

<特集「アスペクト」>

## The Strategies to Express Aspects in Kinyakyusa Sentences ニャキュサ語のアスペクトの表現方法

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**要旨:** 先行研究では、東ルヴ・バンツー語 (Bar-el & Petzell, 2021), マラ・バンツー語 (Roth, 2018), 南タンザニア・バンツー語 (Persohn & Bernander, 2018) などの東部バンツー語では、本動詞と助動詞の両方に接尾辞でアスペクトが表れることが明らかになっている。しかしながら、類似言語間でも様相の差異が確認されている。このことは、ニャキュサ語のアスペクト体系に関するさらなる研究に動機を与える。本研究では、バンツー諸語に属するニャキュサ語においてアスペクトを表現するために二つの方法が用いられていることが判明した。一方では、アスペクト体系は動詞に現れる接尾辞-ile と、同一動詞の接頭辞に現れる時制形成辞によって、完了相と未完了相を区別する。他方、習慣相と進行相の区別は、前者に接尾辞-ag-を、後者に接頭辞(不定詞)-ku-を用いることで行われる。他方、複合文では、現在・過去時制を表す助動詞形-li-と現在・未来時制を表す-ja-が、他の活用情報を帯びる本動詞と共に現れる。助動詞-li-は文法化が進んでおり、ニャキュサ語の一部動詞におけるその必須出現がそれを裏付けている。

**Abstract:** Research have shown that Eastern Bantu languages such as East Ruvu Bantu (Bar-el & Petzell, 2021), Mara Bantu (Roth, 2018) and Southern Tanzania Bantu (Persohn & Bernander, 2018) reveal aspects in the suffixes of lexical verbs as well as in auxiliary verbs. However, variations across similar languages are also attested. This is the motivation for further research of the aspect system of Kinyakyusa. It was found that two strategies are used to express aspects of the Bantu language Kinyakyusa. On the one hand, the aspect system distinguishes between the perfective and imperfective based on the suffixal formative -ile that occurs in the verb, together with the tense formatives in the prefix of the same verb. The distinction of the habitual and progressive aspects is based on use of the suffixal formative -ag- for the former and the prefixal (infinitive) -ku- for the later. On the other hand, compound sentences bear the auxiliary forms -li- for the present and past time-frames and -ja- for the present and future time-frames, which occur together with the lexical verbs which inflect for other inflectional information. The auxiliary verb -li- is getting grammaticalized as evidenced in its compulsory occurrence in some verbs in Kinyakyusa.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.15026/0002001496>

**キーワード:** アスペクト体系, 助動詞, バントウ, ニャキュサ語, 本動詞, タンザニア

**Keywords:** aspect system, auxiliary verb, Bantu, Kinyakyusa, lexical verb, Tanzania



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## 1. Introduction

This paper offers a detailed description of the strategies used to express aspects in the grammar of the Bantu language Kinyakyusa, spoken in south-western Tanzania and northern Malawi. In Malawi, the language is popularly called Cinkonde (Hara & Lusekelo, 2024), while in Tanzania it is commonly known as Kinyakyusa (Felberg, 1996; Lusekelo, 2024a; Persohn, 2020; Robinson, 2021). The data presented in this paper come from the area around Kiwira in Rungwe District of Tanzania (Lusekelo, 2007; Lusekelo et al., 2025; van der Wal et al., 2023).

The packaging of information in the verb of Kinyakyusa appeared for the topics of tense, aspect and modality (Lusekelo, 2007; Persohn, 2020; Robinson, 2023), object marking and argument structure (Lusekelo, 2024b), the passive construction (Lusekelo, 2024c), and the packaging of focus and topic in a construction (Lusekelo et al., 2025; van der Wal & Lusekelo, 2022; van der Wal et al., 2023). The aspects of Kinyakyusa require further attention mainly on the manifestation of the formative **-ile** (Botne, 2010; Persohn, 2020; Robinson, 2021), the habituality marker **-ag-** (Kanijo & Petzell, 2025; Lusekelo, 2007; Persohn, 2020; Persohn & Bernander, 2018; Rugemalira, 2008), and the use of the negation markers **-ti-** and **-ka-** in a given aspectual spectrum (Botne, 2010; Persohn, 2021).

Specifically, three areas that require scrutiny concern the negation marker as occurring in the aspects of Kinyakyusa and the formatives for present tense in the language. Firstly, it is suggested that the expression **-kaali** ‘still’ would better be treated as a word for persistive aspect by Persohn (2021). In other circumstances which involve the auxiliary verbs, the structure may point to another analysis. In sections 2 and 5, I shall argue that the structure may split further into **-kaa-li** ‘NEG-be’ in Kinyakyusa. Secondly, the expression **-linku**, that is treated as an affix for the narrative past by Persohn (2016), requires further scrutiny. Based on previous analyses in Persohn (2019), in sections 4 and 5, I want to argue that **-li-n-ku-** would be properly parsed as be-18(LOC)-15(INF)- in Kinyakyusa. Thirdly, Persohn and Bernander (2018) investigates the manifestation of the prefix **i-** occurring in Kinyakyusa and other languages in southern Tanzania. In sections 2 and 5, I revisit their reconstruction and suggest for the auxiliary reading of this prefix.

Aspects involve the level of completion of the event or situation described in the verb form (Botne, 2010; Nurse, 2008; Nurse, Rose & Hewson 2016; Roth, 2018). Specifically, Nurse (2008: 43) pointed out that “aspect is most often encoded at FV or TA. FV originally carried a heavier aspectual load.” In the same line, Nurse and Devos (2019: 209), “tense establishes the time framework, and aspect then sets out how the situation is distributed within the time framework.” Research has established strategies used to encode aspects in Bantu languages (Anderson, 2011; Botne, 2025; Nurse, 2008; Nurse & Devos, 2019; Roth, 2018). The aspect system of Bantu languages such as Kinyakyusa is marked by the suffix **-ile** as in (1), the infinitive in both the first and the second verb in a construction with two verbs as shown by in (2), or in the auxiliary verb as illustrated by **-li** in (3). However, variations in the affirmative and negative constructions is apparently attested across Bantu languages (Anderson, 2011; Botne, 2010; Nurse, 2008). Nurse (2008: 43) pointed out that “some languages today keep this while others have de-emphasized the FV and carry most or all of their aspectual distinctions at TA.” The variation calls for further research, which is the motivation for the current investigation of aspects in Kinyakyusa.

- (1) Tuntufye a-Ø-tem-ile i-li-toki.  
 1.Tuntufye SM1-PST-cut-PFV AUG-5-banana  
 ‘Tuntufye has cut down banana.’

- (2) Tu-kw-is-a ku-fw-al-a i-ngiga.  
SM2-INF-come-FV INF-wear-FV AUG-9.crown  
'We will be crowned.'
- (3) Tu-ka-li pa-ku-mal-a.  
SM2-NEG-be.PFV 16-INF-finish-FV  
'We have not yet completed.'

This paper undertakes revisitation of the proposed strategies of expression of aspects in Bantu languages. It begins with presentation of the perfective aspect as realised by **-ile** in section 2, which is the primary suffix used to distinguish between the perfective and imperfective in Kinyakyusa, similar to many Bantu languages (Nurse, 2008; Nurse et al. 2016; Roth, 2018). Then the paper presents the habituality in section 3. The section is envisaged to demonstrate that habituality in both the past and the future time-frames could be realised by **-ag-** suffix. The progressive aspect is presented in section 4. In the section, I argue that the linguistic material proposed by Persohn (2021, 2016) require re-analysis as they mark progressive aspect. Section 5 is envisaged to present the role of auxiliary verbs in expressing aspects in the language. In the section, I continue arguing that the linguistic materials proposed by Persohn (2021, 2016) requires re-analysis to obtain aspects in Kinyakyusa. Section 6 is envisaged to present data and discussion about the expression of aspects (and tense) in the immediate past and present time-frames and in passive constructions. The conclusion is offered in section 7. In Appendix A, readers will find sentences that correspond to the ones in the questionnaire for comparative purposes. This paper is a companion paper about passive constructions in Kinyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2024).

## 2. The perfective aspect with formative **-ile**

The primary mechanism to express perfective aspect is through the suffix **-ile**, which is common across Bantu languages (Botne, 2010). Based on Nurse (2008: 134), semantically, the perfective aspect represents “a situation as complete, as a single bounded whole, without regard to its internal structure or its constituent phases.” Robinson (2021) pointed out that the perfective **-ile** offers many readings of the completeness of the situation described in the verb. Three readings mentioned include the remote past perfective, yesterday (middle) past perfective, and today (recent) past perfective. Furthermore, he remarks that these readings depend on the co-occurrences with the prefixal materials in the verb. In this section, two possible interpretations of the perfective are presented.

Another previous work on the perfective **-ile** in Kinyakyusa revealed that variations of the formative depend on the syllable structure of the verb in that monosyllabic, disyllabic and polysyllabic verbs take the suffix **-ile** (e.g. **fwa – fwile** ‘die’, **keeta – keetile** ‘watch’, **ogeela – ogeelile** ‘swim’ and **niembeteela – niembeteelile** ‘wrap’), while some verb extensions triggers imbrication (e.g. **ongaana – ongeene** ‘be mixed’ and **ongaania – ongeenie** ‘mix up’) (Person, 2020). These verbs comprise imbrication of the suffix **-ile** in Kinyakyusa (Robinson, 2023), which is not discussed in this paper. For the details about stages of imbrication, reference to Persohn (2020) and Robinson (2023) is required.

The example (4) provides the present perfective aspect in affirmative construction of Kinyakyusa, which contains the zero prefix for present tense and **-ile** suffix for present perfective aspect. The example (5) is its negative counterpart which contains the negative formative **-ka-** that is commonly available for present tense and the default final vowel, which also provides the perfective reading together with the negative marker. Both examples provide aspectual reading of the perfective in present tense.

- (4) Andendekisye a-Ø-fik-ile.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-PRS-arrive-PFV  
 ‘Andendekisye has arrived.’
- (5) Andendekisye a-ka-Ø-fik-a.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-NEG-PRS-arrive-FV  
 ‘Andendekisye has not yet arrived.’

The distinction between the present tense and the past tense is realized by the use of the past tense formative **-a-** in the verbal complex (Lusekelo, 2007; Persohn 2016; Persohn & Bernander, 2018). Therefore, the illustrative examples above could be rendered into past perfective once this prefix is attached to the verb as in (6). The same suffix manifests after the negation marker as shown in (7).

- (6) Andendekisye a-a-fik-ile.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-PST-arrive-PFV  
 ‘Andendekisye has arrived.’
- (7) Andendekisye a-ka-a-fik-ile.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-NEG-PST-arrive-FV  
 ‘Andendekisye had not yet arrived.’

The evidence in (5) reveals that the present tense manifests with a zero prefix after the negation marker, while evidence in (7) shows that the past tense is realized with the prefix **-a-**. However, the expression **-kaali** ‘still’ which is analysed by Persohn (2021) could derive from the proto-form **\*-kal-** (stay). Similarly, it is plausible to argue that the structure is similar to **-keeré** that is reported as the persistive in Mara Bantu (Roth, 2018). Based on example (7), there is a possibility of the co-occurrence of the negation marker **-ka-** and the past tense formative **-a-**, which would attract the auxiliary verb as discussed in section 5.

Moreover, the auxiliary verb appears to be in the process of grammaticalisation. This is viewed in some cases where the auxiliary verb and the action verb appear to be fused. In example (8), there appears that the mechanism for the realization of the perfective in the past is through the combination of the prefixal material **-li-** and the action verb **isa** ‘come’. Therefore, the formative **-ile** occurs in the verb **isa** ‘come’ which is preceded with the auxiliary occurring in the past tense as **-li-** in affirmative sentence as shown in (8). The negative counterpart bears the structure in (9) which contains the negative marker **-ka-** in the auxiliary **-li-** and the perfective **-ile** in the verb **isa** ‘come’. Previously, **-li-** was overlooked as a past tense marker by Lusekelo (2007). However, the verb **isa** ‘come’ is not inflected with the infinitive **-ku-** nor the locative **pa-**, which are commonly used in tense and aspect in Kinyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2007; Persohn, 2020). Perhaps the complete grammaticalization of the auxiliary shall allow fully interpretation as a past tense marker in Kinyakyusa.

- (8) Andendekisye a-li-is-ile m-majolo.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-PST-come-PFV 18-yesterday  
 ‘Andendekisye came yesterday.’
- (9) Andendekisye a-ka-li-is-ile m-majolo.  
 1.Andendekisye SM1-NEG-PST-come-PFV 18-yesterday  
 ‘Andendekisye didn’t come yesterday.’

Persohn and Bernander (2018) analysed the prefixal material that manifests as **i-** and realize the present aspect (and tense) that could be reconstructed to the source \***jikad** ‘dwell, be, sit’. Based on the examples below, it appears that the auxiliary could also be the source of the prefix **i-** in Kinyakyusa. For instance, in the present tense, the verb material would appear as **baisile (biisile)** ‘they have come’ on the surface but the underlying form would be as in (10). Likewise, the negative construction would surface as **bakiisa** ‘they have not yet come’ but the underlying form would be as in (11). Further evidence for the postulation of the auxiliary source of the prefix **i-** manifests in the perfective form in the past as shown in examples below. In example (12), the auxiliary material manifests as **-li-** for the past perfective aspect, while in example (13), the negation marker co-occurs with the auxiliary material manifests as **-li-**. Therefore, contrary to Persohn and Bernander (2018), it becomes plausible to argue that the source of the **i-** present tense/aspect is the auxiliary material in Kinyakyusa.

- (10) A-ba-hesya ba-i-is-ile ulu.  
 AUG-2-guest SM2-PRS-come-PFV now  
 ‘The guests have come right now.’
- (11) A-ba-hesya ba-ka-i-is-a.  
 AUG-2-guest SM2-NEG-PRS-come-FV  
 ‘The guests have not yet come.’
- (12) A-ba-hesya ba-li-is-ile mmajolo.  
 AUG-2-guest SM2-PST-come-PFV yesterday  
 ‘The guests came yesterday.’
- (13) A-ba-hesya ba-ka-li-is-ile mmajolo.  
 AUG-2-guest SM2-NEG-PST-come-PFV yesterday  
 ‘The guests did not come yesterday.’

Further observation from the data above is that some verbs such **aga** ‘find’, **bona** ‘see’, **ega** ‘marry, take’, **isa** ‘come’ and **pa** ‘give’, among others, require the use of the prefix **-li-** when expressing aspect (and tense) in the past. It is plausible to argue that the auxiliary verb is getting grammaticalized as a marker of the aspect/tense in Kinyakyusa. This has implications on the postulation by Persohn (2016) that **-linku-** is being grammaticalized as the narrative past marker. It is argued in this paper that the auxiliary **-li-** is being grammaticalized as a formative for aspect and tense in the language. Another implication is on the persistive formative suggested to be **-kaali** by Persohn (2021). The data above reveals that the **-li-** affix functions as both the auxiliary for the past events/situations. In the persistive formative, there is a combination with the negative marker, which eventually shows limited signs of grammaticalization.

### 3. Imperfective reading of the habitual aspect with formative **-ag-**

Habituality has to do with a situation which takes place over a long period of time. Nurse (2008: 143) pointed out that ‘as a category, discrete from other imperfective categories, it occurs in just under half (43 per cent) of the sample so is less common than general imperfective or progressive.’ The formative **-ag-** provides habitual readings in many Bantu languages (Rugemalira, 2010). However, it appears to be common in languages in which the perfective **-ile** is reduced to complex sentences as in Eastern Ruvu Bantu languages (Bar-el & Petzell, 2021). It is re-introduced in Swahili (Kanijo & Petzell, 2025; Rugemalira, 2010).

The formative **-ag-** is common in Kinyakyusa Bantu. Both Lusekelo (2007) and Persohn (2020) identify the habitual aspect in the language. The example (14) illustrates the habitual past reading, while example (15) shows habituality in the future. The formative **-ag-** manifests in both sentences. The negative counterpart in (16) shows the co-occurrence of the negation marker **-ka-** with the habitual formative, while (17) shows the combination of the negation marker **-ti-** with the habitual marker. Again, both examples offer habitual interpretation.

- (14) Pa-kyinja tw-a-li-ag-a a-ka-punga.  
16-year SM1PL-PST-eat-HAB-FV AUG-12-rice  
'At new year eve, we used to eat rice.'
- (15) Pa-kyeni a-tu-ku-li-ag-a a-ka-punga.  
16-next\_time FUT-SM1PL-INF-eat-HAB-FV AUG-12-rice  
'In future, we will be eating rice.'
- (16) Pa-kyinja tu-ka-li-ag-a a-ma-seeke.  
16-year SM1PL-NEG.PST-eat-HAB-FV AUG-6-vegetable  
'At new year eve, we used not to eat vegetables.'
- (17) Pa-kyeni a-tu-ti-ku-li-ag-a a-ma-seeke.  
16-next\_time FUT-SM1PL-NEG.PST-eat-HAB-FV AUG-6-vegetable  
'In the future, we will not be eating vegetables.'

The possibility of marking habituality in the past and future using similar mechanism appears to suggest that speakers of Kinyakyusa construe both ancestral and eternal time-frames equally. The statement by Lusekelo (2023) would require an explanation. He pointed out that speakers of African languages construe both pastness and futurity in both lexical adverbial expression of time and in the formatives for tense and aspect. Thus, the formative **-ag-** adds further evidence to substantiate the ability to express the two extremes of time. However, Nurse et al. (2016: 32) pointed out that "since most Niger-Congo languages – and many other languages worldwide - have only aspect, how do they indicate time reference? They can imply it via aspect." It becomes apparent that the use of the habitual aspect marker **-ag-** would also require the temporal adverbs to mark the remoteness.

#### 4. Imperfective reading and progressive aspect in verbal forms

The imperfective in Kinyakyusa is realized by at least two mechanisms, namely the combination of the formative **-ku-** and default final vowel **-a** as in (18) and the formative **ku-** and the habitual formative **-ag-** as in (19). Both structures provide the progressive reading and the habitual aspect in present time-frame (Lusekelo, 2007; Persohn, 2016). Their counterparts in the negative constructions manifest with the negation marker **-ti-** and the default final vowel **-a**, as illustrated in (20) and (21). The verbal forms in both negative constructions contain the negative marker **-ti-**, which is used in the present time-frame.

- (18) Uswe tu-ku-ly-a a-ma-toki.  
1PL SM1PL-PRS-eat-FV AUG-6-banana  
'We eat banana/We are eating banana.'
- (19) Uswe tu-ku-ly-ag-a a-ma-toki.  
1PL SM1PL-PRS-eat-HAB-FV AUG-6-banana  
'We shall keep eating banana.'

- (20) Uswe tu-ti-ku-ly-a a-ma-toki.  
 1PL SM1PL-NEG-PRS-eat-FV AUG-6-banana  
 ‘We don’t eat banana/We are not eating banana.’
- (21) Uswe tu-ti-ku-ly-ag-a a-ma-toki.  
 1PL SM1PL-NEG-PRS-eat-HAB-FV AUG-6-banana  
 ‘We shall not keep eating banana.’

The imperfective reading of the kind of habituality and progressive is possible to be achieved through the combination of **a-**, **-ku-** and **-ag-** as in (22). The negative marker **-ti-** tends to occur in the future tenses as in example (23). Both the affirmative and negative constructions provide habituality and progressive interpretations.

- (22) Uswe a-tu-ku-ly-ag-a a-ma-toki nkyeni.  
 1PL FUT-SM1PL-(15)INF-HAB-eat-FV AUG-6-banana ahead  
 ‘We will be eating banana in the future.’
- (23) Uswe a-tu-ti-ku-ly-ag-a a-ma-toki nkyeni.  
 1PL FUT-SM1PL-NEG-(15)INF-HAB-eat-FV AUG-6-banana ahead  
 ‘We will not be eating banana in the future.’

The imperfective readings obtained in examples above could be contrasted with the perfective cases below. For instance, the immediate (near) past is marked with the zero-prefix combined with **-ile** in (24). The negative construction in (25) provides imperfective reading for immediate past.

- (24) Uswe tu-Ø-l-ile a-ma-toki.  
 1PL SM1PL-PST-eat-PFV AUG-6-banana  
 ‘We have just eaten banana.’
- (25) Uswe tu-ka-ly-a a-ma-toki.  
 1PL SM1PL-NEG.PST-eat-FV AUG-6-banana  
 ‘We have not eaten banana.’

## 5. Aspects manifesting in compound sentences with auxiliary verbs

Kinyakyusa behaves like other Bantu languages in that compound constructions may involve a combination of an auxiliary verb and the lexical verb which inflect for aspect and other inflectional information. In Bantu languages, the auxiliary verb may carry the aspect (and tense) and negation markers (Anderson, 2011; Louw, 1987; Nurse, 2008; Roth, 2018). Also, the inflectional information may occur in the lexical verb (Anderson, 2011). In this section, attention is paid on the realization of aspects in the compound constructions of Kinyakyusa.

The distinction between perfective (completive) and imperfective (incomplete) events/situations is made possible through the use of two forms of the auxiliary in Kinyakyusa, namely the perfective **-li** and the imperfective **-ja** as illustrated in (26) and (27) respectively. The negative counterparts involve the negation marker **-ka-** designated for the perfective aspect as in (28) and the negation marker **-ti-** designated for the imperfective aspect as in (29).

- (26) A-ba-sukulu ba-a-li pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil SM2-PST-be.PFV 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils were studying arithmetics.’
- (27) A-ba-sukulu a-bi-ku-ja pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil FUT-SM2-INF-be.FUT 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils will be studying arithmetics.’
- (28) A-ba-sukulu ba-ka-a-li pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil SM2-NEG.PST-be.PFV 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils were not studying arithmetics.’
- (29) A-ba-sukulu a-ba-ti-ku-ja pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil FUT-SM2-NEG-INF-be.FUT 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils will not be studying arithmetics.’

An aspectual reading of (26) would be past progressive aspect, while the interpretation of (27) would be progressive aspect in future time-frame. The progressive aspect in the present time-frame could be marked by the auxiliary verb **-li** as illustrated in (30) whereby the negative counterpart is realized by the auxiliary verb **-ja** as illustrated in (31).

- (30) A-ba-sukulu ba-li pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil SM2-PST-be.PFV 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils are studying Arithmetics.’
- (31) A-ba-sukulu ba-ka-ja pa-ku-bal-a i-mbalilo.  
 AUG-2-pupil SM2-NEG.PST-be 16-INF-read-FV AUG.9.arithmetics  
 ‘Pupils are not studying Arithmetics.’

Two observations are worth making at this point. On the one hand, the infinitive morpheme **-ku-** is treated as an aspect and tense marker in Kinyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2007), mainly as the present aspect/tense formative (Persohn, 2018). On the other hand, the locative affixes **pa-** and **mu-** also function to mark aspect (and tenses) in Kinyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2007). In most cases, the **mu-** occurs as the **-n-** (INF 18) as it receives support from the analysis in Persohn (2019) on the reduction of **mu-** in Kinyakyusa. Given this background, the suggestion that **-linku-** is the narrative past by Persohn (2016) is called to question here. I suggest that the proper analysis of this structure would be **-li** (auxiliary – past), **-n-** (progressive/continuation marker) and **-ku-** (infinitive form).

There is a possibility for the enclitics to occur in the lexical verbs in Kinyakyusa (Lusekelo, 2024b; Persohn, 2020). All three locative classes, namely **pa-** (noun class 16), **ku-** (noun class 17) and **mo-** (noun class 18) (Lusekelo, 2024a), occur as enclitics. The cases in (32) through (34) illustrate this phenomenon.

- (32) Uswe tu-Ø-l-ile=mo (tajali).  
 1.SM.PL SM1PL-PST-eat-PFV=LOC18 already  
 ‘We have already eaten.’
- (33) Uswe tu-Ø-fik-ile=ko ku-Tukuju.  
 1.SM.PL SM1PL-PST-arrive-PFV=LOC17 17-Tukuyu  
 ‘We have been to Tukuyu.’

- (34) Uswe tu-Ø-fik-ile=po pa-la.  
 1.SM.PL SM1PL-PST-arrive-PFV=LOC16 16-there  
 ‘We have already been there.’

Similarly, instead of the enclitics, the formative **-ag-** could be attached to the lexical verb as illustrated in (35). Perhaps the the formative **-ag-** has features of enclitics in Kinyakyusa, as suggested for other Bantu languages by Rugemalira (2010).

- (35) Uswe tu-ku-ly-ag-a a-ma-jabu.  
 1.SM.PL SM1PL-PRS-eat-HAB-FV AUG-6-cassava  
 ‘We shall be eating cassava.’

## 6. Expression of aspects in other Kinyakyusa sentences

The distinctions between immediate past and near future is possible in Kinyakyusa mainly by the use of the lexical adverbs such as **ulu** ‘now’ or **lululu** ‘right now’ (see Lusekelo, 2023). In example (36), the perfective aspect occurs with the recent time-frame, while example (37) shows the event shall occur in the near future. In both examples, the adverbial words refer to the time-frame immediately before and after the speech-moment respectively.

- (36) Ipyana a-Ø-buk-ile lululu.  
 1.Ipyana SM1-PST-go-PFV now  
 ‘Ipyana has gone right now/Ipyana has just left.’
- (37) Ipyana ku-ti a-is-e ulu.  
 1.Ipyana INF-be.FUT SM1-come-IMP now  
 ‘Ipyana shall come right now/soon.’

The stative constructions reveal the use of the subjunctive **-e** as exemplified in (38). However, the past and future distinction is made possible only by the use of the auxiliary, as exemplified by **-li-** in the past time-frame in (39) and **-ja** in the future time-frame in (40).

- (38) I-li-dilisyā li-gul-e.  
 AUG-5-window SM5-open-SBJV  
 ‘The window is open.’
- (39) I-li-dilisyā li-a-li li-gul-e.  
 AUG-5-window SM5-PST-be.PST SM5-open-SBJV  
 ‘The window was open.’
- (40) I-li-dilisyā a-li-ku-ja li-gul-e.  
 AUG-5-window SM5-PST-INF-be.FUT SM5-open-SBJV  
 ‘The window will be open.’

The passive constructions occur with the past tense in the verbs (Lusekelo 2024c), as shown in (41). It follows that the perfective aspect manifests with the subjunctive form **-e** across time-frames. Similarly, the past and future

distinction is made possible through the use of the auxiliary verbs shown in (42) for past time-frame and (43) for the future time-frame.

- (41) I-li-dilisya      li-gul-igw-e.  
 AUG-5-window    SM5-open-PASS-SBJV  
 ‘The window is opened.’
- (42) I-li-dilisya      li-a-li              li-gul-igw-e.  
 AUG-5-window    SM5-PST-be.PST    SM5-open-PASS-SBJV  
 ‘The window was opened.’
- (43) I-li-dilisya      a-li-ku-ja              li-gul-igw-e.  
 AUG-5-window    SM5-PST-INF15-be.FUT    SM5-open-PASS-SBJV  
 ‘The window will be opened.’

## 7. Conclusion

Previous comparative research of the aspect (as well as tense and modality) in the Ruvu Bantu in Tanzania (Bar-el & Petzell, 2021), Mara Bantu in Tanzania (Roth, 2018), Southern Tanzanian Bantu (Persohn & Bernander, 2018; Robinson, 2021), Southern and Eastern African Bantu (Anderson, 2011; Botne, 2010) revealed that aspects are realized in the lexical verbs as well as auxiliary verbs. Variation across similar languages is also attested, which had motivated for further research of the aspect system of Kinyakyusa. In this paper, it had been shown that two strategies are used to express aspects of the Bantu language Kinyakyusa. Firstly, the aspect system distinguishes between the perfective and imperfective based on the suffixal formative **-ile** that occurs in the verb, together with the tense formatives in the prefix. Moreover, the paper showed that the distinction of the habitual and progressive aspects is based on the use of the suffixal formative **-ag-** for the habituality and the prefixal (infinitive) **-ku-** for the continuous events/situations. Secondly, the paper showed that the compound sentences comprise the auxiliary verb in the structure **-li-** which marks events/situations in the present and past time-frames). Also, there is the auxiliary form **-ja**, which represent events/situations in the present and future time-frames when occurring together with the lexical verbs which inflect for the perfective and imperfective aspects.

## Appendix A

### Contexts From 2-1 to 2-8

*Tom and Mark are organizing a meeting preparing for a conference. Mark has been in communication with everyone who is involved, including Andy.*

#### Situation 2-1

*(Mark saw that Andy arrived but went to the bathroom)*

*Tom: I need to check some data with Andy. Did he arrive?*

*Mark: Yes, Andy has arrived.*

Eeh, Andendekisye a-Ø-fik-ile.

yes 1.name SM1-PST-arrive-PFV

‘Yes, Andendekisye has arrived.’

*Tom: I forgot the name of the RA. Did the person arrive?*

*Mark: Oh, I forgot his name too. Yes, that person arrived.*

Eeh, u-mu-ndu jula a-Ø-fik-ile.

yes AUG-1-person 1.that SM1-PST-arrive-PFV

‘Yes, that person arrived.’

#### Situation 2-2

*(Mark was texting with everyone, and Mark knew that everyone was on their way to the meeting)*

*Tom: I need to check some data with Andy. Did he arrive?*

*Mark: Yes, Andy has not yet arrived.*

Mma, Andendekisye a-ka-li u-ku-fika.

no 1.name SM1-NEG.PST-be AUG-15-arrive

‘No, Andendekisye has not yet arrived.’

*Tom: I forgot the name of the RA. Did the person arrive?*

*Mark: Oh, I forgot his name too. Yes, that person has not yet arrived.*

Eeh, u-mu-ndu jula a-ka-li u-ku-fika.

yes AUG-1-person 1.that SM1-NEG.PST-be AUG-15-arrive

‘Yes, that person has not yet arrived.’

### Situation 2-3

(Mark was texting with everyone, and Mark knew that everyone was still at home)

Tom: I need to check some data with Andy. Did he arrive?

Mark: **Yes, Andy has not been coming yet.**

Mma, Andendekisye a-ka-isa=po.

no 1.name SM1-NEG.PST-come=LOC17

‘No, Andendekisye has not been coming yet.’

Tom: I forgot the name of the RA. Did the person arrive?

Mark: Oh, I forgot his name too. **Yes, that person has not been coming yet.**

Ena, u-mu-ndu jula a-ka-isa=po.

yes AUG-1-person 1.that SM1-NEG.PST-come=LOC17

‘Yes, that person has not yet been coming yet.’

### Situation 2-4

(Mark has just arrived at a meeting place. He saw that only Tom was there)

Tom: I need to check some data with Andy. Did he arrive?

Mark: **Yes, Andy has not come yet.**

Ena, Andendekisye a-ka-li u-ku-isa.

yes 1.name SM1-NEG.PST-be AUG-15-come

‘Yes, Andendekisye has not come yet.’

Tom: I forgot the name of the RA. Did the person arrive?

Mark: Oh, I forgot his name too. **Yes, that person has not come yet.**

Ena, u-mu-ndu jula a-ka-li u-ku-isa.

yes AUG-1-person 1.that SM1-NEG.PST-be AUG-15-come

‘Yes, that person has not come yet.’

### Situation 2-5

(Mark was texting with everyone, and Mark knew that everyone will arrive within 5 minutes)

Tom: I need to check some data with Andy. Did he arrive?

Mark: **Yes, Andy will come soon.**

Ena, Andendekisye ku-ti a-is-e lululu.

yes 1.name INF-be.FUT SM1-come-IMP soon

‘Yes, Andendekisye will come soon.’

Tom: *I forgot the name of the RA. Did the person arrive?*

Mark: *Oh, I forgot his name too. Yes, that person will come soon.*

Lelo, u-mu-ndu jula ku-ti a-is-e lululu.  
 yes AUG-1-person 1.that INF-be.FUT SM1-come-IMP soon  
 ‘Yes, Andendekisye will come soon.’

### Situation 2-6

*(Mark and Tom just saw Andy entering the meeting room)*

Tom and Mark: *(Oh!) Andy has come!*

Omwa, Andendekisye a-Ø-is-ile!  
 oh 1.name SM1-PST-come-PFV  
 ‘Oh, Andendekisye has come!’

### Situation 2-7

*(Mark and Andy were at the meeting venue to discuss various issues the day before, but Tom was not there)*

Tom: *Is the preparation over? I asked Andy to finalize everything yesterday. Did he come?*

Mark: *Yes, Andy came yesterday.*

Ena, Andendekisye a-li-is-ile! mmajolo.  
 yes 1.name SM1-PST-come-PFV yesterday  
 ‘Yes, Andendekisye came yesterday.’

### Situation 2-8

*(Mark was at the meeting venue to check the preparation the day before, but Tom and Andy was not there)*

Tom: *Is the preparation over? I asked Andy to help you yesterday. Did he come?*

Mark: *No, Andy didn’t come yesterday.*

Mma, Andendekisye a-ka-li a-is-ile! mmajolo.  
 no 1.name SM1-NEG-be SM1-come-PFV yesterday  
 ‘Yes, Andendekisye didn’t come yesterday.’

### Situation 2-9

*You bought one delicious looking apple. Your brother was together when you bought it. When your brother was at work, you ate it. Your brother after work asks about the banana.*

Brother: *Where is the banana you bought?*

You: *I already ate that banana.*

Ni-Ø-1-ile=mo                      i-li-bifu              lila.  
 SM1SG-PST-eat-PFV=LOC18    AUG-5-banana    5.that  
 'I already ate that banana.'

**Situation 2-10**

*You bought one delicious looking apple. Your brother was together when you bought it. Your brother went to the shop, and you joined him later. Your brother after work asks about the banana.*

*Brother: Did you eat the apple?*

*You: **No, I haven't eaten that banana yet.***

Mma, ni-ka-li                      u-ku-lia=mo                      i-li-bifu              lila.  
 no            SM1SG-NEG-be    AUG-15-eat=LOC18    AUG-5-banana    5.that  
 'No, I haven't eaten that banana yet.'

*Brother: Will you eat the apple later today?*

*You: No, **I won't eat that banana.***

Ni-ti-ku-ly-a                      i-li-bifu              lila.  
 SM1SG-NEG.FUT-eat-FV    AUG-5-banana    5.that  
 'I won't eat that banana.'

**Situation 2-11**

*You bought one delicious looking banana. You brought it home and put it on the dining table. Then you went for work. Your mother saw that your brother took the banana and started eating it. When you returned from work, you did not see the banana. You ask your mother.*

*You: Where is the banana I bought earlier? Did my brother take it?*

*Mother: **Yes, he's eating that banana just now.***

Ena, a-li            pa-ku-ly-a            i-li-bifu              lila            ulu.  
 yes    SM1-be    16-INF-eat-FV    AUG-5-banana    5.that    now  
 'Yes, he is eating that banana just now.'

**Situation for 2-12**

*On a cold day, you and Mark arrived in the office, which was cold. Then you saw a window open. You tell Mark:*

*You: **The window is open.***

I-li-dilisya            li-gul-e.  
 AUG-5-window    5-open-PFV  
 'The window is open.'

*Then, Tom arrives, and he wonders why it is so cold in the office. You tell Tom:*

*You: **The window was open.***

I-li-dilisya      li-a-li      li-gul-e.  
AUG-5-window    5-PST-be    5-open-PFV  
'The window was open.'

*After closing the window, all of you go out to get some breakfast. When you return to the office, the office was again cold. You again saw the window is open. You tell Mark and Tom:*

*You: **The window is opened.** (passive form because the window cannot be opened by itself)*

I-li-dilisya      li-gul-igw-e.  
AUG-5-window    5-open-PASS-PFV  
'The window is opened.'

*After that Mpho comes in and asks, why the office is so cold. You tell Mpho:*

*You: **The window was opened.***

I-li-dilisya      li-a-li      li-gul-igw-e.  
AUG-5-window    5-PST-be    5-open-PASS-PFV  
'The window was opened.'

### **Situation for 2-13**

*Your friend asks where you get most recent news (not knowing that you read newspaper). You reply:*

*You: **I read the newspaper every morning.***

Ni-ku-bal-a            i-li-gaseti            kukuti    nulubunju.  
SM1SG-PRS-read-FV    AUG-5-newspaper    each      morning  
'I read the newspaper every morning.'

### **Situation for 2-14**

*You met your niece after 3 years, and you see that she looks like your sister, so you say:*

*You: **You look like your mother.***

Mu-Ø-fwene            na      u-nyoko.  
SM2PL-PRS-like.PFV    with    AUG-mother  
'You look like your mother.'

### Situation for 2-15

*You are a senior student at a college, and you go to school 3 days a week. Your younger brother asks what your schedule was during the freshman year.*

*Brother: How was your class schedule during your first year at the college?*

*You: **I used to go to school every day.***

Na-buuk-aga ku-sukuulu bwila.  
SM1SG-go-HAB 17-9.school every day  
'I used to go to school every day.'

### Situation for 2-16

*People are talking about their vacation in Limpopo, and asks you whether you have been there. So you respond:*

*You: **Yes, I have been to Limpopo.***

M-Ø-fik-ile=ko ku-Tukuju.  
SM1SG-PST-arrive-PFV=LOC16 16-Tukuyu  
'I have been to Tukuju.'

### Situation for 2-17

*From your building, you and your mother saw that there was a long traffic jam on the highway, including a bus with your brother. Your mother had to go inside, and after a while you see the traffic started moving. You tell your mother:*

*You: **Finally, the bus began moving.***

Ulu i-li-basi li-and-ile u-ku-enda.  
now AUG-5-bus SM5-begin-PFV AUG-15-move  
'Finally, the bus began moving.'

### Situation for 2-18

*Your sister went to a week-long overseas trip, and she is not good at sleeping on an airplane. She returned on a Friday. When you met a friend on the Sunday, she asks how your sister was doing after the trip. You respond:*

*You: **She slept all day yesterday.***

A-a-gon-ile i-li-siku li-osa mmajolo.  
SM1-PST-sleep-PFV AUG-5-day 5-all yesterday  
'She slept all day yesterday.'

### Situation for 2-19

*You are visiting some distant relatives for the first time, and they serve you local delicacies (for example, a grasshopper). However, you have never eaten it. Later that night, your sister who knew about this custom asked:*

*Sister: I know they serve local delicacies. How was it?*

*You: **I tried eating it a bit.***

Ni-a-gel-ile=po                      pa-ku-li-a      panandi.  
SM1SG-PST-try-PFV=LOC16 16-INF-eat-FV little  
'I tried eating it a bit.'

### Situation for 2-20

*Tom received a gift of a box of pens (20 of them). When you heard about it from Susan, you wonder whether Tom still has some pens. You ask Susan:*

*You: Does Tom still have some pens to spare?*

*Susan: **No. He gave them to everyone.***

Mma, a-a-ba-p-ele=syo                      kukuti      mu-ndu.  
no      SM1-PST-OM2-give-PFV=OM10 every 1-person  
'No. He gave them to everyone.'

### Situation for 2-21

*In lunchtime, and your friend asks whether you want to eat yet. You tell your friend:*

*You: **Let's go!***

Tu-buuk-e.  
SM1PLgo-PFV  
'Let us go.'

### Situation for 2-22

*In a science class, the teacher is explaining about the relationship between the earth and the sun, and he says:*

*Teacher: **The earth goes around the sun.***

I-ki-su      ki-ku-sungutil-a      i-li-suba.  
AUG-7-land SM7-INF-rotate-FV AUG-5-sun  
'The earth goes around the sun.'

### Situation for 2-23

*A severe storm is passing through, and you see from your window that a tree on the street is bent so much that it may fall down soon. You tell your mother:*

*You: Mom, mom. **That tree is about to topple.***

U-m-piki ugo gu-sumwik-e pa-ku-gwa.  
AUG-3-tree 3.that SM3-be\_about-PFV 16-INF-fall  
'That tree is about to topple.'

#### Situation for 2-24

*You were reading Instagram post while walking on the street, but then a curb suddenly appeared, and you almost fell. That evening, you tell your brother.*

*You: I should stop looking at my phone while walking. **I was almost about to trip.***

*(note: 'to trip' means 'to fall')*

Na-sumwik-e pa-ku-gwa.  
SM1SG-be\_about-PFV 16-INF-fall  
'I was almost about to trip.'

#### Situation for 2-25

*You meet your neighbor at the local supermarket. She asks what you are here for:*

*You: **We will have guests tomorrow, so I will buy some bread.***

A-tu-ku-ja na a-ba-hesya kilabu, po a-ni-ku-ul-a u-n-kate.  
FUT-SM2PL-INF-have with AUG-2-guest tomorrow so FUT-SM1SG-INF-buy-FV AUG-3-bread  
'We will have guests tomorrow, so I will buy some bread.'

#### Situation for 2-26

*You went to Giyani and found a nice bag, which you bought. A couple of days later, your friend asks where you got the bag from. You respond:*

*You: **I (had) bought this bag when I went to Giyani.***

Ni-Ø-ul-ile i-nyambi iji bo ni-buuk-ile ku-Tukuju.  
SM1SG-PST-buy-PFV AUG-9.bag 9.this when SM1SG-NEG.PST-be 16-Tukuyu  
'I had bought this bag when I went to Tukuyu.'

#### Situation for 2-27

*Your friend knows that you go to many business trips. Just recently, you went to Durban, Giyani and Pretoria. Between Durban and Giyani, you bought a new bag, which your friend did not know about. When you meet your friend after your Pretoria trip, the friend asks:*

*Friend: You are always on the go. When did you buy a bag?*

*You: **I (had) bought this bag before going to Giyani.***

Ni-Ø-ul-ile i-nyambi iji bo ni-ka-li pa-ku-buuk-a ku-Tukuju.  
SM1SG-PST-buy-PFV AUG-9.bag 9.this when SM1SG-NEG.PST-be 16-15-go-FV 17-Tukuyu  
'I had bought this bag before going to Tukuyu.'

**Situation for 2-28**

*Tom bought a bag at a famous market in town. When you met Tom, you noticed the bag, but you did not ask where Tom bought the bag. A couple of days later, you were browsing items at that market with Susan, and you noticed the same kind of bag there. So, you tell Susan:*

*You: **I knew he (had) bought this bag in this market.***

Ni-a-meny-e            itolo u-l-ile            i-nyambi    iji    pa-i-soko    ili.  
SM1SG-PST-know-PFV    only    SM1-buy-PFV    AUG-9.bag    9.this    16-5-market    5.this  
'I knew he had bought this bag at this market.'

### Abbreviations

1, 2, 3, ...:	Noun class numbers	IMPERF:	Imperfective Aspect
1SG, 2PL, ...:	Person and Number	INF:	Infinitive
Ø:	Zero Affix	LOC:	Locative
AUG:	Augment (initial vowel prefixed to a noun class prefix)	NEG:	Negative Marker
FUT:	Future Tense	OM:	Object Marker
FV:	Final Vowel (default inflectional suffix of the finite verb)	PASS:	Passive
HAB:	Habitual Aspect	PFV:	Perfective Aspect
IMP:	Imperative	PRS:	Present Tense
		PST:	Passive
		SM:	Subject Marker

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### Acknowledgement

This work was partially supported by JSPS KAKENHI Promotion of Joint International Research (Fostering Joint International Research (B)) 21KK0005. This study was also supported by JSPS KAKENHI (B) 23K25319, JSPS KAKENHI (A) 25H00465 and the ILCAA joint research projects ‘Phonetic typology from cross-linguistic perspectives: Phase 2 (jrp000294)’ and ‘Diachronic Perspectives on Language Description and Typology in Bantu (jrp000292)’.

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原稿受理 : 2026 年 1 月 29 日

刊行年月日 : 2026 年 3 月 31 日