

Research Article

Unaccusative Verbs in Runyambo: Burzio's Generalization Approach

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Abstract

The study focused on Unaccusative verbs in Runyambo, a Bantu language spoken in Kagera region in Tanzania. The study was specifically conducted at Katera village found at Kyerwa district in Kagera region. The study drew inspiration from Burzio's Generalization Approach focusing on Intransitive Unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. It employed a qualitative research approach to explore complex data, to gain insight into people's experiences about unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. Snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used to select informants. In this study, the target population were all native speakers of Runyambo from whom the sample of 4 was selected to represent others to come up with information needed. Data collection methods included sentence questionnaires and extraction from written materials. The data were analyzed descriptively using thematic analysis and tree diagrams. Tree diagrams are typically used to express the phrase structure in all versions of Transformational Grammar (TG), and to show the relationship between the D- Structure and S-Structure of the sentence and all NPs movements at the S-Structure. The findings reveal that in Runyambo, there are intransitive verbs which have a status of unaccusative verbs. They are known as intransitive unaccusative verbs because they cannot assign external theta role as well as accusative case. They do not possess an external argument at D-S. Intransitive unaccusative verbs carry only internal argument at D-S. They have the same features presented by Burzio's Generalization Approach in verbs 3. The researcher recommends more studies to be conducted on the other Bantu language and non-Bantu language.

Keywords

Unaccusative Verbs, NP Movement, Theta Role, Structural Case, Argument

1. Introduction

The article focuses on unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. Unaccusative verb is the verb whose unique argument is a patient/theme. It is the verb that takes one argument to which they assign a theme theta role and it is typically a verb of movement [24]. Unaccusative verbs have a certain range of properties by which we can identify them. Grimshaw [10] describes unaccusative verbs as verbs whose single argu-

ments denote direct objects in relational grammar. These are types of verbs which are defined syntactically rather than semantically as verbs that fail to assign structural case and external theta role.

Unaccusative verbs in Runyambo have been taken as independent verbs from their basic counterparts. These kinds of verbs are studied separately from the basic verbs. This

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makes Runyambo one among the Bantu language with a greater number of unaccusative verbs than those of Indo European which are identified by Burzio [2] under verb 3 in English including passive and raising.

Unaccusative hypothesis was first formulated by Perlmutter [22] within relational grammar. Unaccusative Hypothesis (UH) argues that unaccusative verb syntactically behaves like intransitive verbs but are semantically related to transitive verbs because of the object like theme and patient they have. Pierre [21] adds that, the object of the verb becomes the subject through derivation. Verbs can be said to have unaccusative status because they lack external arguments. These verbs involve NP movements, whereby the internal argument moves to the external argument position to be case marked, and morphological behaviors (verb extension) which affect their syntax. The attachment of extensions on basic verbs affects case assignment as argued by Burzio's generalization that passive verb cannot assign an accusative case to its complement. This article focuses on one type of unaccusative verbs which is intransitive unaccusative verbs.

Runyambo speakers inhabit the districts of Karagwe and Kyerwa in the north-western part of Tanzania. The indigenous inhabitants of Karagwe and Kyerwa call themselves *abhanyambo* and refer to their language as *Orunyambo* or *Ecinyambo*. Runyambo as a Bantu language is an agglutinating language which exhibit many verbal affixes which are affected by the verb valency leading into the NP movement. So, more unaccusative verbs were found than those presented in Indo-European languages.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this study of intransitive unaccusative verbs in Runyambo, Burzio's generalization theory is applied as a road map in interpreting data and coming up with a clear conclusion. The main idea is that a verb can assign a theta role to its subject position if and only if it assigns an accusative case to its object. Accordingly, if a verb does not assign a theta role to its subject, then it does not assign accusative case to its object. He focused on the organization of verb harmony and how these verbs behave towards their arguments [3].

3. Intransitive Unaccusative Verbs in Various Languages

Intransitive unaccusative verbs require only one argument found at the subject position but does not semantically belong there [5]. Intransitive unaccusative verbs have two different forms based on the structure used to describe and analyze the language. These are the derived and underived verbs. According to Keenan and Dryer [14] stem/underived unaccusative verbs are verbs which do not derive from any

verb. This is a type of intransitive verb that describe actions, when the subject undergoes the action without actively performing it. Subject is the entity affected by the action rather than the one causing it. In English, they are known as root/basic verbs that are few in number and include verbs like; 'melt', 'die', 'freezes', 'sink', 'fall', as shown in 1.

1. a) Sam smiles.
- b) The water freezes.
- c) Richard died.

Source: [16]

According to Moro [17], stem /base unaccusative verbs are the verbs that reflect the features of unaccusative verbs as the verbs that do not assign structural accusative case. These verbs typically describe actions/events where the subject is affected by the action rather than actively initiating it. In Italian they include verbs like:

Italian: Cadere; Scoppiare; Morire; Crescere

Gloss: to fall; to burst; to die; to grow

Tina [24] argues that in Kiswahili, stem + FV form underived intransitive verbs in most Bantu languages, which describe an action that happens to the subject without the subject causing it. This feature reflects the properties of unaccusative verbs. These verbs do not take a direct object in their typical usage, and some of them are words like: *kufa* 'to die', *kupotea* 'to disappear' in 2.

- 2.a) *Wasafiri walikufa*

Wa-safiri wa-li-kufa

CL 2 PL-traveler SM-PAST-die

'Travellers died'

- b) *Mtoto kapotea*

M-toto a-me-potea

CL1-child SM-Pres-lost

'The child is lost'

Source: [24]

In 2 a) and b), the verb *kufa* 'to die' and *potea* 'get lost' are the underived unaccusative verbs. They are not derived from any verb; thus, they are called root verbs, in which they do not require an object to provide the meaning. The subject is affected by the action without performing it.

Intransitive unaccusative verbs include passive and raising. Anderson distinguishes that, "passive" and "raising" are often used to describe certain syntactic and semantic processes in the formation of sentences. Anderson [1] in his article "Parasitic Passive intransitive in English" distinguishes that passive and raising constructions are essential in analyzing the syntax and semantics of verbs, as the derived verb from active counterpart. Raising is an operation commonly associated with unaccusative verbs. It involves the movement of a verb phrase within a sentence, often resulting in changes in meaning or grammatical roles [13]. This study found out that there are more verbs belonging to the category of intransitive unaccusative verbs in addition to passive and raising.

In considering the work of Burzio [3], it is important to note that, he makes significant contributions to our under-

standing of unaccusative constructions. In his analysis, Burzio describes passive and raising as unaccusative verbs in a clear and insightful manner. He argues that passive and raising constructions are intimately related to the properties of unaccusative verbs, which are verbs that lack external argument. In English, unaccusative verbs are often associated with intransitive verbs of change, such as "fall" or "rise". Burzio's analysis of passive constructions emphasizes the syntactic and morphological changes that occur when transforming an active sentence into a passive one. In the passive, the subject of the active sentence becomes the object in the passive sentence, while the auxiliary verb "be" is used together with the past participle form of the main verb. This can be seen on Table 1 about active and passive sentence.

Table 1. Active and Passive Sentences.

Active	Passive
Italy beat Belgium in the semi-finals	Belgium was beaten in the semi-finals
The dog chased the cat.	The cat was chased by the dog.
She prepares dinner.	The dinner is prepared.

Source: [18]

Examples on Table 1 indicate that, the passive verbs used to construct the sentences are derived from active verbs through the addition of auxiliary verbs and the verb to be in participle, for the verb to express the state of verb without an agent or the causative.

In Bantu languages like Kifipa passive is the derived verb. In Kifipa, a passive construction is characterized by the attachment of the suffix *-w-* and *-iw-* to the verb root Cromwel and Mpobela [9]. This is supported by Burzio [2] in his discussion about verb 3 (unaccusative verb) which is passive and raising. He argues that passive verb allows only one argument which is internal argument and fails to assign an accusative case to its argument as indicated in example 3 in Kifipa.

- 3.a) Umwana *atumwa*
U-mu-ana a-ta-umw-a
 AUG-NC1-child AgrS-Pst-be beaten-FV
 'A child was beaten'
- b) Makonde *iyakalwa*
Ma-konde i-ya-kal- w- a
 NC6-maize AgrS-Pst-be bought- FV
 'The maize was bought'

In example 3) passive verb *-umwa* 'be beaten' and *kalwa* 'be bought, allow only one argument and they fail to assign accusative case. The external argument *umwana* 'child' and *makonde* 'maize' bear agentive theta role and are assigned nominative case by INFL.

Motsa [20] explains that the passive verbs are generated through morphological processes involving the addition of the morpheme '*-w-*' to the root verb in siSwati. The characteristics of the passive verbs do not allow external argument in external argument position. The external argument is optionally found in a by phrase as an adjunct. In the examples in 4, Motsa [18] does not include the by phrase:

- 4.a) *sinkhwa idliwa*
sinkhwa i- dli- w- a
 AUG -NCL3 bread AgrS-Pst-eat- P-FV (siSwati)
 'The bread was eaten.'
- b) *Ubusitaani bweerwa*
Ubusitaani bw- eer-w-a
 AUG NCL5 garden AgrS-Pst-grow- P-FV
 'The garden was grown.'

As in the sentences in 4, siSwati like other Bantu languages allow the external theta role position to be observed, the intention being to avoid ungrammatical sentences. Passive verbs extend from active constructions in siSwati. This extension takes place via the integration of a passive extension, which reduces the quantity of syntactic arguments from two to one. The verbs 4 do not assign the accusative case and allow for the existence of only one syntactic argument.

Friesen [10] argues that the stative verb seems to have its main meaning and take only a single syntactic argument. This also happens in Kiswahili where the subject is affected by the action described by the verb. These are verbs like '*funguka*' (be opened), *pasuka* 'be burst open', *vunjika* 'be break', and others as indicated in 5.

- 5.a) *Mlango umefunguka*
M-lango -u-me -fung-uk-a
 NC3-door AgrS-Pst-open-S-FV
 'The door is opened'.
- b) *Mti umevunjika*
M-ti -u-me -vunj-ik-a
 NC3-tree AgrS-Pst-break-S-FV
 'The door is broken.'

Source: [1]

According to Jerro [14], in Kinyarwanda, the stative is an intransitive unaccusative verbs which describes an action done to the subject, without the subject actively causing the action. It takes the form of *-ik* attached at the root verb before the final vowel, as in 6:

- 6.a) *Umu-gati waarika*
Umugati w-a-r-ik-a.
 Bread AgrS -eat-S-FV (Kinyarwanda)
 'The bread is edible.'
- b) *Urugi ru-ra-fung-ik-a.*
Urugi ru-ra-fung-ik-a.
 Door- AgrS-pst-close-S-FV
 'The door closes.'

Source: [25]

Generally, various studies discuss intransitive unaccusative verbs as the derived verbs from their counterpart verbs. They form differently in various languages. Intransitive un-

accusative verbs describe an action done to the subject, without the subject actively causing the action as discussed above by different scholars. This study classifies intransitive unaccusative verbs and investigates their properties in Runyambo.

4. Research Methods

The paper is qualitative in nature with descriptions, analysis, categorization and explanation of data on intransitive unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. The data were descriptively designed as argued by Creswell [8] that descriptive research determines and reports the way things are. The data were collected from Kagera region, Kyerwa district, specifically at Katera village. The study involved four informants obtained through snowball sampling technique. Sentence questionnaires were used to collect data whereas thematic system and geometry tree were used in data analysis procedures. Secondary data were collected from Rugemalira [25]. The informants were asked for their informed consent before they were involved in data collection.

5. Intransitive Unaccusative Verbs in Runyambo

The data collected reveal that, intransitive unaccusative verbs in Runyambo are the verbs that require only one argument. They are defined as the verbs which have no external theta-role and cannot assign accusative case. Their internal arguments are at object position at D-structure, but have to move to subject position in order to receive (nominative) case from INFL. Intransitive unaccusative verbs include underived, passive and stative unaccusative verbs. All these verbs have one argument and they do not assign accusative case to their NP complement. They also instigate NP movement. This part concentrates on the syntactic features of intransitive unaccusative verbs within the GB perspective. The D-Structure (DS) and S- Structure (SS) of sentences in this group are

D.S: [IP [NP e [I' [VP V' [NP [PP [NP]]]]]]]

S.S: [IP NP_i [N' _i [I' [VP V [NP t_i [PP[NP]]]]]]]

At D-S, intransitive unaccusative verbs have an empty internal argument position which has to be filled. At internal argument position, there is an NP complement which the nature of the verb does not allow. A verb can only assign a theta role to such NP but it cannot case mark it. For the internal argument to be case marked, it is moved to the empty external argument position where it receives nominative case. The PP which is only found in passive constructions is optional. The following verbs possess all these features; hence they are argued to fall under this group of unaccusative intransitive verbs.

From the field, respondents provided the information which shows that, both underived and derived intransitive unaccusative verbs are found in Runyambo. This is because

Runyambo has a rich verbal morphology with verb extensions and other inflectional categories. This section covers intransitive unaccusative verbs in Runyambo by looking at their morphology under verb extension process, their structure and how they instigate NP movement. The data indicate that, all intransitive unaccusative verbs are treated as independent verbs in Runyambo. We found it important to start with identifying such verbs and discussing their morphology because in Bantu, most of the aspects are morphosyntactic. The intransitive unaccusative verbs found in Runyambo are underived, passive, and stative verbs.

5.1. Underived Verbs

In Runyambo, the data indicate that these are intransitive unaccusative verbs which do not undergo any derivational processes except for the attachment of final vowel (ROOT +FV). They describe actions, where the subject undergoes the action without actively performing it. The subject of such a verb is an entity affected by the action rather than the one causing it. They do not have the ability to assign accusative case to their NP complement, hence, lack of ability to carry the object. Also, they carry only one argument which is internal argument. The researcher finds a few verbs of this kind as presented on Table 2:

Table 2. Underived Unaccusative Verbs in Runyambo.

Root	Root + FV	Gloss
yag-	yag-a	Melt
tobher-	tobher-a	Sink
gand-	gand-a	Freeze
si-	si-a	Be Burnt/ripen
f-	f-a	Die
rwan-	rwan-a	Beat

In Table 2, some examples of underived verbs in Runyambo are presented. The nature of verb like *yaga*, 'melt' *tobhera* 'sink', *ganda* 'freeze' and the rest explains the condition of an action without actively being involved as an agent. However, they possess all the features of unaccusative Runyambo verbs and they can be inflected for TAM, and can receive verb extensions.

The data reveal that the subject of underived verb has patient theta role, as it is affected by the action. The fact on the nature of underived unaccusative verbs is the failure to assign accusative case to their NP complements. It is the verb with only one argument which is internal. Its theme/ patient is inherently. This calls for the fact that the NPs in underived construction are not at their canonical position hence the sentences in 7 are presented at the D- structure to show the

canonical position of the moved argument and the subject position marked with 'e' (empty NP position).

7.a) - *kafa omuntu*

e ka- fa omuntu

[_{IP} NP e [_I¹ *ka* [_{VP} V *fa* [NP *omuntu*]]]]

[_{IP} NP e [_I¹ Pst [_{VP} V die [NP person]]]]

'e- died a person'

b) - *aganda ameizi*

e a- ganda ameizi

[_{IP} NP e [_I¹ *a* [_{VP} V *ganda* [NP *ameizi*]]]]

[_{IP} NP e [_I¹ Pres [_{VP} V frozen [NP water]]]]

'e -has frozen the water'

The examples in 7 present the D- structure which lack an external argument whose position is rendered empty. The same is reflected on the SM on the verbs which is an obligatory NP element in the sentences. This suggests the fact that these verbs are unaccusative in Runyambo. The D- Structure in 7 can be presented in a tree diagram in which all arguments are seen in the internal argument position and the external argument position is empty as in Figure 1:

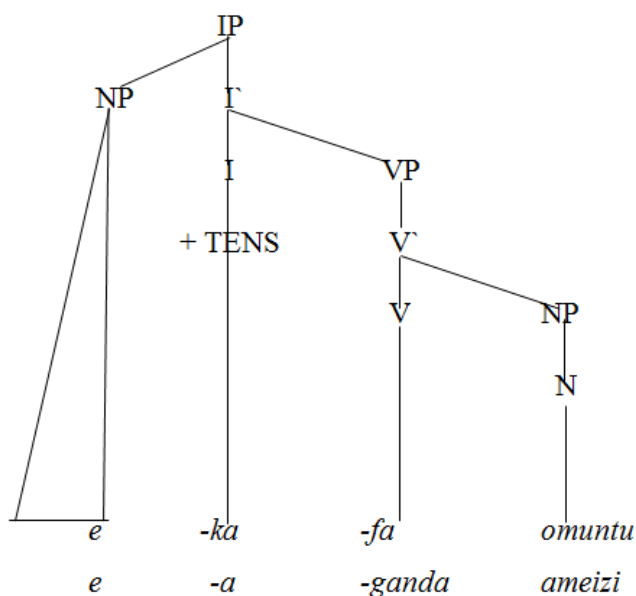


Figure 1. D-structure of Underived unaccusative Verbs.

In Figure 1, the verbs *ganda* 'freeze', and *fa* 'die' cannot assign accusative case to their NP complements and consequently they lack external argument. This makes the sentence ungrammatical because syntactically, all sentences should have the subject as an obligatory entity. All NP complements are forced to move from their original position to the empty external argument position to be case marked and rescue the sentence from ungrammaticality. At the S- structure, the internal argument should therefore be moved to the external argument position to be assigned nominative case leaving a trace at the base position which is marked by (t_i). The sentences at D-structure on Figure 1 can be presented at S-

structure in 8:

8.a) *Omuntu akafa*

Omuntu a- ka- fa

[_{IP} NP *omuntu* [N *a* [_I¹ *ka* [_{VP} V *fa* [NP t_i]]]]]

[_{IP} NP a person [_I¹ Pst [_{VP} V die [NP t_i]]]]

'A person died'

b) *Ameizi gaaganda*

Ameizi ga- a- ganda

[_{IP} NP *ameizi* [N *ga* [_I¹ *a* [_{VP} V *ganda* [NP t_i]]]]]

[_{IP} NP the water [_I¹ Pres [_{VP} V frozen [NP t_i]]]]

The water has frozen

The sentences in 8 presents the S- Structure from the D-structure sentences in figure 1. In the examples in 8, all the arguments are moved to the external argument position leaving the trace (t_i) at the internal argument position (their canonical position) producing the grammatical sentences as in Figure 2.

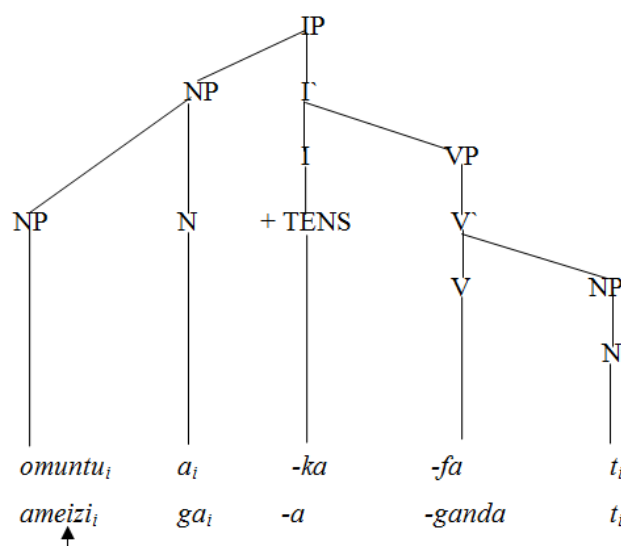


Figure 2. S-structure of Underived Verbs.

From the examples in Figure 2, the S- structure is the result of NP movement, in order fulfill the syntactic requirement of having a subject in any of the correct sentence. The moved argument is assigned nominative case by INFL at the external argument position. It moves with its patient/theme theta role from its base position at which the theme/patient theta role is assigned by the verb. This group of verbs is referred to as intransitive unaccusative verbs due to their having only one argument which is an internal argument. They differ from the other intransitive verbs which carry one argument which is an external argument.

5.2. Passive Verbs

Passive are formed through verbal derivation [15]. They are derived from their counterpart verbs (active-verbs) through morphological process of verb extension in which

the extension affixes are attached between the verb root and FV. Passive verbs in Runyambo are formed by the attachment of the extension suffix *-w-* to verb root resulting into a syntactically independent verb. These verbs possess all the features of unaccusative verbs as argued by Burzio [2]. Some of the collected passive verbs are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Passive Verbs in Runyambo.

Active verb	Derivation	Passive verb	Gloss
Zana	zan-w-a	Zanwa	be played/danced
Zaara	zaar-w-a	zaarwa	Be born
Gura	gur-w-a	Gurwa	be bought
Yeta	yet-w-a	Yetwa	be called
Chinga	ching-w-a	Chingwa	Be closed

In Table 3, the data reveal the fact that unaccusative verbs like *gurwa* 'be bought', *zanwa* 'be played', *yetwa* 'be called' and the rest are derived from active verbs which are *gura*, *zana*, and *yeta*, respectively. Passive verbs in this study are taken as independent verbs.

The data reveal that passive verbs in Runyambo takes only one argument which is an internal argument at the S-structure in Runyambo which is found at the subject position but does not semantically belong there, as it plays a theme/patient role in a position canonically occupied by the agent theta role. Just like underived unaccusative verb, this verb does not deviate from Burzio's verb 3 which cannot assign a theta role to its subject and therefore cannot assign accusative case to its complement NP. This fact is presented at the D-Structure where the subject is found in the preposition phrase (PP) with its theta role as agent assigned by a preposition *na* 'by', as in 9:

9. a) *-kakorwa emotoka numusigazi*

[e- [ka- [korwa [emotoka [na omusigazi]]]]]

[_{IP} NP e [_{I'} ka [_{VP} V' korwa [_{NP} emotoka [_{PP} P' na [_{NP} omusigazi]]]]]

[_{IP} NP e- [_{I'} Pst [_{VP} V' be repaired [_{NP} car [_{PP} P' by [_{NP} a boy]]]]]

'-was repaired the car by a boy'

b) *-karimwa endimiro na abhaana*

[e- [ka- [rimwa [endimiro [na abhaana]]]]]

[_{IP} NP e [_{I'} ka [_{VP} V rimwa [_{NP} endimiro [_{V'} [_{PP} P' na [_{NP} abhana]]]]]

[_{IP} NP e [_{I'} Pst [_{VP} V' be cultivated [_{NP} farm [_{N'} [_{PP} P' by [_{NP} the children]]]]]

'- was cultivated the farm by children'

The examples in 9 shows the original positions occupied by the arguments *omusigazi* 'boy' and, *abhaana* 'children'. The external argument positions are empty marked by 'e'. The D- structures can be presented on the tree diagram as on

Figure 3 as follows:

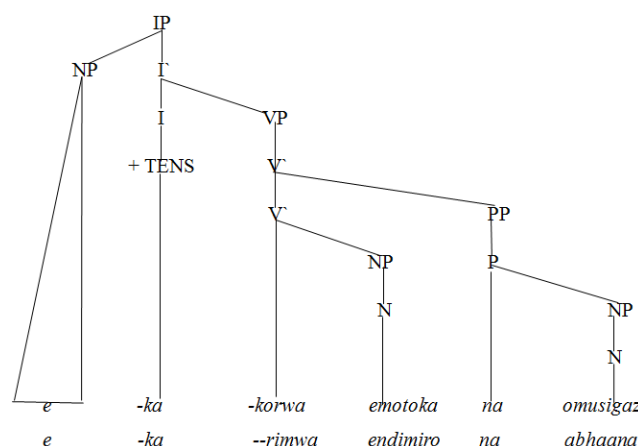


Figure 3. D-structure for Passive Construction.

The data in Figure 3 show that in D-structure, the passive verb allows only one argument which is internal argument as presented on Figure 3, where the original position of internal argument is occupied by *omusigazi* 'boy' and *abhaana* 'children' in the sentences before movement. In Runyambo, passive verbs affect case assignments on their NP complement, causing their internal arguments to be assigned nominative case after the movement, whereby the external argument positions become filled with the moved categories to avoid ungrammatical constructions. This is because, passive verb fails to assign accusative case to its internal argument resulting into NP movement which takes us to the S- structure which produce the grammatical sentences as presented in 10:

10. a) *Emotoka ekakorwa numusigazi*

Emotoka e- ka- korwa na omusigazi

[_{IP} NP emotoka_i e_i [_{I'} ka [_{VP} V korwa [_{NP} t_i [_{PP} P' na [_{NP} omusigazi]]]]]

[_{IP} NP a car_i [_{I'} Pst [_{VP} V' be repaired [_{NP} t_i [_{PP} P' by [_{NP} a boy]]]]]

'A car was repaired by a boy'

b) *Endimiro ekarimwa nabhaana*

Endimiro e-ka-rimw-a na abhana

[_{IP} NP endimiro_i e_i [_{I'} ka- [_{VP} V rimwa [_{NP} t_i [_{PP} P na [_{NP} abhana]]]]]

[_{IP} NP farm_i [_I Pst [_{VP} V' be cultivated [_{NP} t_i [_{PP} P' by [_{NP} children]]]]]

'The farm was cultivated by children'

In 10, the S-structures possess external arguments, which result from obligatory NP movement of internal argument from its original position to the landing position. The position is empty to give the room to the moved category in the external argument position to be case marked as nominative, leaving a trace at its base position as in the constructions in 10.

This fulfills case filter in which each argument must possess a case and a theta role [6]. The internal arguments *emo-*

toka ‘car, and *endimiro* ‘farm, move from their original position to the external argument position to be assigned nominative case, and they move with their theta role as theme/patient. Also, the data show that an internal argument moves to an A position which is empty at the D-structure ready to accommodate the moved category for case marking.

The agent of the action which is the external argument is presented by a ‘by phrase’. So, the arguments *emotoka* ‘car’ and *endimiro* ‘farm’, ‘are basically internal arguments which are moved with their theta roles of theme/patient to the empty argument position and attach the SMs to the V. Since SM is obligatory compared to an overt subject it is taken to be a basic element in the NP. At the S-structure, the notion of movement to some entities is observed. The S-structure is illustrated in Figure 4.

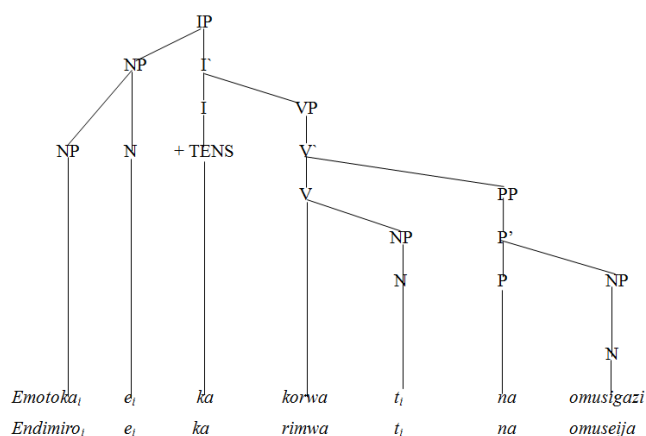


Figure 4. S-Structure for Passive Construction.

The data in Figure 4 show that, the internal argument moved with its theta role theme/patient which is assigned by verb to subject position leaving the trace. At the landing position, the argument is assigned nominative case. Different from the underived unaccusative verbs, passive verbs allow an adjunct which shows the agent of the action (by phrase). The by-phrase, however, is optional. This makes passive sentences to fit into the structures presented in the introduction of section 4.3. Therefore, the sentences in 10 can be presented as:

Emotoka ekakorwa ‘A car was repaired’

endimiro ekarimwa ‘The farm was cultivated’

The sentences are grammatical in Runyambo making the structure similar to that presented by Burzio [2] which may have an adjunct or not. The data indicate that, the passive verbs ‘be made, *korwa* ‘and be cultivated’ *rimwa* in Runyambo cannot assign accusative case and they carry only one argument and assign only one theta role of theme/patient which are characteristic of intransitive unaccusative verbs. As per case theory each argument must be case marked. The passive verb has no ability to assign case to its NP complement, making NP movement obligatory. This is supported by

Burzio [2] in his discussion about verb 3 which includes passive and raising verbs. The moved category leaves the trace at its original position. This shows the relationship between trace and external argument indicated by co-index as in Figure 5.

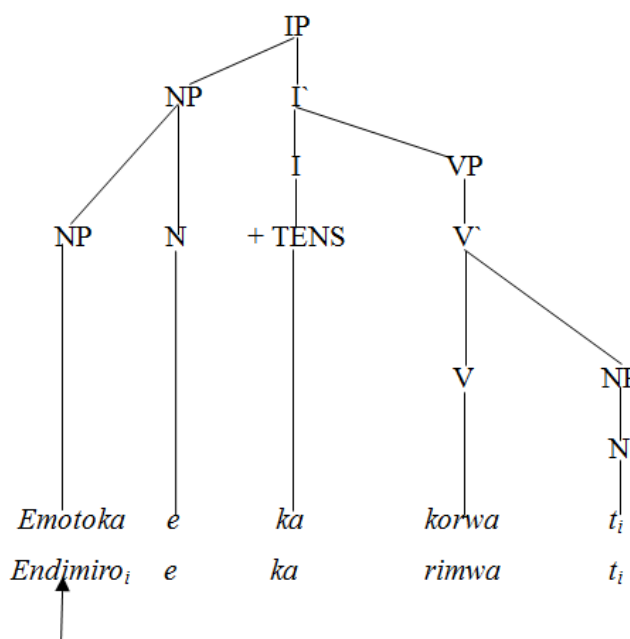


Figure 5. S-Structure for NPs Movement.

According to the data presented in Figure 5, the NP movement at the S- structure is an obligatory process in order for the sentence to be free from grammatical errors and acceptable. In Figure 5, the arguments at the external argument position like *emotoka* ‘car’, and *endimiro* ‘farm’ are moved from the internal argument position.

According to Haegeman [11], the adoption of theta criterion requires that, each theta role be associated with a predicate to be assigned to some argument (an NP or a casual complement). In Figure 5, there is only one argument per sentence with only one theta role. The arguments *emotoka*, and *endimiro* are taken as the subjects of the sentences with patient theta role. They are not taken as the agents of *korwa* ‘be repaired’, and *rimwa* ‘be cultivated’.

These NPs are taken as crystal property of passive verb as they fail to assign the external theta role to NPs at A-position. Jerro proposes that the agent role is not absent in passive sentence in most Bantu languages [12]. It is observed by the passive morphology on the verb, which is marked by the morpheme -w which is attached to the verb root before the final vowel which is the same in Runyambo based on the data presented in passive sentences.

5.3. Stative Verbs

In Runyambo, the data reveal that, stative verbs are the

verbs that generally describe a state or quality of a thing, as presented by Chomsky in aspect of syntax [4]. The findings also reveal that, in Runyambo, morphemes *-ik*, *-ek* and *-uk* are attached after a verb root in the verb to form stative verb. The *-uk* /*-ek* phonologically attached before plosive sounds and *-ik* appear after fricative sounds. Some examples of stative verbs collected from the field are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Stative Verbs in Runyambo.

Verb root	Derivation	Stative verb	Gloss
Soma	som-ek-a	Someka	Be legible
Bhona	bhon-ek-a	Bhoneka	Be seen/visible
Manya	many-ik-a	Manyika	Be known/famous
Chinga	ching-uk-a	Chinguka	Be open
Yata	yat-ik-a	Yatika	Be shattered
Hemuka	hem-uk-a	Hemuka	Be ashamed

Table 4 presents some stative verbs collected from the field. This is a productive verb extension in Runyambo. The data reveal the fact that unaccusative verbs like *bhoneka* 'be seen', *someka* 'be readable', *chinguka* 'be open', *Manyika* 'be known', and other verbs are derived from basic verbs which are *honda*, *soma*, *chinga* and *manya*, respectively. The researcher found it important to identify them by discussing the morphological process used in forming stative unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. This makes it easy to grasp as the researcher discusses their syntactic properties.

In Runyambo, the data reveal that stative verbs are the verbs that generally describe a state, condition or quality of a thing. Stative verbs are stable and they lack shift or variation. In this sense, they refer to constant states and they are durative over time [4]. A verb is considered to be a stative if it expresses a state or condition rather than an action. In Runyambo, this process is productive.

The stative verbs in Runyambo are categorized under intransitive verbs, because they have no external argument, they have only an internal argument. The internal argument of stative verb cannot be assigned case at its base position. This is because the verb in question has no ability to assign case to its NP complement. Due to that, the internal argument moves from its original position to external argument position to be case marked. The D-structure of sentences with stative verbs is illustrated in 11.

11. a) *-a-yatika echikompe*

- a- yatika echikompe

[_{IP} NP_e [_{I'} *a-* [_{VP} V' *yatika* [_{NP} *echikompe*]]]]

[_{IP} NP_e [_I Pres' [_{VP} V be broken [_{NP} the cup]]]].

- is broken a cup

b) *-kachinguka Omryango*

- ka- chinguka omuryango

[_{IP} NP_e [_{I'} *-ka-* [_{VP} V' *chinguka* [_{NP} *omuryango*]]]]

[_{IP} NP_e [_I Pst' [_{VP} V be opened [_{NP} the door]]]].

'- was opened the door (by itself)

The constructions in 10 reveal that stative verbs in Runyambo lack ability to assign accusative case to their NP complements. This led to the formation of ill sentences at the D-structure in which complements are placed at their base position. The internal arguments '*omlyango*' door, '*amate*' milk' and *echikompe* 'cup' are the objects of the predicate. They cannot acquire case at their original position. At the D-structure, the external argument position is empty. The D-structure of the stative verb sentences in 11 can be presented on the tree diagram as in Figure 6:

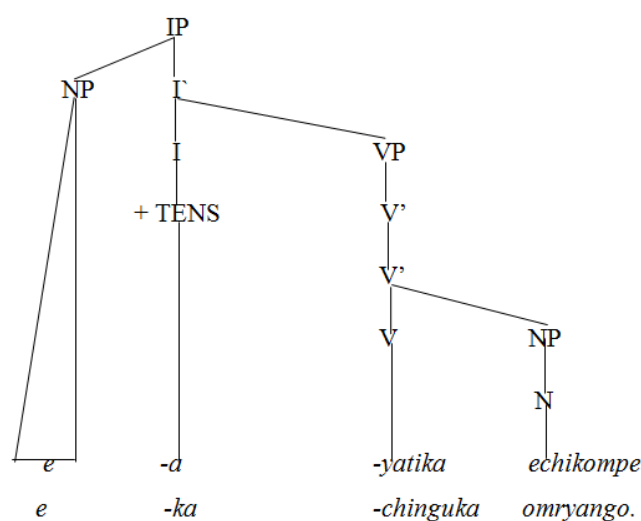


Figure 6. D-Structure for Stative Verbs.

Figure 6 illustrates the D-structure of stative constructions in Runyambo. The sentences at D-structure are ungrammatical because the verbs in question cannot assign accusative case to their NP complements and they lack the external arguments which are obligatory. The external argument position is empty, which gives a room to the moved category marked as nominative case to fulfill the structural requirement in syntactic construction. So, the internal argument at its base position cannot be assigned case because the verb has no ability to assign case to its NP complement.

Stative verbs in Runyambo instigate obligatory movement of internal argument from its original position (object/internal argument position) to the external argument position where it receives nominative case. The S-structure of sentences with stative verbs is illustrated in 11.

12. a) *echikompe chayayatika*

echikompe chi-a-yatika t_i

[_{IP} NP *echikompe*_i ci_i- [_{I'} *a-* [_{VP} V' *yatika* [_{NP} *t_i*]]]]

[_{IP} NP the cup_i [_I Pres' [_{VP} V be broken [_{NP} *t_i*]]]].

'The cup has broken'

b) *Omryango gukachinguka*

Omryango gu-ka-chinguka

[_{IP} NP *omryango_i* *gu_i* [_{I'} -ka- [_{VP} V' *chinguka* [_{NP} *t_i*]]]]]

[_{IP} NP the door_i [_I Pst' [_{VP} V be open [_{NP} t_i]]]]

‘The door opened’

The sentences in 11 present the S-structure in which the empty external argument position is filled by the moved category (internal argument) which is assigned nominative case as presented in the tree diagram on [Figure 7](#):

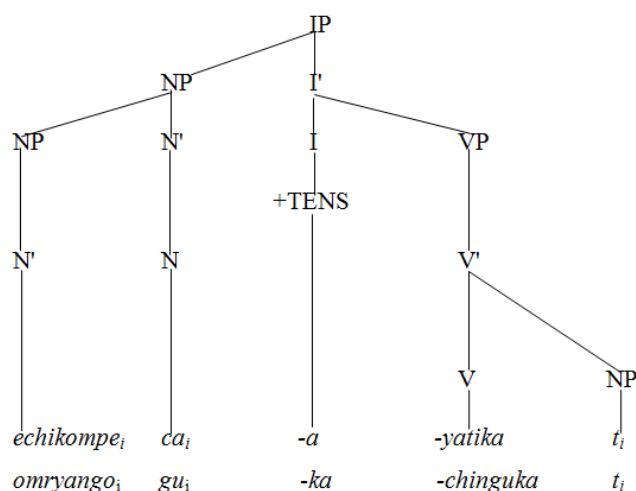


Figure 7. *S-Structure for Stative Construction.*

The S-structure in Figure 7 reveals that the empty position is filled and the original position of internal argument has a trace. The verbs '*chinguka*' and '*yatika*' in Runyambo allow only one syntactic argument (internal argument), which is moved to a subject position which is empty in the D-structure. Nominative case is assigned by INFL to external argument while accusative case is assigned by verb to internal argument. An internal argument in Runyambo has one theta role which is patient, assigned to it by the verb.

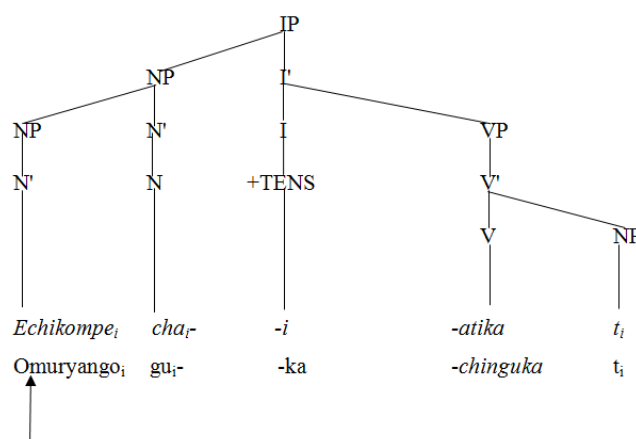


Figure 8. *S-Structure for NPs Movement.*

Structure is the result of NP movement which is an obligatory process in order to produce the grammatical sentences. The data show that the movement of NP involves only the internal argument from its original position to external argument position. ‘*omryango*’ door’ *echikompe* ‘cup’ and *amate* ‘milk’ moved from their object position to the empty external argument position to be case marked. Figure 8 shows the movement of the internal argument to the external argument:

The data presented on [Figure 8](#) are grammatically correct. This evidences the fact that stative verbs are intransitive unaccusative verbs in Runyambo. They differ from passive by not having the by-phrase which in passive marks the agent of an action. Stative verbs present the state rather than an action.

Stative verbs differ from underived verbs morphologically as they receive verbal extension. Syntactically, they possess the same features as they both carry only one argument which is internal. On the other hand, stative verbs differ from passive verbs by lacking an agent. While agent can appear in a by-phrase in passive sentences, it cannot appear anywhere in stative sentences.

6. Conclusion

Generally, intransitive unaccusative verbs carry a single argument which is assigned a patient/theme theta role. This differentiates them from other intransitive verbs which carry a single argument which is assigned agent theta role and is canonically assigned nominative case. The internal argument in intransitive unaccusative verb appears at the external argument position as a result of NP/A-movement. At the landing position, it acquires nominative case to fulfill case filter, which suggests that every overt argument must be case marked. It moves from the internal argument position with the theme/patient theta role which is assigned to it by the verb at the base position.

After the NP movement which occurs at S-structure, the argument found in intransitive unaccusative verb has nominative case and theme/patient theta role, making it grammatically well-formed and acceptable. At the D-structure, the internal argument is theta marked by the verb, but not case marked hence violating the case filter.

Abbreviations

AUG	Argument
D-S	Deep Structure
FV	Final Vowel
GBT	Government and Binding Theory
NC	Noun Class
NP	Noun Phrase
OM	Object Marker
PERF	Perfective
PROG	Progress

PST	Past Tense
RCV	Reciprocal Verb
SM	Subject Marker
S-S	Surface Structure
TAM	Time, Mood and Aspect

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The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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