class 12 diminutive

Asiimwe (2022) provides evidence regarding another interpretation of the prefix *ka-* in Rukiga personal names. She postulates that several names with *ka-* were created from associative phrase structures employing the connective *-a*, which expresses a relationship typically glossed as ‘of’. For example, *Kémigisha* means ‘child of luck’ and it is derived from the structure of *ká + e-migisha*, where the associative marker attaches to the noun, and the omission of a head noun (*akaana* means ‘child’). As such, *ka-* is considered class agreement with that omitted noun and *-a* is the marker encoding the relationship between the noun and the name; thus, the entire associative construction is lexicalized into a personal name.

From the above literature reviewed, evaluative morphology is crucial and contributes significantly to the shaping of meaning in place names. The works of scholars like (Gravelly 2016; Kondrashova and Shustrova 2021; Xydopoulos and Christopoulos, 2011) all explain how diminutives and augmentatives interpret dimensions of size, intensity, emotion or familiarity. Additionally, several researchers from the literature above have utilized a range of linguistic communities to explore how derivation, compounding and affixation of morphological processes create place names that reflect the environmental, cultural and historical significance of those locations (Хобеля, 2005; Bichlmeier, 2020; Anindo, 2016; Masanja, 2025; Temba and Shigini, 2025). Moreso, cognitive approaches were also applied in examining how communities view and assign value to their surroundings through toponyms (Skorupa, 2005, Katapang & Navarra, 2025 and Mugyabuso, 2022). However, the majority of the existing literature focused primarily on the structure of place names. This study extended the analysis by examining the role of evaluative markers in toponyms within the specific cultural and geographical locality of Ankole, with a goal of examining how speaker’s perspectives and societal values are transmitted through the evaluative markers. The next subsection will discuss the inventory of evaluative morphology in Ankole before discussing literature on toponymic changes.

marker *ka-* to indicate affection or something small in size. *Rubogo* comes from the noun ‘embogo’ (buffalo). The augmentative prefix *ru-*, (*NCP 11*) in the name *Rubogo* indicates strength due to its classification as a male buffalo. *Kahimakazi* was also created in the same way; it originally came from *omuhimakazi*, ‘a female Muhima’. The *ka-* in the name conveys affection for the person or thing named.

2.3.1 Evaluative morphology in Runyankore

According to Maho (2001), the distribution of nouns into noun classes is one of the principal features of Bantu languages. Runyankore being a Bantu language, also displays this feature. Nouns in Runyankore are distributed into 21 noun classes based on their prefixes. Their distribution is guided by three criteria, which include morphological, syntactic, and semantic (Byamugisha 2022). See Section 2.3 Table 1 for the noun class system in Runyankore and their semantic categories.

In Runyankore, evaluative meanings are expressed through evaluative markers. Evaluative markers are typically expressed in Bantu languages as noun class markers, commonly as prefixes applied to the noun stem (Di Garbo, 2013). Diminutive and augmentative are among the evaluative markers. Below is an explanation of diminutives and augmentatives in Runyankore.

Diminutives

As indicated in Section 2.3 about the noun classification in Runyankore, there are three diminutive classes in Runyankore marked by noun class prefixes *-ka-* (12), *-tu-* (13), and *-bu-* (14). Below is an explanation of diminutive classes in Runyankore.

Diminutive ka- (12)

Nouns that inherently belong to class 12 are limited in number and do not entail diminution. Most of the nouns that are prototypical members of this class refer to things that are small in size and mark their plurality in nouns class 13 and 14 (Byamugisha 2022). Rugemalira (2005) reports that a few nouns in class 12 that are not derived from other classes take their plural in class 14, and some of these nouns are names of small insects. Table 2 shows nouns that are typical members of class 12 but mark their plural in class 13 and 14.

Table 2: Inherent Nouns in Class 12 (*ka-*) with their Plural Forms in classes 13 (*tu-*) & 14 (*bu-*)

Inherent noun	Gross	Plural 14 (-bu)	Plural 13 (-tu)
Akacumu	a-ka-cumu Aug-12-pen	o-bu-cumu Aug-14-pen	o-tu-cumu Aug-13-pen
Akame	a-ka-me Aug-12-rabbit	o-bu-me Aug-14-rabbit	o-tu-me Aug-13-rabbit
Akaato	a-ka-ato Aug-12-trough	o-bu-ato Aug-14-trough	o-tu-ato Aug-13-trough
Akatare	A-ka-tare	o-bu-tare	o-tu-tare

	Aug-12-market	Aug-12-tare	Aug-13-market
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The nouns exemplified in Table 2 above cannot be diminutivized because they already contain a morphological marker *-ka-*, which entails a diminutive sense. This holds true for their plural morphological markers. This evidence, therefore, implies that class 12 entails a diminution of nouns derived from other classes. Among all evaluative prefixes, this is the most occurring prefix, as evidenced in this study, based on the collected data. Nouns from other singular noun classes mark their diminution in class 12. These singular noun classes include classes 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 15, as illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Nouns from other singular noun classes that mark their diminution in class 12

Noun class	Example noun	Gross	Diminutivised noun (Class 12)	Gross
1	omwana	o-mu-ana Aug-1-child	a-ka-ana Aug-12-child	A small child
3	omuyembe	o-mu-yembe Aug-3-mango	a-ka-yembe Aug-12-mango	A small mango
5	eibondo	e-i-bondo aug-5-stomach	a-ka-bondo Aug-12- stomach	A small stomach
9	ente	e-n-te Aug-9-cow	a-ka-te Aug-12-cow	Small cow
11	orutookye	o-ru-tookye Aug-11-banana plantation	a-ka-tookye Aug-12-banana plantation	Small banana plantation
15	okuguru	aug-15-leg o-ku-guru	aug-12-leg a-ka-guru	Small leg

Apart from the evaluation roles, class 12 also serves as a larger grammatical function in the agreement pattern and arrangement of nouns in Runyankore.

Diminutive tu- (NCP 13)

Noun class prefix *tu-* is used to diminutivise nouns from other classes (Ndoleriire, 2020). If compared to diminutive class 14 (*bu-*), diminutive class 13 (*tu-*) is more derogative than class 14 (Mugyabuso, 2022). The only inherent noun from noun class 13 is *oturo* ‘sleep’, which does not have to take a plural form (Asiimwe, 2014). Table 4 below gives some examples of nouns in other classes which can be diminutivised by NCP 13.

Table 4: Nouns in NCP 13 (tu-)

Noun class	Gross	NCP 13	Gross
1	o-mu-ana Aug-1-child	otwana	o-tu-ana Aug-13-child
3	o-mu-ti Aug-3-tree	otuti	o-tu-cumu Aug-13-pen
5	e-i-babi Aug-5-leaf	otubabi	o-tu-babi Aug-13-leaf
7	e-ki-tabo Aug-7-book	otutabo	
9	e-n-koko Aug-9-hen	otukoko	o-tu-koko Aug-13-hen
11	o-ru-ku Aug-11-firewood	otuku	o-tu-ku Aug-13-firewood
12	a-ka-me Aug-12-rabbit	otume	o-tu-me Aug-13-rabbit
14	o-bu-ro Aug-14-millet	oturo	o-tu-ro Aug-13-millet
15	o-ku-guru Aug-15-leg	otuguru	o-tu-guru Aug-13-leg

Diminutive bu- (NCP 14)

The data in Table 2 indicate that nouns that are inherent members of noun class 12 first select their plural forms in class 14 and later 13. Unlike class 13, class 14 is less derogative. This phenomenon is portrayed by the examples provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Plural Form of Diminutive NCP 12 (*ka-*) in 14 (*bu-*) and NCP 13 (*tu-*)

Class 12	Gross	Class 14	Class 13
Akame	a-ka-me Aug-12-rabbit	o-bu-me Aug-14-rabbit	O-tu-me Aug-13-rabbit
Akacumu	a-ka-cumu Aug-12-pen	o-bu-cumu Aug-14-pen	o-tu-cumu Aug-13-pen
Akaato	a-ka-ato Aug-12-trough	a-bu-ato Aug-14-trough	o-tu-ato Aug-13-trough

Augmentatives

As seen in Table 1, in Runyankore, the augmentative classes include NCP 7, 8, 11, 20 & 2 (Ndoleriire, 2020). Some nouns from different classes can be augmented by the above prefixes, a concept that will be explained going forward.

Augmentatives ki-, bi- (NCP 7/8)

In Runyankore, noun classes 7 and 8 are inherently non-augmentative classes. When nouns are moved from their original classes to 7 for singular and 8 for plural, they function augmentatively to express something as above the normal size or quality. This is illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Nouns in Augmentative classes ki-, bi- (7/8)

Noun class	Example	Gross	Class 7	Class 8	Gross
1	o-mu-ana	child	e-ki-ana		big child
2	a-ba-ana	children		e-bi-ana	big children
3	o-mu-ti	tree	e-ki-ti		big tree
4	e-mi-ti	trees		e-bi-ti	big trees
5	e-ri-isho	eyes	e-ki-isho		big eye
6	a-ma-isho	eyes		e-bi-isho	big eyes
9	e-n-te	cow	e-ki-te		big cow
10	e-n-te	cows		e-bi-te	big cows
11	o-ru-senene	grasshopper	e-ki-senene	e-bi-senene	big grasshopper(s).
12	a-ka-cumu	pen	e-ki-cumu	e-bi-cumu	big pen(s)
15	o-ku-guru	Leg	e-ki-guru	e-bi-guru	big leg(s)

The augmentative ru- (NCP 11)

Another augmentative class in Runyankore is *ru-* (NCP 11). Like augmentative *ki/bi*, class 11 is not inherently augmentative, with nouns such as *oruhabyo* ‘billhook’ *orusenene* ‘grasshopper’. Nouns from other classes may be placed in this class to mark something above the normal size or unpleasant as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Nouns in the diminutive class *ru-*

Nouns	Gross	NCP 11	Gross
o-mu-ana	child	o-ru-ana	big child
e-ki-takuri	sweet potato	o-ru-takuri	big sweet potato
e-n-konko	hen	o-ru-koko	big hen
a-ka-me	rabbit	o-ru-me	big rabbit
o-ku-guru	leg	o-ru-guru	big leg

The augmentative gu-/ga- (NCP 20/21)

In Runyankore, as seen in Table 1, classes *gu-/ga-* are inherently augmentative and are used to augment nouns from other noun classes (Ndoleriire, 2020). The augmentative *gu-* only augments entities to singular form, while *ga-* augments entities to plural forms. The two noun classes mark entities above their normal size and typically carry negative connotations. Examples are given in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Nouns in augmentative class *gu-/ga-*

Noun	Gross	NCP 20	Gross	NCP 21	Gross
o-mu-shaija	man	o-gu-shaija	big and ugly man	a-ga-shaija	Big and ugly men
e-mi-nekye	yellow bananas	o-gu-nekye	big and unpleasant yellow banana	a-ga-nekye	Big and unpleasant yellow bananas
e-ki-tekyere	Yam	o-gu-tekyere	big and unpleasant yam	a-ga-tekyere	big and unpleasant yams
e-n-buzi	Goat	o-gu-buzi	big and a bad looking goat	a-ga-buzi	Big bad looking goats
okuguru	leg	o-gu-guru	big and dirty leg	a-ga-guru	big and dirty legs

The diminutive and augmentative prefixes discussed above are the evaluative markers found in the Runyankore noun class system (See section 2.3 Table 1). Only noun classes 20 and 21 inherently express evaluation. The rest of the noun classes presented can accommodate nouns from other classes for purposes of expressing diminution (in the case of classes 12, 13, and 14) and augmentation (as shown for classes 7, 8, and 11) (Byamugisha, 2022).

As seen from the above, both diminutives and augmentatives exist in evaluative morphology of Runyankore.

2.4 Toponymic changes

This section provides literature regarding how toponyms change over time. Within this broader scholarly context, the typology proposed by Tóth (2011) provides a systematic framework for investigating how place names change. Tóth's work is based on historical onomastics and linguistics, which provide classifications of onomastic changes largely based upon Hungarian and English naming practices. In terms of the typology of changes in toponyms, Tóth identifies three general types, namely, complex changes (where change occurs in relation to meaning and form), semantic changes (where meaning shifts but form is unchanged), and morphological changes (where change happens in form with a constant meaning). Tóth articulates concepts such as 'constituents' of a name and elements of a name to methodically unpack the internal structure of toponyms and to track that change over time. For instance, an extensive probing into how complementation, ellipsis, name replacement, and extension or reduction, among other procedural trends, are examined, along with their historical context, to explain how place names have changed over centuries. The study includes a rigorous linguistic methodology that provided a strong framework for understanding the structural processes that led to toponymic change, particularly regarding socio-historical events that have affected toponyms, including invasions, migrations, and administrative reforms. Tóth offers systems for identifying and classifying change in place naming, especially with respect to lexical, morphological, and semantic changes. While Tóth's framework is rooted in Indo-European naming systems, it is mainly drawn from Hungarian and English, it also offers a systematic and linguistic approach for analysing place name transformation. Given the clarity of Tóth's concepts, it would be a compelling extension to apply them to examine the changes in Ankole toponyms.

Similarly, Buza (2011) investigated the etymological and historical development of place-names across Romania. He emphasizes that Romania is a unique case of toponymy reflecting an ethnolinguistic history that was both complex and heterogeneous. For instance, Buza studies not only how toponymic patterns reflect Romanian speakers' history but also how toponyms are used with connections to the settlement and influence of various people, some of which trace back to pre-Indo-European and many Indo-European origins (Thracian-Geto-Dacian, Latin, Greek, as well as Slavic toponyms), and others from Turkish, Hungarian, and German speakers, and more. Furthermore, Buza's analysis and findings are based on the principles of historical toponymy which shows that toponymy across Romania did not evolve in isolation of non-Romanian speakers' cultural presence. Rather, many of the toponymic evolutions are a product of incoming populations, cultural interactions, and the ethnogenesis of Romanian

people. In addition, Buza's (2011) study captures the sophistication of Romanian place-names and exposes the value of toponymy in studying the historical movements of populations, cultural engagements, and the ethnogenesis of the Romanian people. This work gives a firm foundation for investigating the historical development of the place names in different geographical contexts.

Correspondingly, Kanieva et al. (2024) note that toponyms sometimes evolve with the shifts in culture and language. They are also valuable in preserving a record of previous civilizations and encounters with other ethnicities (Woodman, 2014). According to the findings presented in Kanieva et al., (2024), these are all expressed by linguistic markers. Furthermore, the authors note the importance of protecting toponyms as intangible cultural heritage, arguing that the loss of names due to re-naming or the loss of a language can lead to erosion of collective identity and memory. While Kanieva and the rest used social economic surveys and land use spatial analysis, this study employed discourse meaning interpretation, evaluating meaning and the conceptual metaphor to explore the toponymic evolution in the context of Ankole.

In her article 'Place Name Change and GIS', Jensen (2025) explores how Geographic Information Systems (GIS) reveal patterns when toponymic changes take place. These changes are typically influenced by politics, language, and culture. She looks at examples such as Canada's renaming of Dundas Street as a means for reconciliation and how Evenki Indigenous names in the Russian Federation underwent about 30% change of names. This was due to Soviet policies, such as moving away from traditional forms to distorted forms like Gorbiachin River 'no name'. In Europe, Jensen (2025) highlights the Polish city Katowice, which was renamed Stalinogrod in 1953 and reverted back later, as well as the ongoing and contentious changing of names in Schleswig-Holstein in Germany as a result of border changes. Other narratives she covers include restored place names such as the University of Tripoli after the revolution in Libya and the change of the Marchant Glacier in Antarctica to Matataua Glacier. In his study, however, Jensen effectively employs the GIS quantitative mapping and large datasets. Building on his approach, this study examined the toponymic changes in Ankole using the qualitative approach.

Furthermore, Marin (2012) studied the toponymic changes as temporal boundary-making: Street Renaming in Leningrad/St. Petersburg. The evidence of his research has shown that renaming a place can serve as a potent political mechanism to signal distance from an unwanted past while suggesting a new identity. According to Marin (2012), in post-Soviet cities, namely

St. Petersburg, renaming developed as a process of temporal boundary-making that distinguished the Soviet time from an emergent imperial narrative. Rather than constructing new place names entirely, authorities and citizens essentially reverted to place names used prior to 1917, representing a process of ‘restitution’, not invention. Examples include renaming *Pr. 25ogo Oktyabrya* back to *Nevsky Prospekt*, *Uritskij Square* back to *Palace Square*, and *Ul. Proletkul'ta* back to *Malaya Sadovaya*. Citizens in St. Petersburg, requested change on a regular basis. However, not all Soviet place names were replaced, and both public spaces such as Ploshchad' Vosstaniya and the 1-10 Sovetskaya streets still exist, reflecting a common connection to the Soviet past and disclosing cross-cutting historical identities within the urban landscape. Marin’s study is important, especially considering her detailed examination of urban street renaming in St. Petersburg. Marin (2012)’s in-depth analysis of metropolitan renaming practices provides a firm basis for analysing toponymic changes in Ankole toponyms.

Khayitova’s (2021) study shows that toponyms usually change over time based on varying historical, cultural, and political forces. He notes that toponyms undergo three common lexical strategies. These include shortening, for example, *La Rededich*, which was shortened to *Redditch*; adding new elements for further meaning, for instance, *Hamme*, which transformed to *Holme Lacy*), or complete renaming, such as Knight’s *Enham*, which completely changed to *Enham Alamein*). Large political events like colonial expansions, wars and conflicts, and ideological disagreements usually trigger the widespread toponymic transformations. This phenomenon is portrayed by the United States' anti-German name changes, which were witnessed during World Wars I and II. For example, Berlin transformed to Marne, and Germantown to Garland. The above provide clear examples of the effects of political events on toponyms in U.S. place names. In more recent years, toponym changes were motivated by social justice movements, where changes in names were based on values, as well as commercial initiatives. For instance, *halfway*, which changed to *Half.com*, was as a result of a marketing strategy.

Furthermore, Light and Young (2017) reveal that street names serve as profound political symbols and can be preserved beyond the regimes that created them. While many studies have focused on renaming streets after a political transformation, Light and Young (2017) call attention to the survival of a named place, or a continuity of an old toponym. This argument is against the notion that place names are dynamic. Yes, they are, but in some contexts these names have remained static. Their research demonstrates that, following a change in a regime such as the collapse of socialism, many cities such as Moscow, Minsk, and Bucharest retained

street names such as Lenin Street, Red Army Street, and Vasile Roaită Street, respectively. Continuity in names after the transformation often occurred due to political ambivalence, lack of resources, and the influence of local actors who simply were unable to act as agents of change within the landscape. Only a small number of street names underwent change in post-socialist Romania. This was because there was a limited budget, and the costs of working with the existing administrative framework were delayed. The end result was that unnamed or less known streets have names like Street of the Worker following instead of changing street names like the Boulevard or an unnamed street being changed to Moghioroș Market. Likewise, even ordinary citizens act in opposition to, or with indifference toward renaming official names by habitually referring to them by names they are accustomed to using. Therefore, the residents of Bucharest and the above examples illustrate that renaming is not often total or instant; it instead reflects the coexistence of the old and the new street name choices as political goals or intentions are consolidated or reasserted, as they respond to practical or everyday conditions, and memory of the old. In light of Young and Light's (2017) extensive study, one of the aims of this study was to examine the dimension of the change of toponyms and how evaluative markers are influenced by this change.

Давид et al. (2024) carried out an investigation of geographical evaluation of the Aktobe Oblast's toponym changing and elimination dynamics from Soviet names. His study shows that many of the toponyms in this region preserve words from the Kazakh language, as well as the Russian language and even, in some isolated cases, Arabic or Persian languages, representing centuries of migration, colonisation, and cultural contact. During the Soviet period, many traditional Kazakh place names were replaced or Russified to advance the mission of constructing a Soviet identity. The contiguous villages or towns were renamed after political leaders, heroes, or ideological nomenclature. Like Uganda, in the years since Kazakhstan's independence, there has been a deliberate attempt to restore indigenous names and bring back local heritage. Examples of this effort include the renaming of Oktyabrsk to Kandyagash, and several small settlements have changed back from their Russian form to Kazakh. Place name changes are understood not only as changes in politics but also as a cultural revival and a way of focusing on national identity. Давид et al.'s (2024) study relies on the geographical evaluation, mapping, and cartographic approaches. It does not use any linguistic-based theory to study these toponymic changes. This study therefore contributes to the analysis of the changes Ankole toponyms have undergone under the guidance of social dynamic theory.

Moreover, Khotcholava-Matchavariani et al. (2023) examined the artificial manipulation of place names in Georgia to promote and consolidate Soviet ideology. Their focus was on the toponym 'Leselidze', and they traced its alterations over three periods. First from Gechripshi to Ermelovsky under the Russian Empire to commemorate a Russian bureaucrat, then to Leselidze during the Soviet period to honour a Red Army general, and finally again to Gechripshi in the post-Soviet period. Like Kanievna et al. (2024) asserted, each toponymic transformation meant something politically for each period, eliminating local memory, loyalty to imperialism, or restoring national identity. They further demonstrate how toponymic alteration was embedded in the conquest of the Caucasus, Soviet propaganda, and more recently, post-Soviet decolonisation. Kanievna et al. (2024) suggest that toponyms provide linguistic historical documents to demonstrate how political powers shape contested collective memory. Khotcholava-Matchavariani et al. (2023) provided a foundation for the study of toponymic changes and evolution.

Alas (2014) carried out research on 'The Changes in Place Names on the Northern Coast of Estonia'. Alas discusses the evolution of rural place names on the Vergi Peninsula from the 20th century to the present day, in light of changing place lifestyles by their respective environments. Of the 910 place names collected as part of his study, approximately 41% have survived, while approximately the same number have been lost. Names for villages and nature are the ones most likely to have survived, particularly hydronyms (water names), such as Lobi neem (Lobi Cape) or Neeme lõugas (Cape Backwater), because hydronyms usually reference landmarks that remain stable, no matter the landscape (they are also more likely to be remembered for longer in common memory). For example, names that reference the agricultural history of the area, like 'Oja heinamaa which means 'Oja meadow', have been lost due to the decline of farming. These have sometimes been replaced by a nominal form, such as Ojakivi mets, which is 'Oja rock forest'. Recently, new recreational names have been created, some for less meaningful places but nonetheless named as a form of common recognition between leisure users. These new names may include Diivan 'Sofa' or Vahvlikivi 'Wafer Rock' showing that the area is now significant for recreation users. Alas's (2014)'s study provided valuable archival and quantitative comparisons which illuminate patterns of toponymic changes.

Contrary to the above, Bába (2016) restricted his research to lexical topoformants in Hungarian toponyms. He identified a clear distinction between toponyms and the primary and secondary topoformants. He asserts that primary topoformants express their original geographical

meanings, such as *hegy* ‘mountain’ in *Nagy-hegy* ‘big mountain’, *falu* ‘village’ in *Újfalú* ‘new village’, and *völgy* ‘valley’ in *Nagy-völgy* ‘big valley’. He further argues that secondary toponyms obtain toponymic function through their use, even if their meaning does not literally suggest or mean a type of place. For example, the word *egyház* ‘church’ was subsequently taken up as a marker for settlements that contained churches, as in *Mákegyháza* and *Szentpéteregyháza*; *vár* (‘castle’), *monostor* ‘monastery’, and *híd* ‘bridge’ similarly developed through metonymy, as in *Koppánymonostora* and *Hédervára*. Tree names such as *cser* ‘oak’ and *bükk* ‘beech’ also become toponyms in context for forests or settlements, as with *Cser* and *Apátbükke*. His argument illustrates how the original functions of a toponym and meanings underwent dynamic shifts. For instance, the toponym *fő* ‘source’ in *Tapolcafü* referred to a water source and subsequently a settlement with proximity to water in *Szalafő* or *Gyöngyösfő*. Baba (2016) further cited comparable processes from languages such as English -bridge, -wood, -hill, or German -kirchen to suggest broader cross-linguistic patterns of lexical modification in toponymic systems. Bába’s (2016) study provides general observations on toponym formation and transformation which created a firm ground for analysing toponymic changes in Ankole.

In the same vein, Apriadsa et al. (2019) investigated a substantial loss of toponymic heritage in the northern Menoreh Mountains section of Java, Indonesia, where a contrast of Dutch colonial maps (1920-1939) to modern Indonesian topographic maps (RBI, 2000-2001) found 107 place names that have been lost from present maps. Like Light and Young (2017), Apriadsa et al. (2019) found that 87% of toponyms found in the ancient maps continue to be used by community members. These included 81 that are still acknowledged locally, 12 that have undergone changes, and 14 that lack knowledge of the names by locals. Examples of place name adaptations include G. Poerwogondo being referred to as G. Gondopuro or G. Margogondo, G. Gadjahmoengkoe renamed G. Gajahmungkur, and G. Sikrindjing is now called G. Krinjing, and some examples of the total loss are G. Boedjel, G. Bokong, K. Songgogon, and G. Tjikalan. This significant toponymic loss is attributed to a lack of surveying, updated maps using ill-informed participants in mapping, weakening of oral tradition, and changing place names over time. Although Apriadsa et al. (2019) carried out substantial work in examining the loss of toponymic heritage in the northern Menoreh Mountains section of Java, Indonesia, their work remains cartographic and archival in scope. What remains unclear is how the communities appreciate and negotiate these changes in

everyday practice. With the guidance of exploratory research design, this study investigated the change in the lived Ankole toponyms.

Yeh (2013) study shows the status of toponymy in nation-building and cultural politics in Singapore, particularly in relation to the removing and re-appropriation of place names from the 1960s and beyond. Yeh (2013) stresses that the government has renamed many colonial and ethnic toponyms as part of creating a national identity. While at the same time, ancient place names were often retained and re-appropriated in new circumstances, which preserved elements of historical memory. For example, even while colonial streets were renamed, some terms from that colonial era, especially about ethnic or neighbourhood classifications, were retained by embedding them in new toponymic contexts. This action shows a way for local residents to quietly resist any name changes made by the government, and reusing old names reflects their struggle with losing control over their cultural and spatial identity. The retention and erasure of place names serve as crucial symbols in Singapore's complex process of nation-building, conjuring local experience to national ideology, while place names can serve as a reflection of local experiences of colonialism.

Usmonova and Makhmudova (2025) studied toponyms as a linguistic unit in Uzbekistan. They emphasise that toponyms substantiate several meanings based on historical structure, morphology, and sociolinguistic elements. The authors cite several examples of described place names, including Oxford, 'a ford for oxen', and Cambridge, 'a bridge over the River Cam'. The case of Samarkand (from Persian), meaning 'Samar's city,' is an illustration of how cultural influences shape the naming of toponyms. Morphological processes of compounding and prefixation are portrayed in examples that include New York, Karakum, and Springfield. These processes convey connotations that are either positive or negative. Other semantic characterisations are descriptive, associative, possessive, and commemorative. They also address change in toponyms with examples of political and situational identifications of ownership, including Ceylon which changed to Sri Lanka, Ayers Rock to Uluru, and Stalingrad to Volgograd. The study provided different case studies of toponyms that preserve indigenous languages, including Uzbekistan, India, Canada, and South Africa. Usmonova and Makhmudova (2025) also demonstrate the layers of history included in toponym structure, including Tashkent, 'Stone City'; Bangalore, which was Bengaluru; and Pietersburg, which was Polokwane. By exploring the toponymic changes in Ankole, this study contributes to the understanding of such dimensions of toponymic change in the Ankole geographical context.

Wirasanti (2018) examines how toponyms in the Canggal Temple region of Central Java indicate the area's transformations in culture, particularly from Hindu to Islamic civilisation. By applying an eco-linguistic and structural strategy for analysis, the study investigated which toponyms originating from a Sanskrit signifier during the 8th century (Sthirangga, Kunjarakunja, Medang, and Canggal) were replaced or retained with Javanese and Arabic-influenced toponyms (Mantingan, Bobosan, Kadiluwih, Kangkungan, and Carikan). These toponyms were a result of a transformation of culture and a change in religious and sacred things associated with the place but did share the same cosmological meanings with their predecessors; sacred space on elevated terrain for gods or sacral energy remained a culturally significant marker.

Studies on post-apartheid South Africa frame toponymic changes as a reflection of broader political and social cultural transformations. Guyot and Seethal (2007) discuss the temporal aspect of place names in South Africa, with a specific focus on the changes that have taken place after the era of apartheid. Their findings reveal how toponymic evolution is often linked to political shifts and the desire to rectify aspects of the problematic past, such as colonialism and apartheid. This phenomenon is of great importance because most places change their names after political waves and events like wars. This situation was demonstrated in the Eastern Cape, where Xhosa place names have become more prevalent in municipal designations; for instance, Jan Smuts Airport became Johannesburg International Airport and later O.R. Tambo International Airport, and Louis Botha became Durban International Airport. Such cases illustrate how toponyms operated as public markers of identity reconstruction and historical redress. Similarly, Ndletyana (2012) investigates the uneven change in name of colonial provinces, arguing that these variations reflect differing historical experiences and political situations. Provinces such as Mpumalanga and Limpopo did not hesitate to change previous colonial names because of a hostile colonial-native past and a strong memory of pre-colonial identity. In contrast, the Eastern Cape and Western Cape proceeded very slowly because of their greater degree of assimilation into colonial culture. Ndletyana (2012) attributes these changes to factors like prior colonial authority, the strength of indigenous memory and the degree of local political agency. The studies examined here highlight how historical and politically motivated changes in place names occur. This study builds on the findings from both studies to emphasize the evaluative linguistic characteristics associated with place names and to consider how these may change in Ankole.

Similar to Buza (2011)'s study, Batoma (2006) investigated the naming systems on the African continent, stressing the relevance of toponyms and ethnonyms for their linguistic, historical, and socio-political contexts. Like Buza, Yeh and other researchers above, Batoma discusses how colonial, post-colonial and nationalist forces have shaped place names, exploiting their significance regarding power, identity, and memory. Many African toponyms were altered by the actions of European colonisers. Rhodesia, Leopoldville and Ivory Coast are examples of names carrying legacies of foreign superiority versus local realities. After independence, many African countries initiated the renaming processes to reclaim their indigenous heritage. An example of this is the renaming of Rhodesia to Zimbabwe or Leopoldville to Kinshasa. The toponyms that Batoma (2006) describes are primarily related to their ethnonyms in areas of North and West Africa, sometimes reflecting Berberized or Arabized names in Algeria and Morocco or Anglicized or French origins in Ghana and Benin. Toponymy reveals histories of linguistic contact and cultural negotiations spanning back centuries. Batoma (2006) analyses how colonial, post-colonial and nationalist dynamics changed place names in North west and some parts of central and South Africa. This study adds to Batoma (2006) study by extending the analysis of the naming system in the context of Ankole.

In conclusion, changes in place names as demonstrated in the reviewed literature highlight their dynamic nature, shaped by many factors including collective memory, migration, and political influence. Place names continue to serve as markers of identity and heritage across many communities as indicated by Alderman (2016). Building on this understanding, exploring similar patterns in a different geographical context such as Ankole offers a valuable insight into how place names have changed over time, whether in form or meaning, and the reasons behind the changes.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

Henceforth, the review of the literature illustrates that toponyms often stem their meanings from the historical experiences, language, and culture of places of use, and at times provide a glimpse into the heritage and experiences of the people of that place. Literature on evaluative morphosemantics of toponyms serve much more than simply as geographical identifiers (Toth, 2011; Buza, 2011; Wirasanti, 2018, among others). They substantially elaborate linguistic markers, which have embedded evaluative meanings and implications of emotional tones and cultural judgements toward a place name (Tufi & Blackwood, 2010). Furthermore, studies toponymic changes illustrate how toponyms change over time either by semantic or morphological shifts but also as a result of political, socio-historical events such as invasions,

migrations, or administrative reforms (Usmonova and Makhmudova, 2025); Warisanti, 2018; Yeh, 2013). Grounded in the foregoing scholarship, this study contributes to the existing debates by exploring the role of evaluative markers, investigating the etymology of place names and examining how meanings in place names have shifted over time in the geographical context of Ankole.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the research protocol that was followed, the research design, research approach, area of study, study population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis methods, population of the study, and validity and reliability of research findings.

3.2 Research Protocol

Following my proposal defence, I received an introductory letter from the Head of Department. That was done in order to get the consent from the authorities, especially the 15 LC1 chairpersons whom I met before meeting the participants. I approached one homestead in Kizinda, who showed me the office of the Mayor of Kizinda Town Council. The mayor then gave me a list of names according to villages in his area of jurisdiction. The study employed the sample size of 30 participants who were sampled from only 15 toponyms. The 15 toponyms were purposively selected from the list of 26 place names given to me by the Mayor of Kizinda. Toponyms with evaluative markers in their structure were given a priority. These toponyms include Kibatsi, Nyakatugunda, Bukumbya, Rushoorooza, Kambuzi, Kirera, Katooma, Rwakaringura, Katookye, Kaagati, Kibingo, Omukitooma, Nyakinengo, Kigoma and Kakoma (see Appendix D). Two informants from each of the 15 selected toponyms were chosen. The selection procedure was guided by the sampling techniques of snowball and purposive sampling techniques, which were employed for the study (see section 3.8). Interviewing and document analysis were the data collection methods used. A semi-structured interview guide that included open-ended questions was prepared and guided the interviewing process. Also, document analysis was another method used to collect data for this study. The official and archival documents containing place names were collected from the mayor's office. These documents included official village records, maps, and lists of place names recorded in writing. They were analysed to select place names that were appropriate for the study. Throughout the study, all ethical guidelines for undertaking research were adhered to. I prepared a question guide and 30 consent forms for the 30 informants who were selected from 15 villages. All 30 informants gave me their consent. However, one participant from each of these three villages, namely, Kibatsi, Nyakatugunda, and Bukumbya, stated that they had limited knowledge of the questions' responses. The little information they gave was insufficient to answer the three objectives. Due to time limitations, I was not able to repeat the process of selecting other

informants. However, even when I encountered the above challenge, the data collected and analyzed in this study were representative of the larger picture of the evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms.

The interviews and field notes obtained from the field were thereafter, transcribed and coded. In the presentation of data, following the ethical guideline on confidentiality, all names were represented by the initials of their original names whenever data was reported and analysed.

3.3 Research Approach

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. According to Willig (2017), qualitative research involves the idea of exploring linguistic structures and meanings in a rich, interpretive manner. Since the study aimed at exploring the etymology of place names, investigate the motives of evaluative markers, and examine the toponymic changes, a qualitative approach was the most suitable. Besides, the approach is flexible and comprehensive (Thompson Burdine et al., 2021). The qualities of this approach enhanced the collection of data from different sources and helped in understanding the etymology of Ankole toponyms, motives of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms and changes Ankole toponyms have undergone.

3.4 Research Design

The research design used in the study was a case study. This study design is appropriate for obtaining an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon within its real-life cultural and geographical context (Creswell 2014). Ankole subregion being a society with a homogeneous pattern in the use of evaluative markers in place naming was selected as the case of this study.

3.5 Area of study

The study was conducted in Western Uganda, in the Ankole sub-region in the district of Bushenyi, in particular Kizinda Town Council, where 15 toponyms were selected for analysis. Ankole region is a sub region in southwestern Uganda consisting 12 district and one city. Ankole was selected because it exhibits a homogeneous pattern in the use of evaluative markers in place naming, which was a central focus of this study. The district of Bushenyi, was selected because of its culturally rich and diverse village names, which are linguistically rich. The already documented names were given a priority to ensure that the study relied on officially documented and administratively recognized locations, thereby enhancing the credibility and validity of the findings. Ankole has homogeneity in regards to naming of places.

3.6 Population of the study

The study participants were residents of the selected toponyms aged 50 and above regardless of their education. The study participants predominantly use Runyankore as their first language in their homes. Their ability to speak Runyankore and their cultural awareness provided rich insights grounded in lived linguistic experience, which allowed the study to gather the needed information to achieve study objectives.

3.7 Sample size and sampling techniques

A total number of 26 place names on the list received from the office of the mayor was considered. Thirty (30) participants were selected in only 15 selected toponyms with evaluative markers in their structure. Using purposive and snowball sampling techniques, two participants were picked from each of the selected toponyms. Gender was not a determining factor in selecting participants. Regarding age appropriateness, the elderly ranging from the age of 50 and above were given a priority given the fact that they are equipped with narratives, which were crucial for this study. A purposive sampling technique was used to aid a deliberate selection of participants, such as cultural custodians who possess unique knowledge of Ankole history and culture related to the naming of places. This technique also ensured that the selected toponyms were culturally and linguistically significant for the study. The selection process was done with the help of the updated place names provided by the office of the Mayor of Kizinda Town Council, where 15 toponyms with evaluative markers in their structure were selected. Besides, snowball sampling was also used to locate further sources and participants using referrals from the initial informants. Snowball was used in order to easily identify the informants with cultural and historical knowledge of Ankole place names. I approached an elderly resident of Kizinda town council, who referred me to the office of the mayor. The mayor then referred me to LC1 chairpersons of the 15 selected village names, who also referred me to the appropriate people that would give me the information I wanted.

3.8 Data collection methods

This research employed two data collection methods, namely, interviewing and document analysis.

3.8.1 Interviewing methods

The semi-structured interview method was the primary means of data collection for this research. This method was the best suited for this study because it prompted detailed stories and cultural insights from the participants (Sanchez, 2024). Prior to conducting interviews, a preliminary field visit was made in the selected villages to identify applicable toponyms and

possible participants. In this instance, participants would be key figures such as village elders, local leaders and long-time residents with significant knowledge about the history and meaning of place names. Once study participants were identified, interviews took place by scheduling at their convenience and obtaining informed consent prior to conducting the actual interview. In preparation for each interview, an interview guide that included open-ended questions was prepared prior to interviewing (see Appendix B). All responses received during interviews were probed further using follow-up questions to clarify any emerging themes and provide depth of understanding regarding cultural interpretations and evaluative meanings given by the participants (Moerman, 2014). The interviews were conducted in Runyankore and audio recorded. As Brinkmann (2009:179) asserts, when the interviews are audio-recorded, it allows the interviewer to concentrate on the interview. The permission for audio recording was obtained at the point of consenting to participation. Following the completion of interviews, recorded interviews were transcribed and translated into English; this step allowed for further analysis of toponyms. Field notes were also taken to create a record of all communication that occurred during each interview that may assist in understanding each participant's experience with regard to the use of the examined toponyms. Of the 30 participants who were targeted, all of them consented apart from two who expressed their discomfort with recording their voices. Field notes were also helpful in capturing the information provided by the two participants.

3.8.2 Document analysis

The study also applied document analysis as a data collection method. According to Thompson Burdine et al. (2021), document analysis is the methodical process of going over and assessing documents, both printed and electronic. Prior to and alongside the interviews, two types of documents, i.e., official and archival documents containing place names, were collected from the mayor's office. These documents included official village records, maps, and lists of place names recorded in writing. To get toponyms with the linguistic elements important for the study, the above documents were utilised.

3.9 Data collection tools

The study used two main data collection instruments, namely, a semi-structured interview guide and a sound recorder. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions (Weller et al., 2018). These were designed to explore the motives of evaluative markers in the toponyms, the etymology and changes in the selected toponyms. As postulated by Karatsareas (2022), semi-structured interviews also aid the flexibility of researchers during data collection by allowing follow-up questions stemming directly or indirectly from participant responses. The

sound recorder was used to collect verbal information during interviews and ensured that no critical information was lost (Rutakumwa et al., 2020).

3.10 Validity and reliability of research findings

Given the fact that the strength of a study is determined by its validity and reliability (Creswell & Clark, 2007), this study employed the strategies of pre-testing instruments and peer debriefing. In this study, triangulation involved collecting data from various sources to cross-reference and verify patterns that emerge (Sanchez, 2024). The sources included semi-structured interviews, cultural texts, and oral histories. This process helped to diminish biases and improve validity. Pre-testing the interview guide and the recording devices, as suggested by Bhalla et al. (2023), ensures that the tools are appropriate for the participants and culturally relevant to ensure validity and reliability. Peer debriefing with academic colleagues and supervisors provided constructive feedback during the research process to identify biases and improve the objectivity and credibility of findings (Francois et al., 2018).

3.11 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to qualitatively analyse the data. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis identifies key themes and patterns in the data collected. The audios obtained from the field were transcribed and translated. With the body of participant's accounts in a written form, I categorised data based on recurring and frequent themes about the etymology of Ankole toponyms, motives of evaluative markers and changes toponyms have undergone which became the basis of my analysis.

The analysis was further guided by the tested theories that is the radial models of cognitive semantic theory (Jurafsky 1996, Prieto 2005) and the Social - cultural dynamic theory (Sorokin 1937-41). The two theories were important in interpreting the identified themes and allowed the study to move beyond description to explaining intricacies within Ankole toponyms.

3.12 Ethical considerations

This study observed key ethical principles to ensure safety and dignity for all participants. I received an introductory letter from the Department of African Languages (DEAL) to reach out to the participants. I sought consent from the potential participants to enhance voluntariness with liberty of refusal or withdrawal at will. Confidentiality and privacy were ensured by avoiding the disclosure of participants' names. However, their initials were used whenever data were reported and analysed. Data was treated carefully and was saved securely to safeguard moral standards in research throughout the study.

3.15 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study came up during data collection. The research was conducted at a time when the country was preparing for the 2026 general elections. Most of the population thought I was an agent of some politicians, and others feared that I could be a government spy. This uncertainty, to some extent, hindered their willingness to participate in this research. However, this challenge was combated by providing my introductory letter acquired from the Head of the Department of African Languages, together with my student's identity card. Additionally, the use of semi-interviews was difficult in relation to standardizing responses. For example, the flexible nature of this method enabled participants to give answers in different lengths and directions. Despite this challenge, techniques such as triangulation and careful management of data were utilized to lessen its effects.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study on etymology, roles of evaluative markers and changes in Ankole toponyms. In this chapter, the research objectives identified in chapter one are answered by the data objectives. The first section begins by exploring the etymology of the selected toponyms in Ankole. The next section presents data on the role of evaluative markers in the selected toponyms. This was done with special reference to Runyankore, the community language in which these toponyms are formed. The last section of this chapter examines how toponyms in Ankole have changed over time. The analysis below is approached from both sociocultural dynamic and cognitive semantic points of view. To begin with, is the etymology of the selected toponyms in Ankole.

4.2 Etymology of Ankole toponyms

The second objective of this study was to investigate the etymology of selected Ankole toponyms.

The findings of this objective show that the etymology of place names in Ankole culture reflect cultural and geographical surroundings. Using Sorokin's ideational and sensate worldview, we can understand how Ankole people used different place references across different historical periods. Place names that were adopted when an ideational worldview was dominant have a strong connection to mythology, spirituality/sacredness, and the belief that places have ancestral presence (McGill et al., 2022). In other words, there is divine authority over that area, and there are cosmological reasons for where those areas are located. On the other hand, names created from a sensate view tend to be more associated with the material aspects of that area, and those names emerge from the biological environment, ecological features, socio-economic activities, and socio-political occurrences. Additionally, this study has shown that some place names are associated with acts of violence or social punishment. These names capture events that the community remembers as being important in maintaining social order (Booth, 2006). All the toponyms analysed in this study show how Sorokin's worldviews helped define how, where, and why places in Ankole are named in a certain way, as discussed in Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4.

4.2.1 Environmental / Ecological Naming

Throughout history, communities have named places based on the visible natural features (Room, 2024). Data collected suggests that the ecological/ environmental aspects of an area influenced how places were named by early settlers within the Ankole subregion. From the analysis, the major criterion used by these early settlers for identifying and naming specific locations was based on the most apparent and prominent features in their natural environment. Examples of place names that reflect this identifiable pattern include: Katookye from bananas farms, Katooma from backcloth tree, Nyakinengo from gorges, Kirera from specific type or species of a tree, Nyakatugunda from specific species of fruit tree, 'Kibingo' from elephant grasses formerly found there, and Rushoorooza from a grass specie formerly found there. All the above names describe how the settlers named these respective locations based on their surroundings. This concept illustrates how closely related the physical geographic features and landforms are to the naming process and supports the view that the naming of places was not arbitrary; rather, it reflects those people's relationship with their environment (Helleland, 2012). The findings of the study rhyme with Buberwa (2012) study on the sociolinguistic meaning of place names in the Ruhaya language in Tanzania. The author observed that toponyms are not chosen randomly without a reason but are rather motivated by society's surroundings.

Conclusively, seven toponyms that is Katookye, Katooma, Rushoorooza, Kibingo, Nyakinengo, Kirera and Nyakatugunda toponyms out of fifteen show that their etymology is as a result of environmental characteristics. From the insights drawn primarily from the interviews, it is evident that environmental features were in place at the time of settling in the areas in question. Similar to Oyètáté (1997) findings, the environmentally and ecologically named locations serve as a sociocultural tool that interprets environmental information into local identity, thereby linking material surroundings with enduring cultural expressions. However, over time, the ecological and environmental features go into extinction, and others reduce (Dirzo et al., 2022). This has resulted in dominance over other ecological features. For example, toponyms like Nyakatugunda, Nyakinengo, Katooma, Kibingo, Kirera and Rushoorooza have shown the reduction and extinction of environmental features they were named after. At the time this research was conducted, Monk trees in Nyakatugunda were extinct, gorges in Nyakinengo were extinct, reduction of elephant grass in Kibingo was observed, there was a reduction of the tree species 'emirera' in Kirera, there was a reduction of backcloth trees in Katooma, and there was a reduction of the grass species of 'omushoorooza'

in Rushoorooza. Their extinction and reduction have given dominance to other environmental features, such as banana plantations, which are the major grown food and cash crop in the above-mentioned areas. In light of these changes, it is pertinent to consider whether these changes have prompted the renaming of the mentioned place names to reflect the emerging environmental characteristics. This issue will be discussed in Section 4.4.

4.2.2 Socio-economic functions

Place names that originate from socio-economic activities reflect activities like occupation and livelihood which once defined a society (Cinner & Bodin, 2010). The findings from this study reveal that socioeconomic activities are a basis of place naming in Ankole. In this regard, the way some places were named was driven by the types of economic activities, livelihood practices, and social interactions of users within these areas, i.e., as the focal point of these actions (Vernon, 2014). Consequently, names not only serve as a reference point for authorship but also encompass the significance of that area to the daily life needs of the population using it. As such, names reflect how an area was used for trade, grazing livestock, manufacturing crafts, or labour exchange (Iberall & White, 1988). These views about naming reflect a social constructionist view articulated in Sorokin's socio-cultural theory, which maintains that the expression of culture comes from how societies function both materially and through their interactions. Sorokin asserts that social forms and structures, as well as the kinds of exchanges among individuals, determine the development of cultural patterns such as language and naming. For example, considering the toponym Kambuzi, its etymology is associated with the economic functions of the place as suggested by the two participants, MK and ANO, interviewed. This is illustrated in Extracts 1 and 2 below.

Extract 1. MK: *Obukomooko bw'omwanya ugu, nintekateeka ngu bukaruga omu bantu abaabaire nibariisa embuzi aha. Buri bwire obu baabaire nibenda kutwara embuzi zaabo aheeru kuriisa, bakaba bazireeta omu kicweka eki...* (The origin of this place, I believe, came from the people who used to graze goats here. Whenever they wanted to take their goats out to graze, they would bring them to this area...)

Extract 2. ANO: *Abantu abaabandize kutuura aha rushozi oru bakaba bari abariisa b'embuzi. Bakaba bareeta embuzi zaabo n'ebindi bikooko hanu kuriisa... nikwo kuheeta Kambuzi. (The first settlers were grazers of goats; they used to bring their goats and other animals to graze here. That's how it came to be Kambuzi.)*

From the above extracts, the data shows how the etymology of the toponym Kambuzi was influenced by social activities. As observed by Radding and Western (2010), names were shaped by social interactions and community activities. In this regard, participants that is MK and N/A in Extracts associate the name with goat rearing which was the main economic activity being practiced in the geographic location by then. Each participant identified Kambuzi as a location where goats were brought on a daily basis to be fed. Thus, the term Kambuzi emerged to reflect the dominant source of livelihood sustenance in the region, showing how the economic role of a place has affected place-naming practices throughout Ankole. As already discussed, in section 4.2.1, like the environmental features change over time, the economic activities also change.

4.2.3 Political and administrative naming

According to Woodman (2014), place names from the social, political, and administrative influences reflect systems of governance, leadership, and community organisation. Accordingly, the findings from this study reflect how power structures, leadership, and political events shaped the etymology of Ankole toponyms. In this regard, places were named not only based on the geographical landscape or economic association but also based on their association with clan leadership, political authority, administrative functions, or boundary demarcations. Accordingly, participants' descriptions offer examples of places named after prominent leaders, kingships, clan authorities, and administrative functions, which were responsible for the regulation of social life. Examples include places like Rwakaringura, Kigoma, Bukumbya, Kakoma and Kaagati. For some toponyms, it was based on leaders for example Bukumbya, and others were named for administrative functions e.g. Kakoma for punishing criminals or geographic location to other kingdoms like Kaagati. Based on this information, we can see that the naming of places in Ankole was not arbitrary, but relates directly to systems of governance, authority, and social organization. Furthermore, these names serve as markers for political history, social order, and administrative development within that community and help the members to identify locations that are important to them and also to remember where their leaders and institutions have been. These findings align with Komara (2019)'s study who observed that toponyms function as not only geographical designations but also as repositories of the community's historic, political and cultural legacies; many toponyms still hold meaning in today's society.

The naming of places using political and administrative terms provided a yardstick for the community to identify and record their authorities and forms of governance, as well as to

segregate social space. The names not only served to identify geographical locations, as Komara et al. (2019) postulates, but also to provide a marker for the political history, the social order, and the evolution of administration within Ankole. Today, most of these areas are still identified as places of importance to the history and culture of Ankole.

4.2.4 Mythic or spiritual and Sacred meaning

Some place names originate from divine association like ancestral myths and sacred events, which hold deep cultural importance (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). From the data collected, it was found out that mythic, spiritual, and sacred meanings also acted as the genesis of some place names in Ankole. This naming reflects the worldview in which the environment is interpreted in not only material or social attachments, but also in the lenses of spirituality and ancestral memory. With reference to Pitirim Sorokin's social cultural dynamic theory, in an ideational culture, events occur because of the influence of divinity, sacred symbols, or unseen forces. Participants interviewed in this study stated that some places were named because of the belief that there were spirits residing there. This concept is illustrated in Extracts 3 and 4 below.

Extract 3. GK: *Ku naizire omu mwanya ogu, abantu abaatugambiire bakagira ngu ira gukaba guri omwanya ogutarimu bantu. Abantu bakaba bagwetantara ahabw'okugira ngu gukaba gwijwire emiti y'ebitooma, eyaabaire ereeta ebihangirwe bingi eby'akabi. Batyo baaheeta Omukitooma.*

(When I came to this place, the people who told us about it said that it was once a place without inhabitants. People used to avoid it because it was full of backcloth trees, which attracted many dangerous creatures. They then named it Omukitooma.)

Extract 4. ANO: *Kare, hakaba hariho omuti muhango munonga gw'ekitooma, kandi gukaba guri omuti gw'Abacwezi. Omu miti endiijo hakaba harimu enjoka, ebimera by'amahwa, n'ebintu bingi ebirikutiinisa. Abantu b'omuri ekyo kicweka bakaba batiina munonga n'okutema omuti gumwe kuruga omu mwanya ogwo. Nikwo okuheeta Omukitooma kya abachwezi. (In the past, there was a huge backcloth tree, and I believe it was the tree of the Bacwezi. Among the other trees were snakes, thorny plants, and many frightening things. The local people were so afraid that*

they could not even cut down a single tree from that place. Thus, becoming Bachwezi's backcloth.)

Participants' responses 3 and 4 above illustrate how both mythical beliefs and sacred beliefs shaped how places are given names in Ankole. Participants GK in Extract 3 and ANO in Extract 4 provided descriptions of sacred backcloth trees that were seen as belonging to Bachwezi. From the participants' views, therefore, the toponym Omukitooma reflects a mix of mythical beliefs and spiritual associations, thereby providing an example of how sacred perceptions can influence toponymic naming in Ankole. Rushoorooza is another toponym, which shows a slight association with mythic and sacred naming. However, the participant did not consider sacred meaning as a primary origin of the name. For this reason, the origin of the name Rushoorooza was discussed more extensively in 4.2.1 and given less attention in the current section.

From the above, the naming of places with a spiritual significance illustrates how the Ankole integrated their ideational culture into their spatial identities (Jordan, 2012). The findings align with Sorokin's ideational module where place names serve as tools for transmitting the legacy of sacred encounters, ancestral presence, and supernatural occurrences from one generation to another.

In conclusion, the findings show that place naming in Ankole originates from the four major themes. These include the ecological or environmental characteristics, social economic information present in a place, the mythology or spirituality of the name and the social political influences. The results indicate that Ankole place names and the processes of naming are important parts of a community's history, beliefs, and relationship with their immediate surroundings. The names not only serve as geographical locations, just like (Komara et al 2019; Buburwa, 2012; Chamo, 2016) postulate. This study goes beyond to showcase how toponyms provide markers for political history, the social order, and the evolution of administration within Ankole. In addition, Ankole place names result from the interaction between people and their environment, social structure, and cultural worldview over many years. The etymologies of the analysed toponyms indicate how various types of material conditions, institutions, and ideologies influence each other and form the basis for their cultural expression. Overall, Ankole place-naming culture is an archive of the ecological memory, economic practice, political organization, and spiritual inheritance of the Ankole people. The next section discusses the changes in the selected place names of Ankole.

4.3 The role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms

The second objective of this study was to investigate the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms. Data examined on Ankole toponyms demonstrate that evaluative markers dominate most toponyms. Out of 26 place names analysed, 22 toponyms had evaluative markers in their structure, while 4 toponyms did not. Evaluative markers that are prevalent in Ankole place names include *ka-* and *bu-* for diminutives and *ru-* and *ki-* for diminutives.

From the findings, the roles of evaluative markers are two, that is, quantitative and qualitative roles. As Garvey (2016) posits, quantitative and qualification represents two aspects of evaluative morphology. On one hand, quantification refers to perceived sizing of items through augmentatives or diminutives morphemes. On another hand, qualitative evaluation entails amelioration and pejoration.

Section 4.3.1 discusses quantitative roles of evaluative markers in the selected toponyms of Ankole. The analysis was guided by the radial category models discussed by Jurafsky (1996) on diminutives, which states that diminutive forms are not just indications of size, but can expand metaphorically to convey a variety of meanings.

4.3.1 Quantitative evaluative roles in Ankole toponyms

This section discusses quantitative evaluative roles encoded by diminutive prefixes in Ankole toponyms. I will begin with exploring the quantitative roles expressed by diminutive prefixes in Section 4.3.1.1, and followed by the quantitative roles expressed by augmentative prefixes in Section 4.3.1.2.

4.3.1.1 Quantitative roles expressed by diminutives

Diminutive evaluative markers express the quantitative role of smallness, reduction in size or intensity, as noted in Mugyabuso (2022). The findings from this study indicate that diminutives exist in Ankole toponyms, and these are *ka-* (12) and *bu-* (14) (see Table 1 in section 2.3 about the noun class system in Runyankore). The noun class prefix *tu-* (13), identified as a diminutive class in Section 4.2 does not appear in any of the toponyms collected. The absence of noun class 13 in Ankole toponyms may be accounted for by the fact that it is more derogatory than class 14 which also marks the plural of noun class 12 as noted in Mugyabuso, (2022) for Ruhaya toponyms. In relation to Jurafsky's radial model on diminutives, the diminutives *ka-* and *bu-* play a primary quantitative function. According to Grandi and Körtevélyessy (2015), diminutives originate from meanings of small size, reduced quantity or lower degree before extending to other connotations. The findings of this study concur with this foundational and quantitative layer in that most of the toponyms marked with *ka-*, and *bu-* refer to places associated with an idea of smallness. The diminutive marker *-ka-* in the toponym *Nya-ka-*

tugunda plays a quantitative role. As presented in Extract 5, participant MP associates the etymology of the name Nyakatugunda with smallness.

Extract 5. MP: *Ekicweka eki kuza kukyeta Nyakatugunda, hakaba harimu emiti mingi y'amatugunda, ekaba neerugamu obujuma bukye nk'amapeera. ...Omu kutandika, ebijuma ebi bikakurira omu mwanya mukye, kwonka bwanyima bikanjaara omu mwanya muhango.*'' (To be called Nyakatugunda, this place had many monk trees, they produced small fruits like guavas. ...In the beginning, these fruits grew in a small area, but later they spread to a larger space.)

From the data above, the *-ka-* quantitatively evaluates the referent as small and covering a limited spatial distribution. Participant MP associated the origin of the name with an idea of smallness of the fruits from the monk trees that were in that area. Although the fruits later spread widely, the diminutive marker *-ka-* preserves the original quantitative perception, which explains the motive of the existence of the name. The proclitic *nya-* in the structure of the name *Nya-ka-tugunda* has semantic and pragmatic features, which this research does not attempt to investigate.

Another toponym with the diminutive marker that expresses quantitative function is *Kaagati* (*ka-agati*). The response from the participants that affirm the above is presented in Extracts 6 and 7 below.

Extract 6. KB: *Kakaba kari akaanya kakye keetooroire obukama bubiri, ekaba eri nk'esharo. Kwonka obukama ku bwarugireho, gwaba omwanya muhango gwakora na LC eyaagwo.*
(It was a small space in between two kingships; it acted like a separating point. When the kingship ceased, it became a big place and made its own LC.)

Extract 7. MJ: *Ekyasigaire ahagati n'akacweka kakye aku abantu baayetsire Kaagati ahabwokuba kakaba kari ahagati y'obugabe oburi haihi... (...What remained in the middle was a small place which people named Kaagati because it was in the middle of the neighboring kingships...')*

The information provided by two participants KB and MJ carry a quantitative function expressed by the diminutive evaluative marker *-ka-*. Both KB and MJ associated the etymology of the toponym with smallness. Their similar accounts suggest that *Kaagati* was formally a

narrow and marginal area, serving as an in-between or separating point of two neighbouring kingships. From these converging views from the two participants engaged, it is evident that diminutive marker *-ka-* quantitatively evaluates the place as small at the time of naming. Despite the subsequent expansion of the area, the diminutive evaluative *-ka-* is still used to fossilize its original small-scale status.

Additionally, the diminutive marker *-ka-* in Kambuzi signifies the quantitative role of smallness as given in Extracts 8 and 9, by participants MK and ANO.

Extract 8. MK: *Eziina Kambuzi rikaruga aha rushozi oruri hare n'abandi orwabaire rurimu eihamba kandi rutariho kintu kyona. (...the name Kambuzi is associated with an isolated hill that was once deserted and had nothing on it...)*

Extract 9. ANO: *Kakaba kari akaanya kakye keehereire, karikumanywa munonga ahabw'okuriisizamu embuzi. Ahabw'ekyo, bakama b'embuzi baaheeta Kambuzi. (It was a separate place, well known for grazing goats. Because of that, the owners of the goats named it Kambuzi...)*

As observed in Extracts 8 and 9, from the second participant's account, the linguistic element *-ka-* in the name Kambuzi refers to a quantitative notion of smallness and isolation. For example, ANO describes the place as an isolated small place '*akaanya kakye keehereire*' emphasizing its limited size, which aligns with the diminutives' quantitative role. Although the first participant focuses more on desolation and underdevelopment, both accounts converge on the idea of marginality. From their views, it can be argued that *-ka-* in the place name Kambuzi quantitatively evaluates Kambuzi as a small space.

The diminutive evaluative marker *-ka-* in Katooma did not align with the concept of the quantitative function of smallness, and the participants' accounts did not match with any quantitative function, as illustrated in Extracts 10 and 11.

Extract 10. SJ: *Hati munuuya hoona kikaba kiri ekibira, harimu emiti etari emwe n'emwe. Hariyo emitooma, hariyo emibura, hariyo n'endiijo mingi. Ahabw'emitooma mingi, baaheeta Katooma. (So now, all over this place, there was a forest, there were many different trees species, like backcloth trees and others. Because of many back cloth trees, they called the place Katooma)*

Extract 11. ER: *Twagira ngu obwaira hakaba harimu nk’emiti, nk’emibura, amatugunda, ebitooma haza ebitooma byo bikaba biri bingi. (We said that in the past, there were trees of different species, like Monk fruit trees, and backcloth trees, which were many...)*

As seen from the Extracts 10 and 11, both SJ and ER emphasise the dominance of backcloth trees ‘ebitooma’ among other species in the forest from which the name was derived. The two participants SJ and ER did not associate the origin of the name with smallness as was the case with other toponyms. From this, the motive of the evaluative marker *-ka-* in the name *Ka-tooma* remains fuzzy at this point so far. One hypothesis is that its existence in the structure is due to qualitative roles; this idea will be verified in Section 4.3.2.1. Another interpretation of *ka-* in the name *Katooma* can be linked to the part of reduced associative construction as discussed by Asiimwe (2022) in her study about linguistic analysis of Rukiga personal names.

Similarly, the diminutive evaluative marker *-ka-* in the toponym *ka-tookye* does not necessarily express the quantitative function. Below in Extract 12 and 13, I present the views of the participants.

Extract 12. TK: *Ku baahikire omu kicweka, baashangamu ekitookye. Nikyo kyabandize kuhingwamu, ku baabyairemu orutookye, abantu baakyeta Katookye. (When they arrived in the area, they found Matooke. It was the first to be grown there. When they planted Matooke, people then named the area Katookye.)*

Extract 13. BP: *Abo ababaire nibaronda eby’okurya boona bakagambirwa ngu baze omu kyarokya Katookye. Nikyo kyarokya kyonka ekyabaire kirimu ebutookye omu byaro bingi. (Those who were looking for food were all told to go to the village called Katookye. It is the only village which grew matooke among the many villages.)*

The data provided above indicate that the diminutive marker *-ka-* does not primarily encode quantitative smallness. For example, neither participant discussed the idea of smallness in the history of the place. Following Asiimwe (2022) in her linguistic analysis of Rukiga personal names, the existence of *ka-* in the above toponym can be understood as part of reduced associative construction whereby the name originally meant ‘place of matooke ‘*akanya k’ebutookye*’ with the head form omitted. This analysis thus suggests that the *ka-* in the name *Katookye* is rather an associative marker, not a marker of size.

Likewise, diminutive *ka-* in the toponym Kakoma does not reflect any quantitative function. The views of the participants are presented in Extracts 14 and 15 below.

Extract 14. SP: *Kakoma egi nibaza kugyeta Kakoma, bakaabakomeramu abantu ira. Babakomesa emboha, babiita. Ahabwokuba akaanya k'okukomeramu abantu, nikwo okugyeta Kakoma omwanya guba Kakoma. (This place to be called Kakoma, they used to tie people from there. They used a specific rope 'emboha' and would kill them. Because it was a place where people were tied from, people called it Kakoma. The place was known as Kakoma)*

Extract 15. FM: *Eiziina Kakoma rikaruga ahabyabaire nibibaho omu biro bya kare. Abantu baingi abaabaire nibaturayo bakaba bari abariisa b'ente. Bakaba batashomire, kandi abaingi bakaba nibamara ebiro byabo barikunywa amaarwa. Omuntu Owaabaire abateganisa, bakaba bamukoma bwanyima bamwita. Omuze ogwo ogw'okukoma niho eiziina Kakoma ryarugire.*

(The name Kakoma came from what used to happen in the early days. Many people who lived there were cattle keepers. They were not educated, and most of them spent their days drinking alcohol. Whenever someone disturbed them, they would tie that person and eventually kill him. It was from that practice of okukoma that the name Kakoma came up.)

The information provided by two participants in Extracts 14 and 15 above does not include any quantitative function. The presence of prefix *ka-* in toponym Kakoma can instead be interpreted as a reduced associative marker as discussed by Asimwe (2022) in her linguistic analysis of Rukiga personal names. The place in this case originally meant the 'place of tying 'akaanya k'okukoma' where the head noun 'akaanya' was omitted. This therefore implies that diminutive *ka-* in the toponym Kakoma is an associative marker not a marker of size.

Regarding the evaluative marker *bu-*, it was observed that the prefix *bu-* is not commonly used in the place name formation. Only three toponyms appeared with prefix *bu-* and one participant, BW, did not demonstrate knowledge of the meaning of *bu-* in the toponym *Bu-kumbya*, as shown in Extract 16 below.

Extract 16. BW: *Hakaba hariho omushaija orikwetwa Kaabukumbya. Ku yaahikire omu mwanya ugu, yaaba omwebembezi murungi w'akaaro aka kakye, hakaba harimu amaka nka 3. Yaaguma naareeberera abantu. Ahabwokuba uwe n'abantu abu yaabaire aine naazarwa nabo, bakagwa omuributandu aho aha ruguto waaba nootemba owa Ceyamaani aho niho baafereire, haza tukashangaho emiti itwe nituza kukura, tukaba turiisiizaho. Abantu bakaba batugira ngu baana mubinge ente kuruga aha bituuru bya baashwenkuru imwe, haza bakaitwa omuze. Hati nikwo okugweterera Kabukumbya. Baagweta Bukumbya.*

(There was once a man called Kabukumbya. When he arrived in this area, he became a good leader of this small village; there were like 3 families...He kept taking good care of his people. Because his siblings all perished in an accident down there as you head to chairman's home, that's where all of them perished. As we grew, we found trees and we would graze from there. And people would tell us to chase cows from the graves of our grand grand parents. And they were killed by a totem. They therefore decided to name the geographical area after Kabukumbya. They called it Bukumbya.)

In his response, as seen in the extract above, participant BW makes no connection of the prefix *bu-* to the stem *kukumbya*. While the narrative context suggests that the area was small and occupied by few homesteads, that alone is not enough to demonstrate that *-bu-* serves as a quantitative evaluation marker. Based on the limited occurrence of this marker in the dataset, this study concludes that the evaluative function of *bu-* in *Bukumbya* cannot be easily established.

To sum up, the above accounts especially in the toponyms Nyakatugunda, Kaagati and Kambuzi provide additional confirmation that diminutive prefixes do not serve in Ankole place names as a simple stylistic approach. They rather serve as a standard quantitative evaluation of these locations (Masanja, 2025). This is consistent with worldwide patterns of diminutive morphology, where 'smallness', whether visualised by measure of size or measure of area, is the principal semantic function attached to diminutive prefixes.

However, the diminutives *ka-* and *bu-* in the toponyms Katooky, Katooma, Kakoma and Bukumbya did not primarily encode quantitative smallness. Diminutive *ka-* in toponyms

Katookye, Katooma and Kakoma suggests that the *ka-* is rather an associative marker, not a marker of size.

4.3.1.2 The Quantitative roles expressed by Augmentatives

Like diminutive markers, augmentative markers also express the quantitative function, indicating increased size, extent or intensity, abundance, etc. (Ponsonnet, 2018). The findings reveal that in Ankole toponyms, different noun class prefixes mark augmentation. These include classes 7 (*ki-*), 8 (*bi-*), 11(*ru-*), 20(*-gu*), and 21 (*-ga*) (see Table 1 in section 2.3). Data show that augmentative class *gu-* (20) and class *ga-* (21) do not exist in Ankole toponyms. The fact that these classes are more abusive may explain this discrepancy. Noun class 8 (*bi-*) does exist, but its presence in Ankole toponyms is limited, which is why it was not chosen for the study's analysis. Following Prieto's 2005 radial model on augmentatives, magnitude, size and intensity are considered the core semantic domain from which other meanings derive. Prieto's view is true for all augmentative evaluative prefixes in Ankole toponyms. For instance, *ki-* (7), *bi-* (8) and *ru-* (11), only indicate a quantitative measure. Prieto asserts that augmentative languages universally begin with the concept of the physical largeness or the notion of relative scale/size, and that pejorative or expressive meanings (secondary extensions) only emerge later as a result of this concept, as will be discussed in Section 4.3.2.2.

The augmentative marker *-ki-* in Nyakinengo expresses the quantitative role of abundance. Participant ANO'S perspective, as shown below, is the basis for this interpretation.

Extract 17. ANO: *Nyakinengo kikaruga omu nengo nyingi ezaabaire ziri aha.*
(*Nyakinengo came from the many gorges 'enengo' that were here...*)

The augmentative *-ki-* in the toponym *Nya-ki-nengo* illustrates how the augmentative marker anchors quantitative function. This is reflected in the participant's view, associating the etymology of the name Nyakinengo with numerical abundance and spatial density.

Furthermore, the toponyms Kibingo, Omukitooma, Kirera, Kigoma, and Rushoorooza demonstrate the quantitative function represented by *-ki-* and *-ru-* in their structure. From the data collected, these markers encode notions of size, intensity, or abundance and extensiveness of the referenced locations. The extracts below portray how the evaluative elements contribute to meaning that is associated with largeness or abundance.

Extract 18. JK: *Rukaba ruri orushozi rw'omu ihamba orurimu ekibingo kingi. Hakaba harimu emiti ejwangize n'ebyo bibingo. (...it was a plain hill occupied by much elephant grass. There were trees mixed with elephant grass...)*

Extract 19. TT: *Eiziina Kibingo, barikuza kutuuramu omu omuri Kibingo, gukaaguri omugongo hataine ekirimu. Gurimu emiti, gurimu ebibingo, hati ababaizi ku baarugire Bukumbya, au bahiikiire nibaruga mpororo baayebaganisamu abamwe baija, nikwo okukyeta Kibingo. (The name Kibingo, to be called Kibingo it was an empty hill. There were trees, mixed up with elephant grass. So, when carpenters came from Bukumbya, where they settled after coming from Mpororo. They divided themselves; others came here and called it Kibingo)*

Extract 20. TT: *Mbwenu ahaabaire hatarimu bantu noogiira ngu tikyo kyabaire kirimu kingi. Ku baahikiremu baatema ebibingo, baayombeka, baahinga.*

(...So, where there were no people, definitely one can think that the place was only covered by elephant grass in plenty; when they came, they grew crops and built houses.)

As observed in extracts above, it is evident that the augmentative *-ki-* in the toponym Kibingo encodes a quantitative function which is grounded in abundance. The first participant, JK, asserts that the area was covered with plenty of elephant grass, which is where the name Kibingo was derived from. The second participant, however, TT in Extract 19, did not associate the etymology of the area with the dominance of elephant grass for the augmentative meaning to be realised. However, after probing further, the quantitative function became apparent, as shown in Extract 20. This therefore is evident that the augmentative evaluative markers in Ankole toponym quantitatively evaluates the largeness and profusion.

Similarly, from what participants GK and ANO shared, as given in Extract 21 and 22, reflect the quantitative role of the augmentative marker *ki-* in the structure of the name *omu-ki-tooma*, depicting magnitude and prominence.

Extract 21. GK: *Haakaba hariho omuti muhango gw'ekitooma, ogu abantu baabaire nibamanya nk'omuti gw'abachwezi (...there was a very big tree, and people believed it was the tree of the Bachwezi...)*

Extract 22. ANO: *Hakaba hariho omuti muhango aha gw'aba ira ningira gukaba guri ogw'Abachwezi. (There was a big tree of the people of the past, which I think belonged to the Bachwezi...)*

The two participants interviewed, GK and ANO share the view that there was a big tree 'omuti muhango', which was associated with the Bachwezi. The evaluative morphology underlying the name *omu-ki-tooma* quantitatively profiles largeness and physical dominance in the landscape. Thus, *-ki-*, as an augmentative evaluative marker encodes quantitative functions of exceptionally big and prominent features that define an area at the point of naming. The locative *omu-* in the structure of the toponym is associated with syntactic functions, which this research does not address.

Concerning the toponym *Kirera* in Extracts 23 and 24, the information given also shows the quantitative role of the augmentative marker *-ki-* in its structure. For example, both participants describe the area as being occupied by big tree species 'emirera mihango' from which the place name was derived. Their views are presented in extracts below.

Extract 23. NW: *Bakagira ngu omwanya ogwo ira gukaba gurimu ebika by'emiti mihango kandi egumire eyetwa 'emirera'. (...It was said that that place in the past was populated by big and strong tree species called 'emirera')*

Extract 24. DS: *Ahabwokuba Kirera egi ekaba eine emirera mingi, na mbwenu waaza n'oku enyima nayo eriyo. Nikyo eki baagyeiteire kirera. (Because Kirera had many tree species 'emirera', even when you go behind, you can find them.)*

The views shared by NW and DS indicate that the place was evaluated as extensive and densely covered with *emirera* trees as the dominant species. Their perspectives affirm that indeed the *-ki-* in the toponym *Ki-rera* encodes the quantitative role, profiling both the largeness and abundance of many tree species *emirera*, a feature which motivated the naming of the place.

Similarly, as presented in Extracts 25 and 26, the augmentative marker *ki-* in the toponym *Kigoma* expresses the quantitative function of largeness.

Extract 25. MP: *Eiziina eryo rikaruga aha bashaija b'amaani abaabaire nibatuura aha. Aba bakaba bari abashaija b'amaani maingi, kandi abatarikuhendagura abaabaire hatariho orikubaasa kugaya. (...the name is associated with the brave men who lived here. These were*

powerful, energetic, and unbreakable men whom no one could underestimate.)

Extract 26. LK: *Eiziina rikairira aha bashaija b'amamanzi, ebikaaka, bahamire, otakubarabamu mbwenu. (...The name is associated with the presence of strong, brave, assertive and fearless men, who nobody could overlook ...)*

Based on the views of the two participants, MP and LK, the motive of the augmentative evaluative marker *-ki-* is anchored in the quantitative intensity of human manpower not the physical landscape as seen with the previous names. Both participants MP and KL, give similar accounts, which associate the placename *Ki-goma* with exceptionally strong men '*abashaija b'amaani mingi*'. This therefore affirms the augmentative evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms encode the quantitative roles by profiling excess and intensity of human qualities, as is the case of Kigoma.

Finally, in Extract 27 below, the augmentative *-ru-* in the name Rushoorooza plays a quantitative function. This is anchored in the numerical abundance and the spatial spread of grass species '*emishoorooza*' as asserted by participant KD.

Extract 27. KD: *...Omwanya gukaba gwetwa Rushoorooza ahabw'ebika by'ebishaka bingi ebyabaire nibyetwa 'emishoorooza' ebyabaire biri bingi kandi bijanjaire buri hamwe... (...place was called Rushoorooza because of many grass species called 'emishoorooza' which were common and scattered everywhere...)*

KD explains the presence of a lot of grass species '*emishoorooza*', from which the place name was derived. The presence of *-ru-* in the toponym *Ru-shoorooza* evaluates the place as expansive and densely covered in '*emishoorooza*'.

On the contrary, this study confirmed that not all the augmentative evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms encode overt quantitative function. This was evident in two toponyms *Kibatsi* and *Rwakaringura* with prefixes *-ki-* and *-ru-* whose meanings are not directly tied to numerical excess or physical magnitude as is the case with the above-discussed place names. However, these forms can still be analysed in 4.3.2.2 as participating in a radial category. The accounts of the participants are illustrated in Extract 28 and 29 below.

Extract 28. SB: *Enshonga y'eiziina eri n'okugira ngu abeebembezi b'ebyanganga abamwe namunonga omukuru wa w'omuruka owaabaire naamanywa nka Rwabutare haza bo, bakaba bari abakurisitaayo. Bakatahirirwa Abakaturiki abaabaire nibarugire Bunyaruguru kandi barikwenda kwombeka ekanisa aha itaka ryabo. Omu kubabinga, bakakoresa ekigambo baabaki, kyabaki mbwenu. Obwire ku bwagyenzireho, ekigambo eki nikiteekateekwaho kuba kyahindukire eiziina Kibatsi. (The reason for this name is that some local leaders, especially the parish chief known as Rwabutare, were Protestants. They referred to the Catholics who had come from Bunyaruguru to build a church on their land using the word kyabaki, meaning "What is wrong with them?". Over time, this expression is believed to have evolved into the name Kibatsi.)*

Extract 29. FK: *Eiziina eryo hariyo owaabandizemu, bakaba nibamweta Ruringura, akaba akira kuringuriza abataahi ab'obukama obwaseeri. Atyo azayo aringuriza emitwarize yaabo. Atyo agireeta omu bukama obu. Hanu hoona bukaba buri obukama, hatyo nikwo kuheeta Obwa Ruringura. (Among the people that settled there first, there was a man called Ruringura. He used to peep at the neighbors 'okuringuriza', he could peep their habits and transfer them to his kingdom. Around this place, there were kingships; that's how they came to call the kingdom that was here Rwakaringura)*

Therefore, the presence of augmentative prefixes is sometimes not necessarily motivated by quantitative roles (Aijmer, 2008). In the data presented above, neither participant linked the etymology of the toponyms with the quantitative roles, as seen from the extract. The presence of augmentative prefixes *-ki-* and *-ru-* in the toponyms *Ki-batsi* and *Ru-akaringura* can, however, be attributed to their qualitative roles, a notion that can be confirmed in the next Section 4.3.2.2.

In conclusion, augmentative prefixes in toponyms Nyakinengo, Kibingo, Omukitooma, Kirera, Kigoma, and Rushooroza express meanings related to size, intensity, abundance, or spatial extensiveness of the referenced locations. With the exception of Kibatsi and Rwakaringura, the

findings support the view that the occurrence of augmentative prefixes in Ankole toponyms is motivated by the quantitative roles of expansion and abundance, which they encode.

4.3.2 Qualitative evaluative roles in Ankole toponyms

Based on the data analysed, it was found out that all diminutives in Ankole toponyms are ameliorative, while augmentatives are pejorative. By employing Jurafsky's and Prieto's radial models on diminutives and augmentatives, this study established the additional roles of the evaluative markers beyond size or quantity to convey a socio-cultural evaluation. The following sections substantiate this relationship that exists between quantitative and qualitative roles that exist in Ankole toponyms, beginning with ameliorative evaluative roles.

4.3.2.1 Amelioration evaluative roles in Ankole toponyms

Beyond size, the diminutive evaluative markers in Ankole place names encode ameliorative roles of compassion, love, endearment, admiration, and others (Shockley, 2024). Most of the place names analysed presented diminutive noun class prefixes in their structure. The data and discussion of the place names with diminutive evaluative NCP 12 (ka-) and 14 (bu-) that entail amelioration connotations is as follows.

Starting with the toponym Katookye, the diminutive marker *-ka-* in its structure evokes a qualitative role of amelioration. When asking the participants about the origin of the name, they associated it with the ameliorative connotations as shown in Extracts 30 and 31 below.

Extract 30 .TK: *Mbwenu aha ahantu kuza kuheeta Katookye, abafuruki ku bahikire omu kicweka, bashangamu ekitookye. Nikyo kyabandize kuhingwamu, ku baabyairemu orutookye, abantu baakyeta Katookye, abantu bakaheeta katookye ahabwokuba gukaba guri omwanya gw'okubaheerexza ebyokurya...(So, to name this place Katookye, when the migrants arrived in this area, they found Matooke, it's what grew here first. When they grew plantations, people called it Katookye because it was giving them food...)*

Extract 31. BP: *Omwanya ogu gukaba gubacungura. Abo abaabaire nibaronda ebyokurya boona bakaba bagambirwa kuza omu kaaro kakye aka katookye. (...This place rescued them. Those who were looking for food were all told to go to a small village of Katookye...)*

From the accounts of the two participants TK and BP, the prefix *-ka-* in the toponym *Ka-tookye* entails ameliorative connotation. The two participants agree that the area was life-sustaining,

emphasising the role of providing food and rescuing people from hunger. Following Schneider (2012)'s study, the name illustrates how diminutive evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms can signal amelioration connotations apart from quantitative ones.

Moreover, given the data in Extract 32 below, prefix *-bu-* in the name Bukumbya whose quantitative function was not provided for in Section 4.3.1.1 reflects a qualitative role as seen below.

Extract 32. BW: *Hakaba hariho omushaija owaabaire naayetwa Kaabukumbya. Ku yaahikire omu kicweka eki, yaaba omwebembezi murungi w'ekyaro eki ekikye, kandi abantu baamuha obugabe... (There was once a man called Kaabukumbya. When he arrived in this area, he became a good leader of this small village, and the people gave him kingship...)*

The participant interviewed associated the etymology of the place with a man who was positively evaluated as a good leader of the small village. It is here that I confirm that this positive evaluation motivated the use of prefix *bu-* in the name Bukumbya. As Aijmer (2008) postulates, evaluative markers encode positive social value. Prefix *bu-* in this regard shows that evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms can go further to express ameliorative connotations.

The data collected on the toponym Kambuzi showcases the ameliorative connotation expressed through the associative marker *-ka-* in its structure. As observed in Extract 32 and 33, the views of two participants, MK and ANO, rotate around the idea that the place was favourable for goat grazing, highlighting the positive connotations of nourishment, satisfaction, and well-being of animals. Their views are as follows:

Extract 32. MK: *Ku baabaire benda kutwara embuzi zaabo aheeru kuriisa, bakaba bazireeta omu mwanya ugu. (...Whenever they wanted to take their goats out to graze, they would bring them to this area...)*

Extract 33. ANO: *Embuzi ku zariire gye zihaga n'okushemererwa, abantu baasharamu kugyeta Kambuzi. (...When the goats fed well and became satisfied and happy, the people decided to name the place Kambuzi...)*

The first participant in Extract 32 emphasises the habitual use of the area for grazing, while the second one in Extract 33 dwells more on the positive outcome, that is, healthy and satisfied goats. The above shows how the evaluative diminutive marker expresses more than the size of the entity. It further functions to encode positive values, illustrating how Ankole toponyms can anchor amelioration.

Additionally, like other toponyms already discussed, the diminutive evaluative marker *-ka-* in the toponym Kaagati entails an ameliorative connotation. When asked the question of the place's origin, participants KB and MJ associated the place with favourable attributes, as illustrated below.

Extract. 34. KB: *Okuheeta Kaagati, hakaba hariho obusingye bwingi kandi n'omwanya gutereire. Noobaasa kukireeba... (To be called Kaagati, there was a lot of peace and on a flat land. You can see it...)*

Extract 35. MJ: *Ekyabaire kiri eky'omutaano kandi eky'obuhangwa aha mwanya ogu n'ahabwokuba n'omwanya ogwabaire gurimu obunyaatsi bwingi. Ku waabaire ohingamu, ebihinga byawe bikaba bireeta amasharuura marungi.) (...what was special and cultural about this place is that it was a place that was very fertile. Once grown in, your crops would produce good harvests...)*

From the above, KB in Extract 34, for example, highlights peace that prevailed in the place at the time of naming, while MJ in Extract 35 emphasises fertility and high agricultural yields. From their accounts, one can affirm that they align in positively evaluating the place.

Contrary to expectations, from the accounts of the participants in Extracts 36 and 37 below, not all diminutive evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms encode ameliorative connotation. For example, in answering question one of this research, both participants, that is, SR and FM, did not associate the name Kakoma with a positive ameliorative connotation. It, however, emphasises acts of violence, punishments, and killing offenders, as shown in the extracts.

Extract 36. SP: *Kakoma egi nibaza kugyeta Kakoma, bakaabakomeramu abantu ira. Babakomesa emboha, babiita. Ahabwokuba akaanya k'okukomeramu abantu, nikwo okugyeta Kakoma omwanya guba Kakoma. This place to be called Kakoma, they used to tie people there. They used a specific rope, 'emboha', and would kill them. Because it was a place where people were tied up, people called it Kakoma. The place was known as Kakoma*

Extract 37. FM: *Eiziina Kakoma rikaruga aha byabaire nibibaho omu biro bya kare. Abantu baingi abaabaire nibaturayo bakaba bari abariisa b'ente. Bakaba batashomire, kandi abaingi bakaba nibamara ebiro byabo*

barikunywa amaarwa. Omuntu Owaabaire abateganisa, bakaba bamukoma bwanyima bamwita. Omuze ogwo ogw'okukoma niho eiziina Kakoma ryarugire. (The name Kakoma originated from what used to happen in the early days. Many people who lived there were cattle keepers. They were not educated, and most of them spent their days drinking alcohol. Whenever someone disturbed them, they would tie that person and eventually kill him. It was from that practice of okukoma that the name Kakoma came up.)

As shown in Section 4.3.1.1 and in extracts above, the prefix *ka-* in the toponym Kakoma neither expresses a quantitative or a qualitative function. The diminutive evaluative marker does not necessarily mitigate the evaluative meaning. This context further shows how the diminutives in Runyankore evaluative morphology, especially in place name formation, can be semantically flexible, capable of anchoring negative connotations rather than the expected positive valuation.

In Extract 39 and 40, however, the diminutive marker *-ka-* in the toponym ka-tooma entails the qualitative connotation, which is grounded in usefulness and commercial benefit. This is evident in ER's accounts below:

Extract 39. ER: *Abantu bakaba baija kuhiiga, kandi abakozi b'amaato bakaba baija kutunga embaaho kuruga omu miti y'ebitooma kukora amaato. Abandi bakaba botsya amakara. Nahabwekyo ekibira kikaba kiri eky'omugasho munonga aha bantu. (People used to come to hunt, and boat makers would come to obtain wood from the backcloth trees to make boats. Others burned charcoal; so, the forest was very useful to the people...)*

Extract 40. SJ: *Kikaba kijwire emiti y'emitooma. Emiti egi ekaba neehwera munonga ababaizi, hamwe n'abantu abaabaire nibakora amaato g'okuhiisa n'amakara. (. It was full of backcloth trees (emitooma). These trees were very useful to carpenters, as well as people who made fermenting boats and charcoal.)*

Both ER and SJ suggest that the trees from which the toponym originated supported hunting, carpentry, and charcoal burning. Because the prefix *-ka-* in the toponym Katooma did not have a quantitative role of smallness in 4.3.1.1, it is here that I can confirm that its presence was motivated by the positive qualitative function that is usefulness and productivity.

Diminutive marker *-ka-* in the toponym Nyakatugunda also expresses an ameliorative connotation. This is portrayed in the response given by participant MP below:

Extract 41. MP: *Buri murundi ogu ebijuma by'amatugunda byabaire bikura, abantu bakaba baruga hare kubirya ahabwokuba bakaba babikunda munonga...(Whenever the monk fruits grew and became ripe, people would come from far to eat them because they liked them so much...)*

From MP's account, monk fruits 'amatugunda' from which the name originated, attracted people from afar. This account evaluates the place positively in terms of pleasure and desirability. As posited by Ainiala and Olsson (2021), this evidence further affirms the fact that many diminutive evaluative markers in most Ankole toponym structures can encode positively sensory value.

Out of the 7 toponyms with prefix *ka-* in their structure, 6 had ameliorative connotations associated with their etymology. One toponym, Kakoma, with diminutive evaluative marker *-ka-*, presented neither a quantitative nor a qualitative value. As discussed in Section 4.3.1.1, the data indicate that diminutive markers in Ankole toponyms express not only size but also other ameliorative connotations. This observation supports Jurafsky's radial model on diminutives that diminutive forms are not just indications of size, but can expand both metaphorically to convey a variety of meaning.

4.3.2.2 Pejoration evaluative roles in Ankole toponyms

Beyond the quantitative roles, such as abundance, largeness, and intensity, the augmentative evaluative markers also entail pejorative connotations (Ponsonnet, 2018). Most of the toponyms that were analysed were made of augmentative noun class prefixes, which entailed pejoration. These augmentative evaluative markers include NCP 7(*ki-*), 8(*bi-*), 11(*ru-*), 20(*ga-*), 21(*gu-*). Their usage evokes negative feelings, attitudes, and emotions in the speaker over the referred entities, as shown in the discussion below.

The augmentative evaluative marker *-ki-* in the toponym *Ki-batsi* conveys a pejorative connotation. Note that in Section 4.3.1.2, *-ki-* in the toponym *Kibatsi* did not entail any quantitative role. Its presence in the toponym is motivated by the pejorative connotation, which is in line with Prieto's (2005) radial model on augmentatives. Participant SB's account frames the protestants' threat and disapproval as seen from Extract 42 below.

Extract 42. SB: *Enshonga y'eiziina eri n'okugira ngu abeebembezi b'ebyangwa abamwe na munonga mukuru w'omuruka owaabaire naamanywa nka Rwabutare haza bo, bakaba bari Abakurisitaayo. Bakataahirirwa abakaturiki*

abaabaire barugire Bunyaruguru kandi barikwenda kwombeka ekanisa aha itaka ryabo. Omu kubabinga, bakakoresa ekigambo baabaki, kyabaki mbwenu. Obwire ku bwagyenzireho, ekigambo eki nikiteekateekwaho kuba kyahindikire eiziina Kibatsi. (The reason for this name is that some local leaders, especially the parish chief known as Rwabutare, were Protestants. They referred to the Catholics who had come from Bunyaruguru to build a church on their land using the word 'kyabaki', meaning "What is wrong with them?". Over time, this expression is believed to have evolved into the name Kibatsi.)

The augmentative prefix *-ki-* in this case, therefore, does not index largeness but intensifies a negative qualitative evaluation. This thus supports the view that augmentative markers in Ankole toponyms may encode pejoration even when they do not encode quantitative values. Similarly, in Extracts 43 and 44 below, the augmentative evaluative marker *-ki-* in the toponym *Ki-rera* expresses a pejorative connotation on top of the quantitative function already presented in Section 4.3.1.2. When asked about the origin of the place name, the participants argued for the presence of many wild animals, which made the area unsafe, as seen in extracts below.

Extract 43. NW: *Eego, enyamaishwa nyingi zikaba zituura omu kicweka eki, kandi abantu bakaba batarikubaasa kuhingamu. (Yes, many animals lived in this area, and people could not practice farming here)*

Extract 44. DS: *Ti bantu baingi munonga abaabaire nibatuura aha ira ahabwokuba bakaba nibatiina omwanya ogwo ahabw'enyamaishwa nyingi z'omu kibira. (Not many people lived here in the past because they feared the place due to the many wild animals)*

From the above extracts, the inability to do cultivation in this area is attributed to the presence of many animals, as noted by participant NW in Extract 43. The evaluative marker *-ki-* to amplify the negative perception realised in some toponyms in Ankole. In this case, *Kirera* encodes pejoration based on environmental hazards. This approach, therefore, aligns with Prieto's (2005) concept that these evaluative markers convey more than size.

Regarding the name *Kigoma*, the accounts of the two participants, MP and KL in Extract 45 and 46, affirm the pejorative connotations expressed through the evaluative augmentative marker *-ki-*.

Extract 45.MP: *...okaba otarikubaasa kubatiinisa, kandi bakaba batarikwikiriza ebiragiyo by'omuntu weena, bakaba bari abagomi... (...you could not scare them, and they never accepted anyone's orders abagomi)*

Extract 46. KL: *Kigoma ekaba emanywa nk'omwanya gw'abagomi (...Kigoma was known as a place of adamant people 'abagomi')*

The two accounts of participants MP and KL consistently describe the inhabitants as adamant 'abagomi' a word from which the place name was derived. They were unyielding, ungovernable men who resisted authority and could not be intimidated. Thus, the evaluative marker *-ki-* functions to convey pejorative social evaluation in the structure of the toponym Kigoma. This study further demonstrates that augmentative markers in place names can encode pejoration besides their quantitative functions.

Similarly, the augmentative evaluative marker *-ru-* in the structure of the toponym Rushoorooza expresses the pejorative connotation. When asked about the origin of the place, participant KD linked the place to Bachwezi as illustrated in the Extract 47 below.

Extract 47. KD: *Ahansi y'eishomero, hakaba hariho omuti muhango. Abantu bakaba bagira ngu n'omuti gw'Abacwezi, kandi ngu Abachwezi bakaba bari omu kyaro eki kandi batiinisa abantu (... down by the school, there was a big tree. People used to say it was a tree of the Bachwezi, and that the Bachwezi were present in this village and scared away people)*

The presence of Bachwezi, according to KD, used to frighten people away. Apart from encoding the quantitative function as seen in Section 4.3.1.2, the evaluative marker *-ru-* further amplifies a negative connotation, which is tied to threat and danger. From the above account, the name Rushoorooza conveys a negative pejoration based on a culturally perceived threat.

Furthermore, the evaluative marker *-ki-* in the toponym Kibingo expresses a pejorative connotation beyond the quantitative function. This meaning is evident in the accounts of the participants, who connect the etymology of the toponym Kibingo with wild animals and frightening elements that posed a barrier to human life and settlement, as presented in Extract 48 and 49 below.

Extract 48. JK: *Kwonka hati bakashanga ngu omwanya ogu gwijwire ekibingo. Tiharimu bantu, tiharimu ntokye, hakaba harimu busha n'enyamaishwa ezaabaire zaine akabi aha magara g'abantu (...but now they found that*

this place was full of elephant grass. There were no people, no banana plantations, it was just empty with animals which were a barrier to human life...)

Extract 49.TT: *Bakaba batiina kuzayo ahabw'enyamaishwa z'omu kishaka n'ebindi ebirikutiinisa ebyabaire nibituura omu mwanya ogwo...” (They were afraid to go there because of the wild animals and other frightening things that lived in the area...)*

Participant JK in Extract 48 highlights the absence of people and limited cultivation, while TT in Extract 49 foregrounds fear as the main reason for evasion. Just like other toponyms with the evaluative marker *-ki-* in their structure, *the -ki-* in Kibingo evaluates the negative perception of the place as hostile and unsafe.

Similarly, the evaluative marker *-ru-* in the toponym *Rwakaringura* conveys a pejorative connotation, as observed in Extracts 50 and 51 below.

Extract 50. FK: *Mbwenu, ku yaabaire azayo, Ruringura akaba abaasa kuringuriza emitwarize yaabo haza akagitwara omu bukama bwabo ataine rusa rwa bakama baayo. (...So, whenever he would go there, Ruringura could observe their behaviour and transfer it to their kingship without the consent of the owners...)*

Extract 51.ANO: *Nkashanga nibaheeta Rwakaringura (I found when the place was Rwakaringura)*

The account of participant FK in Extract 50 explains that Ruringura, a proper noun from which the toponym was derived, was characterised by inappropriate behaviour. However, the second participant ANO in Extract 51 did not demonstrate knowledge about the etymology of the place name. The first participant's account was therefore considered more reliable for this question due to its relevance to the names. The augmentative evaluative marker in the toponym therefore functions evaluatively to express social disapproval and moral judgement. Similar to the toponym Kibatsi, the evaluative augmentative marker does not encode size or abundance but rather intensifies as a negative qualitative evaluation. This study confirms pejorative functions was the motive of the presence of the evaluative marker in the structure of the toponym, especially in situations when its quantitative values do not exist.

Moreover, like the above discussed toponyms, the evaluative marker *-ki-* in the toponym Nyakinengo conveys a pejorative connotation. This is evident from the perspectives of the participants when asked about the origin of the name, as shown in the extracts below.

Extract 52. ANO: *Abantu bakaba batarikwija omu mwanya ogu ahakuba gukaba guri hare kandi kigumire kuhikayo. (People would not come to this place because it was isolated and difficult to reach)*

Extract 53. BK: *Okuza kukura kwangye, ekyanga eki hakaba harimu enganda ibiri, naashanga nibakyeta Nyakinengo na hati tiyaakahindukahoga. (When I was growing up, this area had two clans. I found when it was called Nyakinengo and even right now, it's called Nyakinengo)*

In Extract 52, participant ANO explains that people avoided the place because of its remoteness. BK's narrative in Extract 53 is scanty as regards the name Nyakinengo. He, however, only mentions the minimal settlement in the area. The accounts of the participants reinforce the fact that the area was in a remote area and had minimal settlements. The evaluative marker in the structure of Nyakinengo functions to encode social and spatial marginality, which amplifies perceptions of neglect and remoteness at the point of naming.

Finally, the augmentative prefix *-ki-* in the structure of Omukitooma encodes a pejorative, which is anchored in fear. The two participants interviewed associate the etymology of the place with threatening elements like Bachwezi alongside snakes and other dangerous wild animals, as seen in Extracts 54 and 55 below.

Extract 54. GK: *Hakaba hariho omuti muhango munonga, kandi niinyikiriza ngu gukaba guri omuti gw'Abacwezi. Omu miti endiijo hakaba harimu enjoka, ebimera by'amahwa, n'ebintu bingi ebirikutiinisa. (...there was a very big tree, and I believe it was a tree of the Bacwezi. In the other trees, were snakes, thorny plants, and many frightening things...)*

Extract 55. ANO: *Abantu bakaba beehara omwanya ogwo ahabw'okugira ngu gukaba gwijwire emiti y'ebitooma, eyaabaire ereetamu ebihangirwe bingi eby'akabi. (People used to abandon the place because it was full of backcloth trees, which attracted many dangerous creatures...)*

Although the evaluative marker *ki-* in the toponym Omukitooma expresses the magnitude of the tree as discussed in Section 4.3.1.2, it also conveys negative connotations as seen above.

As Prieto's radial model on augmentatives suggests, the above accounts demonstrate that in Ankole toponyms, apart from the quantitative roles, the evaluative markers can express pejorative connotations driven by fear and insecurity.

This finding resonates with the conclusions of different scholars. For example, Masanja (2025) who studied 'morphosemantic and morphosyntactic analysis of place names in Zanzibar Island in Tanzania'. Masanja (2025) argues that names of places have linguistic markers, which express something about people in relation to their environment. Similarly, Mugyabuso (2022) reveals that Ruhaya speakers' express evaluation of the entities surrounding them through place naming by the use of augmentatives and diminutive markers that carry pejorative and ameliorative connotations.

Overall, in the data analysed, all 8 toponyms with the augmentative prefixes entail pejorative meanings. These pejorative meanings were expressed in toponyms with NCP *-ki-* and *-ru-*. Other augmentative classes, 8 (*bi-*), 20 (*gu-*) and 21(*ga-*) were not common in the toponyms analysed because of reasons highlighted in Section 4.2. In general, the most notable finding from this analysis is that the augmentative and diminutive evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms convey not only quantitative function but also pejorative and ameliorative roles. This study reveals the roles of evaluative markers within the contextual composition of toponyms in Ankole. The next section discusses the etymology of selected place names in Ankole.

4.4 Toponymic Changes in Ankole

The findings about changing of Ankole toponyms show that Ankole toponyms are fluid cultural constructs which change as communities adjust to new social realities. The changes made by communities to an original name accumulate layers of meaning or place names (Jordan, 2012). Informed by Sorokin's externalistic principle, cultural elements evolve with social change. The findings from this study show that Ankole toponyms acquire, lose, and modify meanings across generations. This study identified four principal themes that define the various ways in which Ankole toponyms can be redefined or changed. These include ecological change, sociological change, socio-political and administrative changes, mythological, spiritual and sacred changes. These four key factors provided an understanding that Ankole toponyms change because of multiple factors which evolve and change the meaning of Ankole toponymic elements based on their environmental dynamics, sociological adaptations, political histories, and spiritual worldviews.

4.4.1 Ecological /environmental change

According to Usmonova (2025), place names change with change in the ecological features of an environment. Correspondingly, the findings from this study show that Ankole place names adapt to environmental changes. In the past, as noted in 4.4, the name of a place could be chosen based on natural characteristics such as thick bush, banana trees, elephant grass, grazing areas, and specific formations (Jordan, 2012). As the environment changed due to population growth in some areas, clearing of trees for agriculture, growth of trade in some areas, and change in youth cultural behaviour, new toponyms emerged reflecting the environment in its current form, an observation this study confirms. This is illustrated in the extracts from toponyms Katookye and Katooma below.

Extract 56. TK: *Eiziina erisy a ririho n’Omukihogo. Eiziina ry’ekihogo abantu bakaba babyairemu muhogo, haza mbwenu kubayombekamu ebizimbe, baaheeta Omukihogo. (There is a new name Omukihogo. This name came into existence because people had grown cassava there. When people built there, they named the place Omukihogo.)*

Extract 57. BP: *Hati omuri Katookye omu hakaijamu eziina eri barikweta Kagongo ahabwokuba hakaba hariyo akagongo, kandi erindi eziina ni Kabaare ahabwokuba hakaba hariyo otubaare otu abantu barikwombekyesa, amaziina goona aga geizireho omu kicweka eki. (Now, in this Katookye, there is a place name that has come up called Kagongo because there was a hill, another name is called Kibaare because there were stones which people used in building. All of these place names have come up in this area.)*

Extract 58. ER: *...Omwanya ogu gukaba gwetwa Omu Kibira ahabw'emiti mingi eyabeire eri aha. Abantu ku baatandikire kutuurayo, bakahindura eziina eryo baaheeta Katooma ahabw'emiti mingi y'bitooma eyaabaire eri ey'omugasho munonga aha bantu. Bwanyima, amaduuka ku gaatandikire kwombekwa omu kicweka eki, omwanya ogu gukatandika kumanywa nka Omu Katojo, ahabw'okwombekwa omu matojo... (...this place used to be called Omu Kibira because of the many trees which were here? When people began settling there, they changed the name to Katooma because of the many backcloth trees, which were very important to the people. Later, as shops were built in the area, the place*

became known as Omu Katojo, because it was developed in a thorny area...)

Extract 59. SJ: *...Naaba naakishoboreire, omu kibira tikyakibaho. Obwahati hariho Katooma, nangwa n'omu maduuka abantu nibeeta Katojo ahabw'amaduuka agaabaire g'ombekirwe omu mwanya ogurimu amahwa... (...I explained it, omu kibira is no longer there. Now there is Katooma, even in the shops people are calling it Katojo because of the shops which were built in a place occupied by thorns...)*

From the extracts above, it is evident that toponyms in Ankole change as their physical environment changes. In Extracts 56 and 57, toponym Katookye, for example, has changed to new names like Ekihogo, Kagongo and Kabaare as stated, which all emerged from the environmental features like cassava gardens, hills, and stones for construction, respectively. Similarly, in Extract 58, the participants' narratives show how toponyms change in response to ecological or environmental change (Usmonova, 2025). The place, which was initially known as Omukibira, reflected dense tree cover, which changed with the extinction of these trees. As the backcloth trees emerged, the name changed to Katooma reflecting the environmental feature of backcloth, which was spread out. These findings demonstrate that toponyms are dynamic and so respond to changes in land use and settlement patterns. However, despite these environmental changes and the emergence of new toponyms, it was found out that for some places, the former place names persist in their usage. This was confirmed after probing participant BP about whether the bodaboda person in town can actually bring someone to Katookye when the new name Omukihigo is used. Below was his response.

Extract 60.

BP: *Ego naakureeta buzima n'obu waakuhika aha siteegi oti ninza omu kihogo naakureeta*

(Yes, he can surely bring you. Even when you reach the stage and tell them to take you to Omukihogo, they can bring you here in Katookye.)

BP's response confirms the fact that these two names, Omukihogo and Katookye are both used to refer to the same place, unlike Katooma and Katojo where the two names are used interchangeably. Therefore, the findings concur with those of Usmonova (2025) to confirm that toponyms in Ankole evolve based on the environment's continuous changes. They are not

static, as Komala (2019) asserts, but adaptable linguistic labels that mirror the dynamics of the ecological conditions.

4.4.2 Sacred re-interpretation

The study's results further reveal that the Ankole toponyms evolve as a result of sacred reinterpretation. This shows how spiritual meanings attached to the landscape change alongside social transformation (Egeler, 2015). Some of the earliest names of places were based on them being considered as sacred spaces. These included forests that were regarded as belonging to the Bachwezi; those associated with spirits' and those where sounds were mysterious, animals were dangerous, or the area had ritual significance. All these have been re-interpreted to new meanings as seen in the extracts below.

Extract 61. GK: *Buzima, omwanya ogwo gukaba nigutiinisa munonga. Amaraka agatari ga buriijo gakaba nigahurirwa nyekiro, nk'oku ekintu kirikugamba kuruga omu kibira. Bwanyima, abantu bakatandika kukoresa emiti omu miringo etarikushushana. Omu kubanza, tukaba tukiine obwoba, kwonka ku haabaire hatariho kibi kyona, buri omwe akagumizamu. Abantu bakaba batorotoora enku, bakora obwato bukye, nangwa n'okutumbisa amaato kuruga omu nku ezo. Omu bwire bukye, tukatandika kugasirwa omu itaka. (Indeed, the place was very scary. Strange sounds could be heard at night, as if something was talking from the forest... Afterwards, people began using the trees in different ways. At first, we were still fearful, but when nothing bad happened, everyone continued. People collected firewood, made small boats, and even fermented boats from the wood. Soon, we started to benefit from the cleared land.)*

Extract 62. ANO: *Ekitooma bakaba bagira ngu n'ekitooma ky'abacwezi kwonka Ruhanga yaija yaahindura file kyaba ekicweka ky'abantu. Abaabaire barimu abaraguriramu, abacwezi, abafumu, boona baatuntumuka. (They used to say that it's the place of a bachwezi but God changed the file and it became a place for people. Those who would get medicine from here, the witches all disappeared.)*

Extract 63. KD: *Abachwezi, abantu tibaakiikiririza omuri ebyo, ahabwokuba tihaine ekyabaireho obu omuti ogwo gwatemwa..." (The Bachwezi, people no*

longer believe in that because nothing happened when that tree was cut...)

The accounts of the above participants indicate that change in toponymic meaning also occurs through sacred re-interpretation. The place of Omukitooma and Rushoorooza were initially perceived as frightening and spiritually charged with spirits, and the Bachwezi discouraged settlement and land use (see section 4.2.4). However, based on the accounts of the participants in Extract 61, 62 and 63, these sacred interpretations were redefined. People began to believe that divine intervention had rendered the place safe and accessible. This change in spiritual understanding shifted the meaning of the toponym from sacred to an everyday use and livelihood. Nevertheless, from the participants' accounts in Extracts 61 and 62, the earlier sacred associations remain embedded in the local memory together with the present normalized interpretation of the place. For example, when these landscapes were cleared and used for farming, settlement, and commerce, the spiritual meanings started to be interpreted differently. Forests that were once feared were cleared and gave way to banana plantations, grazing areas, or venues for trade. In many instances, people still refer to the spiritual stories, but their current use of the land has changed, and as a result, the former place names have a new interpretation that reflects their current uses rather than their previous sacred interpretations.

4.4.3 Migration and urbanisation

As people migrate and settle in different areas, place names emerge that reflect changing patterns of the population (Bilsborrow, 2002). This study's findings found out that migration and urbanisation are central to the changes in meaning in Ankole toponyms as observed elsewhere (see Dollimore & Jordan, 2019). The findings further provide evidence of how population groups moving into areas and transforming their spatial context have influenced the reinterpretation of the local place names of the ancestral lands. Through migration, new groups were added to the region through inter-village trade or migration of the displaced to areas of traditional settlement, as noted in Extracts 64 and 65 regarding the place name Kabingo and Extracts 66 for Kigoma.

Extract 64. JK: *Omwanya ogwo gukamanywa nka Bugomora ahabw'okuba niho abantu baabaire bareeta amatungo gaabo kuriisa n'okukura gye. N'obu eraabe neeshangwa omuri Kibingo. (...The area became known as Bugomora because it was where people brought their animals to feed and grow well. Even though it is located in Kibingo...)*

Extract 65. TT: *Eego, eiziina eryo ririmu, abamwe abantu nibaheeta Karwango. Hati ku baazaire baakanya, ku entuura y'abantu oku eri batakwikirizana, baafuruka, hati ku baahiikire omu mwanya ogu, hati abaakuriya baagiira ngu bakagyenda n'aba rwango, hati baheeta karwango. (Yes, that name is there; some people refer to it as Karwango. When they became many, like how human life is, they had misunderstandings. When they reached here, people to kept referring to them as people who migrated because of hatred, thus Karwango)*

Extract 66. LK: *Amaziina amasya agu abantu barikukoresa garimu Ryancunda, eyaabaire neeruga omu mwanya ogu baabaire bakoreramu amaarwa. Omu myanya y'obushuubuzi, abakoloni bwanyima baareetaho eiziina Aharyana n'eishatu obwo barikukora enguuto. Kwonka amaziina aga goona nigagwa ahansi y'ekicweka ekihango ekirikumanywa nka Kigoma. (New names that people use include Ryancunda, which originated from the place where alcohol was being made. In the trading centres, the colonialists later named the area Aha ryana n'eishatu while constructing the roads. But all these names fall under the larger area known as Kigoma...)*

Therefore, toponyms Kibingo and Kigoma demonstrate that toponymic changes in Ankole may be triggered by migration and urbanisation. For instance, Kibingo as shown in Extract 64 gave rise to Bugomora making them two distant names. This was because of the pastoral landscape that was in Kibingo which forced some people to migrate there. The process consequently led to the rise of a new name, which was in line with the motive of their migration. TT in Extract 65 attributed the rise of the new name Karwango to tensions among the people, which reflects experiences of displacement and movement. Furthermore, the new toponym Karwango, may confirm that some migratory stories and incidences can be embedded in Ankole toponyms, reshaping their meanings over time. Based on the interviews presented in Extract 66, Aharyanan'eishatu emerged as a result of urbanisation. It is linked to road construction and trading centres. These transformations introduce new spatial functions and naming practices, which eventually lead to new interpretations of given toponyms. Despite these layered meanings, the former place names, namely, Kibingo and Kigoma remain in use alongside the locally and historically grounded names. Such further provides historical and contemporary

context for the human geography of Ankole through the evolution of the place names that reflect this duality.

4.4.4 Socio-economic transformations

The findings of this study further indicate that the transformation of the Ankole region's socio-economic system has been a major influence on how Ankole place names have evolved. Names of many areas were originally based on old subsistence methods of supporting oneself, e.g., through grazing, hunting for animals in the area and growing food crops in the area. Following Sorokin's (1937) externalistic principle, these transformations are facilitated by effects of colonialism, or inter-ethnic contact, which either change existing toponyms or create new toponyms. In the context of this study, new economic activities emerged, including commercial agriculture, market expansion, infrastructure development, and modern service industries. The original names, such as, Kaagati, Kambuzi, Kakoma and Nyakatugunda were gradually modified or replaced, as highlighted in discussions below.

Starting with the toponym Kaagati, the two participants interviewed, KB and MJ, revealed that Ankole toponyms change because of social economic influence, as illustrated in Extract 67.

Extract 67. KB: *Ego, hariho eiziina eririkwetwa omu Katafaari. Twombekire amaduuka agamwe omu mwanya ogwo n'amatafaari. (Yes, there is a name, Omukatafaari. We built some buildings for shops in that area with bricks)*

Extract 68. MJ: *Omukikoiyo naho gukaba guri omwanya gwijwire ebikoiyo, ku baabaire bombeka amaduuka, abantu baabo bakaba bagweta Omukikoiyo. (Omukikwijo was also a place full of sugarcanes; when shops were built there, people renamed the place Omukikwijo)*

As observed, toponyms such as Omukatafaari emerged as a result of construction of shops with bricks which was new in the area. Similarly, Omukikoiyo also described the area dominated by sugarcanes. The establishment of shops, an economic venture, leads to reinterpretation of the place in economic terms (Feldman, 2014). However, the emergency of Omukikoiyo is not attributed to any economic activity that might have influenced its existence. This is mainly attributed to the change in the ecological features, as discussed in 4.4.1. As explained already, the broader toponym, Kaagati, continues to be used administratively, coexisting with the newly economically grounded toponyms.

The change of the toponym Kakoma is also attributed to social economic functions. People originally knew the place as Kakoma due to circumstances, which surrounded the place as explained in 4.2.3. As people began making milling stones from this area, another name emerged which changed the place name to a new name that reflects economic activity. This can be illustrated in the extract below.

Extract 69. SR: *Ekicweka eki, hati nibakyeta Kyemengo, kwonka eiziina ryabandize rikaba riri Kakoma. Bwanyima, abantu kutandika kwiha amabaare g'okusa omu mwanya ogu, gukatandika kumanywa nka Kyemengo.. (This side is now Kyemengo but it was Kakoma that came first. The fact that they were extracting milling stone from here, they named the place Kyemengo)*

Extract 70. FM: *Eiziina risya eririmu ni Kyemengo. Eiziina eri rikaijaho obu abantu baatandika kutunga amabaare g'okuseeraho kuruga kunu. (The other new name is called Kyemengo. This name came up when people started getting milling stones from here).*

From the above interviews, it is observed that the name Kyemengo emerged from the economic activity of extracting milling stones 'emengo' making the place acquire a new economic interpretation. The new name Kyemengo encodes the productive use of the landscape rather than its earlier identity. Importantly, it was found out that the name Kakoma remains in use even when the actions behind its existence no longer take place. It is used alongside those shaped by economic activity.

About the name Nyakatugunda, MP in Extract 71 below recounts that within Nyakatugunda, the name Kabutare emerged due to the presence of stones, which were used in iron smelting. Like the case in the toponym Kakoma, this also highlights the changing of the place name toward the economic activity in place.

Extract 71. MP: *Amaziina amasya garimu, nka Kabutare aha kw'Omugyenzi Bakyenga. Eki kikabaho ahabw'okugira ngu hakaba hariho amabaare agu abakozi b'ebyoma baabaire bakoresa omu mirimo yaabo... (Yes, those names are there, like Kabutare at the late Bakyenga's. This was because there were stones which the iron smelters used in their work...)*

Note that the monk fruits were not in place at the point this research was conducted, but the name was still in use, as was the iron smelting economic activity, but people still used the name Kabutare. This further confirms the fact that even when the economic activities or features people based on to name places go extinct, the place names remain in use. The above concept shows how people in earlier generations lived and shaped the economic conditions of their time. The new names remain more reflective of how this part of the world has changed to current ways of living and producing goods and services.

In this section, I have expounded on how place names change in Ankole. The findings from this study are in agreement with those of Toth, (2011); Buza (2011), and Kanievna et al. (2024). For instance, ecological changes, sacred reinterpretations, migration and urbanisation, and socio-economic transformations all trigger changes in place naming and meanings of place names. Similar to the Light and Young's (2017) study, when environmental or economic activities change or go extinct, their functional significance may reduce, but the toponyms remain in use as historical markers alongside newly formed toponyms.

4.5 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed and addressed the findings in reference to the set objectives. Objective one was to explore the etymology of selected Ankole toponyms. The findings provide evidence that Ankole place names can be attributed to various factors, including the environment, the economic activities of the Ankole people, the systems of governance, and the spiritual and mythological traditions. These findings align with the studies of Blažek (2010); Garcia-Quera (2025); David and Glogarová (2022); Pál (2023); Buberwa (2012) and others who linked the origin of place names to different facets. In the second objective, the study aimed at investigating the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponym. The findings reveal the central role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms. The augmentative and diminutive markers in particular serve both quantitative and qualitative functions as they encode size, intensity, value judgements, and emotional attitudes associated with a place. The third objective was to examine how toponyms in Ankole have changed. The research findings reveal that, due to changes in the environment, sacred reinterpretation or recasting, migration, urbanization and socio-economic developments over different periods of time, the names and meanings given to Ankole toponyms have evolved and developed over time. This finding resonates with studies of Marin (2012); Light and Young (2017); Guyot and Seethal (2007) and others who argue that toponymic change is usually attributed to different factors. Collectively, the findings confirm that Ankole toponyms serve as a living archive of linguistic structure, cultural values, and

historical change, capturing how meanings, evaluation, and identity are continuously negotiated in relation to place names.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings of this study. The study set out to examine the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms, investigate their etymology, and analyse the shifts in meanings embedded in selected toponyms. Section 5.2 presents the summary of findings, Section 5.3 provides recommendations, and Section 5.4 identifies potential areas for further research.

5.2 Summary and conclusions of the findings

Objective (i) of this study aimed at exploring the etymology of Ankole toponyms under. The findings reveal that Ankole names resulted from the community's worldview, cultural values, and lived experiences. It presents four interrelated foundations, namely, environmental and ecological features, social economic practices, social political and administrative practices and mythic or spiritual naming. These findings resonate with the conclusions of studies of Blažek (2010); Garcia-Quera (2025); David and Glogarová (2022); Pál (2023); Buberwa (2012) and others who linked the origin of place names to different surroundings in an environment. The results further indicate that Ankole toponyms are a collective cultural archive with regard to ecological information, economic practices, political history, and spiritual heritage. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that Ankole toponyms are not only descriptive but also reflect a deep manifestation of the Ankole people's culture and their connected history.

Furthermore, in objective (ii), this study investigated the role of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms. The findings reveal that Ankole toponyms encode both quantitative and qualitative meanings through evaluative morphological prefixes. According to Hinojosa et al. (2022); Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Wilson (2022); Prieto (2015) and others, the qualitative extension of evaluative morphology implies that people view qualitative evaluations related to augmentation through cultural and emotional lenses. This study also confirmed that both diminutives and augmentatives in Ankole toponyms are not simply morphological indicators of size but rather tools representing the value of social and environmental perceptions.

With reference to objective (iii), which had sought to examine how toponyms in Ankole have changed over time. The research findings confirm that toponyms in Ankole are not fixed linguistic labels but fluid cultural constructs, which evolve in response to changing social,

environmental, economic, and spiritual realities. This finding aligns with studies of Buza (2011); Kanievna et al. (2024); Marin (2012); Light and Young (2017); Guyot and Seethal (2007) and others who argue that toponymic change is usually attributed to change in the surroundings like politics, movements, discoveries mentioned but a few. However, an important observation ascertained in regard to this objective was that most of the former toponyms are kept in use together with new toponyms because of the reasons highlighted in Section 4.5. This finding further indicates that the toponymic continuity and change in Ankole shows how community balance the preservation of historic identity with evolving social cultural realities.

Conclusively, these findings show how place names connect the past and the present by preserving its ecological, historical, political, and spiritual change. Accordingly, through their linguistic elements, Ankole toponyms serve as cultural links that reflect and sustain the identity of the Ankole people.

5.3 Recommendations

For academicians, records should be kept to preserve social and linguistic treasures stored in toponyms. Toponyms carry important linguistic, cultural and social aspects about the communities where they are formed. Documenting place names helps to combat the loss of the historical and cultural knowledge, implications of erosion of indigenous identity, weakening of intergenerational knowledge transfer of culture and a loss of awareness of how language reflects societal values and perception of a place.

The study also recommends further research on the emergency of many place names which are not officially documented but are commonly used by the people in a particular area.

5.4 Areas of further research

This study recommends that further research could be done on personal names in the Ankole subregion to see whether they feature evaluative morphology and the reasons for their use. Moreover, this research was a small-scale study, which only focused on the Ankole sub-region, therefore, to further assess evaluative morphology in Runyankore speaking areas, future researchers could include a larger scale of the area to find out the extent to which evaluative morphology is integrated. This research could be done by postgraduate students and language research centres.

In addition, research could also be conducted on other fields of onomastics found in the Ankole subregion. These subfields include zoonymy which deals with study of names of animals, hydronym which is the study of names of water bodies, phytonym which is concerned with the

study of names of different plants among others. This research could be done by anthropologists and cultural enthusiasts.

A comparative study could also be conducted on evaluative morphology involving toponyms from languages closely related to Runyankore such as Rukiga, Runyoro, Rutooro, Luganda, Lusoga, and Luganda to determine whether they share features identified in chapter four. This suggested areas of further research could be done by research institutions and university researchers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Examining Ankole Toponyms: Etymology, Evaluative Morphosemantics and Evolution

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Leonard Bikorwomuhangi from the School of Languages, Literature and Communication at Makerere University. The information from this study will contribute to the Master's dissertation that I am writing.

You were selected as a possible participant because you are knowledgeable about the history, meanings, and cultural practices surrounding place names (toponyms) in Ankole.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to investigate the role of evaluative markers, the etymological origins, and the change of toponyms in Ankole. If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be interviewed on the meanings, histories, and changes associated with place names in your community.

Confidentiality

All information you provide will be kept confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. No participant's real name will appear in this study; instead, codes or initials will be used where necessary.

With your consent, interviews may be audio-recorded to ensure accuracy. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings, which will be used strictly for research purposes. All recordings will be deleted once the dissertation is completed.

Participation and Withdrawal

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. You may also decline to answer any questions you do not wish to respond to. The researcher may also withdraw you from the study if circumstances arise that make this necessary.

Identification of Investigators

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact:

Leonard Bikorwomuhangi: +256 776627455, leonardbikorwomuhangi2@gmail.com

Dr. Allen Asiimwe (Supervisor): +256 776846984, email: asiimwea94@gmail.com.

Dr. Gilbert Gumoshabe (Supervisor): +256 772708639 gilbertgumoshabe@gmail.com

Participant's Statement of Consent

I, _____, have understood the purpose of this research and I am willing to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Declaration

I, Leonard Bikorwomuhangi, declare that I have explained the information given in this document to the participant. S/he was encouraged to ask questions and the conversation was conducted in Runyankore/English.

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date: _____

OKWIKIRIZA KWEJUMBA OMU KUCONDooZA

Okucondooza obumanyiso bw'okushwijuma amakuru omu maziina g'emyanya omu kicweka kya Ankole

Sebo/Nyabo

Nooshabwa kwejumba omu kucondooza okurikukorwa Omw. Leonard Bikorwomuhangi kuruga omu ishomero ry'endimi, ebihandiiko n'eby'empurizana aha yunivasite ya Makerere. Ebiraaruge omu kucondooza oku nibiija kuhwera omucondoozi kuhandiika ekitabo ekirikuhendera emishomo ye.

Okatooranwa kwejumbira omu kucondooza oku ahabw'okugira ngu oine okumanya aha byafaayo, amakuru, n'emitwarize y'obuhangwa eyehinguririize amaziina g'ebicweka omu kyanga eki.

Omugasho gw'okucondooza

Okwega oku nikugyezaho kucondooza aha bukomooko bw'amaziina, obumanyiso bw'okushwijuma enyehurira n'okuhinduka kw'amakuru omu maziina g'emyanya etoorainwe omu Ankole. Waaheza kwikiriza kwejumba omu kucondooza oku, noiija kubuuzibwa aha makuru, ebyafaayo, n'empindahinduka eziine akakwate n'amaziina g'ebicweka omu kyanga kyawe.

Okukuuma ebiraaruge omu kucondooza

Amakuru goona agu orikuha nigaija kuguma gari ag'ekihama kandi nigaija kugambwaho waaba onyikiriize. Tihariho eiziina ryawe erihikire eririkuza kureebeka omu kucondooza oku; omu mwanya gw'ekyo, koodi nari enyuguta z'okubanza niziija kukoresibwa ahu kirikwetengyesa.

Waaba noikiriza, amaraka g'ekigaaniiro nigabaasa kukwatwa kureeba amakuru gaakumwa gye. Omucondoozi niwe wenka oraatungye amaraka aga, agarikwija kukoresibwa omu kucondooza kwonka.

Okwejumba n'obuteejumba omu kucondooza oku

Okwejumba omu kucondooza oku n'okw'okwekundira kandi tikurimu kushashurwa kwona, n'okwabusha. Oine obugabe kuruga omu kucondooza obwire bwona. Kandi noobaasa kwanga

kugarukamu ebibuuzo byona ebi otakwenda kugarukamu. Omucondoozi naabaasa n'okukwiha omu kucondooza haaba hariho embeera ezirikureetera eki kwetengyesa.

Okumanya abacondoozi

Waba oyine ekibuzo kyona aha kucondooza oku, oine obugabe kugambira:

Leonard Bikorwomuhangi: +256 776627455, leonardbikorwomuhangi2@gmail.com

Dr. Allen Asimwe (Omureeberezi): +256 776846984, asiimwea94@gmail.com

Dr. Gilbert Gumoshabe (Omureeberezi): +256 772708639 gumoshabegilbert@gmail.com

Okwikiriza kw'omwejumbi

Nyowe _____ naayetegyereza ekigyendererwa ky 'okucondooza oku kandi naikiriza kwejumba omu kucondooza oku. Naaheebwa kopi ya foomu egi nk'obuhame.

Omukono: _____

Ebiro: _____

Okuhamya kw'omucondoozi

Nyowe Leonard Bikorwomuhangi nimpamya ngu naashobororera omwejumbi amakuru agaheirwe omu kihandiiko eki. Aikiriizae kubuuzibwa kandi akagarukamu ebibuuzo omu Runyankore-Rukiga.

Omukono: _____

Ebiro: _____

Appendix B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Could you please tell me your name (optional), age, and occupation?
2. How long have you lived in this area?
3. Are there some histories and origins of Ankole place names that you know?
4. What are the roles of evaluative markers in Ankole toponyms?
5. Do these evaluative markers encode today's meaning? (How)
6. What is the etymology of this name (specific toponym)?
7. Has this toponym changed? If yes, how?
8. What factors do you think have caused changes in place names?
9. Do you think the former place names are still important today? Why or why not?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about place names in this area?

EBIBUZO BY'OKUKURATIRA OMU KUCONDOOZA

1. Noobaasa kungambira eiziina ryawe (optional), emyaka yaawe, n'omurimo gwawe?
2. Omazire bwire ki omu kicweka eki?
3. Oine ebyafaayo n'emigyenzo, y'amaziina g'ebicweka by'Ankore?
4. Hariho obumanyiso bw'omutaano omu iziina oburikworeka omugasho, emiteekateekyere, nari enyehurira y'abantu (nk'ekyokureeberaho, ekirungi, ekibi)?
5. Obumanyiso obu obw 'okushwijuma bukiine amakuru nk'ago n'obunaku obu? Ahabw'enki?
6. Omwanya ogu gukatunga guta eiziina eri? (ekitebyo ky'obukomooko, omutandiki, ekyabaireho, obuhangwa, enkora y'obuhangwa, n'ebindi.)
7. Amaziina n'amakuru g'eiziina ry'omwanya ogu gahindikire gata?
8. Noogira ngu ni bintu ki ebireesireho empindahinduka ezi omu makuru?
9. Noogira ngu amakuru g'eiziina ery'okubanza gakiine omugasho n'eri izooba? Ahabw'enki?
10. Hariho ekindi eki orikwenda kugaaniiraho aha maziina g'ebicweka omu kicweka eki?

Webare Munonga

Appendix C: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

MAKERERE
P.O. Box 7062 Kampala Uganda



UNIVERSITY
Tel: +256-414-530106
E-mail: deal.chuss@mak.ac.ug

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

28th August 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam .

Re: Bikorwomuhangi Leonard Reg. No. 2024/HD03/26528U

This is to confirm that the above named person is a student of the Department of African Languages, School of Languages, Literature and Communication, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University. He is pursuing his studies that will lead to a Master of Arts degree in African Languages. He is doing research on the topic titled: **Examining Evaluative Markers in Ankore Toponyms.**

While undertaking the data collection exercise, he will be required to conduct interviews, take pictures and even record voices where necessary, to enable him collect information relevant to his research topic.

The research he is doing is purely for academic purposes. Any assistance rendered to him will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance, as 'We Build for the Future'

Yours sincerely

Dr. Gilbert Gumoshabe (PhD)
Head of Department
0772708639



Appendix D: NAMES OF VILLAGES IN KIZINDA TOWN COUNCIL

KIZINDA TOWN COUNCIL VILLAGES

NO	WARD	VILLAGES
1.	Kigoma ward	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kigoma LC1 2. Kigoma trading Centre LC1 3. Bucuma 4. Rwacunda LC1 5. Nyamiko LC1 6. Katooma 7. Kirera LC1 8. Kibatsi LC1 9. Ryabugahi 10. Nyakatugunda
2.	Nyabubaare ward	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rushoorooza LC 2. Matsya LC1 3. Ncwera LC1 4. Kakoma LC1 5. Kambuzi LC1 6. Nyakinengo 7. Kizinda LC1 8. Bugomora LC1
3.	Kizinda ward	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ntanza LC1 2. Birimbi LC1 3. Kizinda T/C 4. Kaagati LC1 5. Bukumbya LC1 6. Kitooma LC1 7. Kibingo LC1 8. Bukumbya LC1



Confirmed by M. Shaka
Charles' 03/09/2025

