On the expression of mirativity in Rukiga*

Allen Asiimwe
Makerere University

Rukiga (Bantu, JE14) generally does not have a dedicated morphological system to express mirativity, that is, speaker’s surprise at an unexpected occurrence. Nevertheless, the language employs a range of non-dedicated linguistic tools to express speaker surprise. This paper discusses four mirative strategies namely, object marker (OM) doubling, predicate doubling, particle -o and particle ku. The findings indicate that mirativity is highly context-dependent since each of the four strategies is associated with multiple functions. The four strategies can also be combined for a stronger and more explicit mirative interpretation.

Keywords: mirativity, OM doubling, predicate doubling, particle -o, particle ku, Rukiga, Bantu

1. Introduction

Rukiga (Bantu, JE14) is one of the Bantu languages of Uganda, spoken natively in the south-western region by approximately 2.3 million people (UBOS 2016). Rukiga is closely related to Runyankore and the two are often studied together as a language cluster, Runyankore-Rukiga due to their high level of mutual intelligibility. Lexical similarity between the two languages is estimated to be about 94% (Eberhard et al., 2020). As a characteristic feature of Bantu languages, Rukiga exhibits a concord system. The head noun determines grammatical gender and number for all the elements that occur with it (1). Furthermore, the language exhibits an initial vowel (also known as the preprefix or augment) on nominals (1) which serves a range of syntactic and pragmatic functions (see Taylor 1972; Asiimwe 2014; Asiimwe, Kouneli & Van der Wal 2023).

(1)  
Emikyeeka (é)miraingwa (é)míngi (é)mihángo (é)mirungi  
e-mi-kyeeka  e-mí-raingwa  e-mí-ngi  e-mí-hángo  e-mí-rungi  
AUG-4-mat  AUG-4-long  AUG-4-many  AUG-4-big  AUG-4-beautiful  
‘many (of the) big beautiful long mats’

The aim of this paper is to give a descriptive analysis of some of the linguistic resources that Rukiga uses to express mirativity. Mirativity in its broader sense is concerned with how speakers express surprise or unexpectedness at the occurrence of an event, an activity, a state of affairs or an experience in a specific context (Peterson 2017: 10) as the example from Turkish in (2) illustrates.

Aksu-Koç and Slobin (1986) via Peterson (2017: 3)  
(2)  
Context: The speaker hears someone approach, opens the door, and sees  
Kemal — a totally unexpected visitor.  
Kemal gel-miş.  
Kemal came-EVID  
Mirative translation: ‘Kemal came!’

This study describes how speakers of Rukiga express the feeling of surprise, unexpectedness or beyond-expectation states. It was motivated by a recent study by Asiimwe and Van der Wal (2021), which examined the particle -o present in Rukiga, which functions primarily as a contrastive topic marker as given in (3). It was found out that the same particle, given the

*Acknowledgements. I am grateful to my consultants, Aron Turyasingura, Ronald Twesigomwe, Peter Musinguzi and Emmy Rwomushana, for discussing Rukiga data with me. I would also like to acknowledge Michael Diercks and Hannah Lippard for discussing with me interesting features of OM doubling from the Bantu languages they are working on. I will not forget to acknowledge the audiences at the LAEA2 conference (2021) and the Workshop on Miratives and Evidentiality in Bantu (October 2021) for constructive comments on preliminary data. I also appreciate the comments from one anonymous reviewer and the editors of this special issue for their valuable feedback. I take responsibility for any remaining errors.
right pragmatic context, denotes a sense of surprise or unexpectedness, as shown in (4) (see Section 5 for a detailed discussion).\(^1\)

Asimwe & Van der Wal (2021: 3) (3)

Okwéézi kwó náákureeba.
\[\begin{array}{l}
\text{o-ku-ezi} \\
\text{15-Moon} \\
\text{1SG.SM-N.PST-15OM-see-FV}
\end{array}\]

‘The moon I have seen (the sun and/or the stars maybe I have not seen)’

Asimwe & Van der Wal (2021:21)

(4) Context: Is it true that the gorillas sang for you?
Engagi \(\text{zó zaátwéshongorera!}\)
\[\begin{array}{l}
\text{e-n-gagi} \\
\text{10-Gorilla} \\
\text{10SM-N.PST-1PLOM-sing-APPL-FV}
\end{array}\]

‘(Surprisingly) Gorillas have sung for us!’

In Rukiga, there are no grammaticalised mirative markers. The language instead uses mirative strategies. Using elicited data, cross-checked with four native speakers, I describe four strategies of expressing mirativity in Rukiga from the speaker’s point of view. During elicitation, I generated sentences in Rukiga\(^2\) with and without the targeted mirative strategies. The sentences were shared with the consultants and asked for possible interpretations. The strategies included object doubling, predicate doubling, particle \(-\text{o}\) and particle \(\text{ku}\). The consultants gave various interpretations associated with each of the strategies. Mirativity was not always the primary meaning for all the strategies, and the analyses that were generated varied. I should also mention that checking for mirativity was not easy because the strategies under study have various roles they play in the discourse. The consultants would occasionally first mention other functions associated with the strategies before giving the mirative use, as I show, for example, in Section 3. However, with more discussions, more probing and additional contexts, mirativity was listed as one of the interpretations associated with all the tested strategies.

The descriptive analysis given in this paper is focused mainly on four strategies namely, object marker doubling (henceforth OM doubling), predicate doubling, particles \(-\text{o}\) and \(\text{ku}\). There are other mirative strategies as well, including \(\text{ngu}\) and some discourse markers such as \(\text{kyo ‘oh/really!’, mbwenu ‘but/really’, buzima ‘indeed’, nangwa ‘indeed/by-the-way’ and baasi ‘really’}\), but these will not be discussed here. Each of the strategies examined in this paper is associated with multiple roles, an indication that mirativity is not inherent in them but pragmatically motivated. The variety of Rukiga on which data for this study are based is Orunyaifo, spoken primarily in Ndorwa East constituency in Kabale District in the former Kigezi region, in the south-western part of Uganda.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 briefly examines the concept of mirativity in literature but also makes a distinction between mirativity and evidentiality. In Section 3, OM doubling is discussed, where an object NP pragmatically co-occurs with an object marker in a simple clause to convey a mirative interpretation besides other interpretations. Section 4 presents a discussion on the role of predicate doubling in expressing mirativity alongside other interpretations. The particle \(-\text{o}\) discussed in Section 5 generates multiple interpretations in given contexts and mirativity is one of them. Rukiga also uses particle \(\text{ku}\) to encode mirativity as discussed in Section 6. In Section 7, I give an overview of the four strategies and also show that the mirative strategies examined can be combined for a reinforced interpretation. Section 8 is the conclusion.

### 2 The concept of mirativity in literature and its connection with evidentiality

All languages of the world possibly have the means to code an event or state as occurring outside normal expectations (Sahoo & Lemmens 2017). Literature shows that languages differ in terms of the available resources in expressing the phenomenon, and variations are observed even within the same language. Some languages have grammaticalised morphological means for marking mirativity while other languages express mirativity through “non-mirative categories which acquire mirative meanings in a given context” (Aikhenvald 2012: 462). Hence, not every language marks mirativity

---

1. In a different context, the particle in the same construction induces a contrastive topic reading, in that other than the gorillas, there are other animals that were expected to sing, which did not.
2. Rukiga is the first language of the author.
3. The discourse marker \(\text{buzima}\) and \(\text{baasi}\) combine with the strategies discussed in this paper to reinforce the mirative reading as shown in Sections 3, 4, and 5.
in its grammar and that is why some languages use mirative strategies, or at least the equivalent of the verb phrase ‘to be surprised’ (Peterson 2017). Also, to note is that mirativity may be common in certain language families than others.

The concept of mirativity is relatively new although traces of it can be found in older studies especially in languages with grammaticalized evidential markers such as Turkish (Aksu-Koç & Slobin 1986). The phenomenon of mirativity became popular with the seminal work of DeLancey (1997) and many studies have since been conducted. Mirativity manifests itself through pronouns, morphological markers, particles and lexical elements. Moreover, mirative morphemes have been documented in a wide range of languages, for example, in Hare (DeLancey 1997), Turkish (Slobin & Aksu 1982, Aksu-Koç & Slobin 1986), Japanese (Akatsuka 1985), Korean (Lee 1993), among others. In Hare, DeLancey (1997) notes that the inferential evidential marker lö is used to express mirativity in given contexts. Turkish uses the suffix -miş to convey both evidentiality and mirativity as shown in (5) repeated from (2) for convenience. So far, there is no study that has identified morphological miratives in Bantu languages.

Aksu-Koç and Slobin (1986) via Peterson (2017: 3)

(5) Context: The speaker hears someone approach, opens the door, and sees Kemal — a totally unexpected visitor.
Kemal gelmiş.
Kemal came-EVID
Mirative translation: ‘Kemal came!’
Evidential translation: ‘Kemal apparently came.’

Mirativity has remained partially a controversial category because earlier studies suggest that it is part of evidentiality. Rett and Murray (2013) is a recent study that supports the view that miratives are part of evidentials. Indeed, many languages that have grammaticalised mirative meanings, have these meanings extended from evidential markers. However, more recent studies indicate that evidentials and miratives are distinct categories (e.g., DeLancey 1997, Aikhenvald 2012, Peterson 2017). Importantly, evidentiality is concerned with knowledge source while with mirativity, the source of information does not matter since its core value is the expectations of knowledge or surprise (Aikhenvald 2012, Peterson 2017). Nonetheless, grammatical evidential markers in some languages have overtones of mirativity as we have seen in the Turkish example in (5).

The mirative strategies discussed in this paper do not show any direct correlation between the source of knowledge (evidentiality) and expectations of knowledge (mirativity). However, the connection between mirativity and evidentiality cannot be refuted (DeLancey 1997, Aksu-Koç & Slobin 1986, Rett & Murray 2013, Aikhenvald 2004, 2021). There are certain evidential strategies in Rukiga that can yield a mirative reading given the right context but these are not discussed here. For example, the lexical particle ngu as illustrated in (6) can be used to express mirativity as well as evidentiality.

(6) **Ng**u b-áá-síng-a!
COMP 2SM-N.PST-win-FV
‘I heard that they won.’ [Evidential (hearsay)]
‘It is surprising that they won.’ [Mirative]

As far as Rukiga is concerned, I argue that mirativity is not a subcategory of evidentiality. For example, the speaker’s surprise in (7) is realised through the particle -ô (a detailed discussion on the use of the particle -ô is given in Section 5). There is no evidence to adduce a direct correlation between mirativity and evidentiality in this utterance. Henceforth, evidentiality is left on the side since mirativity is the focus of the current paper.

(7) (Speaker puts her sheep in a pen which has a strong fence and a lockable gate. To her surprise, she finds one sheep in the courtyard yet the pen looks properly closed. She therefore wonders where the sheep passed to leave the pen).
Mbwenu y-ô e-gi y-aa-rab-a nkahe!
DM 9-CM DEM-9.PROX 9SM-N.PST-pass-FV where
‘Where has this one passed? (I did not expect to find any sheep outside).’

---

4 There are some languages with grammaticalised mirative markers without evidentiality meaning (for examples, see Hengeveld & Olbertz 2012; Rett and Murray 2013)

5 As far as I can establish, no study has been carried out on evidentiality in Rukiga.
We note that mirativity, according to Aikhenvald (2012: 437), may be more than surprise, covering the following subcategories in (8).

(8)  
   a. Sudden discovery, sudden revelation or realization by the speaker, the audience (or addressee), or the main character  
   b. Surprise of the speaker, the audience (or addressee), or the main character  
   c. Unprepared mind of the speaker, the audience (or addressee), or the main character  
   d. Counter-expectation of the speaker, the audience (or addressee), or the main character  
   e. Information new to the speaker, the audience (or addressee), or the main character.

The central feature of miratives, however, is the violation of expectation — something that was unexpected turned out to be true (e.g., DeLancey 1997: 38). The different shades of mirativity outlined in (8) can be realised through various strategies including lexical means. Aikhenvald (2012) notes that some languages have different grammatical marking for different meanings within the mirative range. Following Peterson (2017), I will focus on surprise of the speaker at an unexpected state, event or activity. As Peterson (2017) observes, surprise is a psychological notion. What is surprising to one individual may not be surprising to another — what is surprising to the speaker may not necessary be surprising to the addressee. The addressee can even challenge, question or deny the mirative meaning by making statements such as ‘I don’t think that is surprising’ or That is expected, anyway!’. Similarly, information may be surprising in one context and not surprising in another. The focus is therefore on how the speaker expresses surprise without considering whether the addressee will interpret the utterance as one of surprise (Peterson 2017: 8). I will now discuss mirative strategies in Rukiga starting with object marker doubling in Section 3.

3 Object marker doubling

First, I present some basic syntactic properties of object marking in Rukiga. Rukiga allows up to three object markers in the verb complex plus a locative enclitic as illustrated in (9).

(9)  
   N-aa-bi-mu-mu-he-er-á=mu.  
   1SG.SM-N.PST-ROM-1OM-1OM-give-APPL-FV=18  
   ‘I have given them to her/him on his/her behalf from there.’

Despite their position at the end of a verb stem, locative enclitics share properties with object markers. Similar to an object marker (OM), a locative enclitic is obligatory when the locative noun is not in situ, as in a locative inversion construction (10)a, or when the locative noun is pronominal (10)b.

(10)  
      a. Omu rutookye hameziremá=amóozi.  
        o-mu ru-tookye ha-mer-ire=*mu a-ma-ozi  
        AUG-18 11-banana.planation 16SM-sprout-PFV=18 AUG-6-pumpkin  
        Lit: ‘In the banana plantation sprouted pumpkins.’  
        ‘Pumpkins sprouted in the banana plantation.’  
      b. Gameziremu.  
        ga-mer-ire=*mu  
        6SM-sprout-PFV=18  
        ‘They sprouted there.’

Rukiga does not feature noun classes that trigger compulsory object marking but an OM may be required in certain syntactic configurations. A case in point is object marking in constructions with a left-dislocated object for a topic referent or a given referent as illustrated in (11):

---

6 No data about mirative expressions related to other discourse participants were elicited.
Shwénkuru  a-ka-gáari  y-áá*(ka)-kánik-a.
1.grandfather  AUG-12-bicycle  1SM-N.PST-12OM-repair-FV
Lit: ‘Grandfather, the bicycle, he has repaired it.’
‘Grandfather has repaired the bicycle.’

Rukiga is a non-doubling language because an object NP cannot co-occur with an object marked verb in the same domain (Van der Wal 2022). This means that the object occurs in a dislocated position. Nevertheless, I use the concept of object doubling in the current analysis where object doubling is pragmatically motivated. Given specific pragmatic contexts, mirativity is one of the interpretations realised when a right-dislocated object NP co-occurs with a corresponding object marker. Hence, OM doubling is licitious in a pragmatically neutral context. When relevant pragmatic contexts are introduced, OM doubling constructions are acceptable eliciting a range of interpretations (see Lippard et al. this volume for a discussion on pragmatic interpretations associated with OM doubling in Lubukusu (E31c) and Cinyungwe (N43)).

The example in (12)a shows a simple SVO sentence containing a transitive verb with an overt in situ object NP. In (12)b, the verb contains an obligatory OM with no explicit object noun, while (12)c illustrates the use of an optional OM co-referenced to a right-dislocated object NP. A right-dislocated object noun usually comes after a prosodic break but this is not the case with OM doubling that realizes mirativity. The mirative meaning is lost once a prosodic break is introduced.

(12)  a.  Shwénkuru  y-aa-kanik-a  á-ka-gáari
1.grandfather  1SG.SM-N.PST-repair-FV  AUG-12-bicycle
‘Grandfather has repaired a/the bicycle.’

b.  Shwénkuru  y-áá*(ka)-kánik-a
1.grandfather  1SG.SM-N.PST-12OM-repair-FV
‘Grandfather has repaired it.’

c.  Shwénkuru  y-áá-ka-kánik-a  á-ka-gáari
1.grandfather  1SG.SM-N.PST-12OM-repair-FV  AUG-12-bicycle
‘Grandfather has repaired it, the bicycle.’
‘Grandfather DID repair the bicycle.’
‘Grandfather repaired the bicycle really well.’
‘Grandfather (surprisingly) fixed the bike!’
‘Grandfather repaired the bicycle badly’
[dislocation, afterthought]
[verum]
[intensity]
[mirativity]
[depreciative]

One possible context for the sentence in (12)c is an answer to the question ‘Did grandfather really repair the bicycle (when one is in doubt)?’ which gives rise to a verum or truth focus interpretation, that is ‘It is true grandfather fixed the bicycle.’ The second interpretation that may arise from OM doubling in (12)c is intensity, which signals that grandfather fixed the bicycle really well. The sentence can also yield a mirative interpretation, that is, to the surprise of the speaker, grandfather fixed the bicycle. Also, the sentence may mean that grandfather did not do a good job and the speaker is expressing his/her disappointment (depreciative interpretation). Note that intonation may play a role for each of the above interpretations to be realised. For example, the intonation for a mirative interpretation differs from the intonation used for a verum reading.

The example given in (13) illustrates further the mirative reading realised through OM doubling.

(13)  (You are certainly joking. You can’t say you have drunk a full jerrycan (five litres) of porridge.)
Wáákán’w y’akagiraaka kóona!
u-aa-ka-nyw-a  a-ka-giraaka  ka-oná
2SG.SM-N.PST-12OM-drink-FV  AUG-12-jerrycan 12-whole
‘You have drunk a full jerrycan (that is unexpected)!’

OM doubling is licit in Rukiga double object constructions (as in 14), allowing both lexical objects to be right dislocated and be object-marked giving rise to a mirative reading, intensity or verum interpretations when the right discourse context is taken into account. With regard to mirativity, the speaker is surprised that father gave all the milk to the dog. The speaker expected that father would give the dog little milk and keep some for another day.
Since the object is in a right dislocated position, an adverb can intervene between an object marked verb and the object. Interesting to note is that when this happens, the mirative reading is lost. Therefore, for the interpretation of surprise or unexpectedness to be realised, there should not be an intervening adverb between the object marked verb and the co-indexed object. Although the mirative interpretation is lost, at least the intensity and verum focus readings are still available, as illustrated in (15) with an intervening adverb of time and (16) with an adverb of manner. Elaborated contexts for deriving verum and intensity interpretations are given in example (16).

    shwenkuru  a-á-ka-káník-á       hati   a-ka-gáari
    1.grandfather 1SG.SM-N.PST-12-repair-FV now AUG-12-bicycle
Lit: ‘Grandfather has just repaired it, the bicycle.’
‘CERTAINLY, grandfather has just repaired the bicycle.’

(16) Shwénkuru y-aa-ka-káník-á gyé a-ka-gáari.
    1.grandfather 1SM.N.PST-120M-repair-FV well AUG-12-bicycle
Lit: ‘Grandfather has repaired it well, the bicycle.’
‘Grandfather has repaired the bicycle really well.’

Context 1: In case of a disagreement about whether grandfather repaired the bicycle well, and the speaker meant to say that ‘Certainly, grandfather has repaired the bicycle well.’

Context 2: Grandfather repaired the bicycle REALLY well. [intensity]

For a manner adverb to appear in a clause that has a co-indexed object NP, the object NP needs to be dislocated as shown in (16). Otherwise, the sentence in (17) is judged to be ungrammatical.

(17) *Shwenkuru yaakakanika akagaari kurungi.
Grandfather repaired the bicycle well.

Not all temporal adverbs behave similarly. For example, the sentence in (18) was judged to be odd while (19) was judged to be felicitous.

(18) ?Shwenkuru y-aa-ka-káník-a a-ka-gáari kare.
    1.grandfather 1SM.N.PST-12-repair-FV AUG-12-bicycle early
Grandfather repaired the bicycle early.

(19) (Context: Did grandfather really repair the bicycle yesterday?)
Shwenkuru a-ka-káník-ire a-ka-gáari nyomwebazyo.
    1.grandfather 1SM-12-repair-PFV AUG-12-bicycle yesterday
‘Certainly, grandfather repaired the bicycle YESTERDAY.’

Overall, in the presence of a manner adverb, OM doubling in Rukiga is licensed only when the object appears to the right of the manner adverb. However, temporal adverbs do not seem to require the same condition, as also observed in Zulu (see Zeller 2012).

We however note that a prosodic break between the verb and the lexically expressed object is possible, an indication that the object NP is not in the VP domain. However, it is not clear at this moment why the mirative reading is
lost when a prosodic break is introduced, as illustrated in (20). This may suggest that a prosodic break may not be a good diagnostic to determine whether a language allows or does not allow object doubling.

(20) Shwénkuru yáákaánika (.) akagaari.
    Shwenkuru y-aa-ka-kanik-a (.) a-ka-gaari
    1.grandfather ISM-N.PST-12-repair-FV AUG-12-bicycle
    ‘Grandfather repaired it, the bicycle.’

In the context of OM doubling, the mirative reading is often strengthened by a discourse marker such as baasi ‘really’ (21) or buzima ‘indeed’ as in (22), which typically come in the sentence final position (but can also be allowed between the object marked verb and the object, as in (21)b) and (22)b). Discourse markers intervening between the object marked verb and the object do not affect or alter the interpretation.\(^7\)

(21) a. W-áá-ga-táh-a á-má-izi baasi!
    2SG.SM-N.PST-6OM-fetch-FV AUG-6-water really
    ‘You have really fetched the water.’
    (It surprises me that you took too long fetching water.)

b. W-áá-ga-táh-a baasi á-má-izi!
    2SG.SM-N.PST-6OM-fetch-FV really AUG-6-water
    ‘You have really fetched the water. (It surprises me that you took too long fetching water.)’

(22) a. W-áá-ga-táh-a á-má-izi buzima!
    2SG.SM-N.PST-6OM-fetch-FV AUG-6-water really
    ‘You have really fetched the water.’ (It surprises me that you took too long fetching water.)

b. W-áá-ga-táh-a buzima á-má-izi!
    2SG.SM-N.PST-6OM-fetch-FV really AUG-6-water
    ‘You have really fetched it, the water.’ (It surprises me that you took too long fetching water.)

To summarise this section, OM doubling is considered to be pragmatically induced and it yields at least four interpretations in Rukiga, viz.: verum or truth focus, intensity, mirativity and depreciative (a term that is attributed to Van der Wal & Jerro (2022) but concessive in Meeussen (1967)) interpretations. The consultants in most cases pointed to at least two interpretations realised simultaneously, either verum and intensity or verum and mirativity or verum and depreciative interpretation. This suggests that the four interpretations tend to overlap, but each of these interpretations can be realised independently, and the realization of each of these interpretations is highly context dependent. We further note from OM doubling in Rukiga that a mirative reading is licensed only when there is no intervening adverb between the object marked verb and the lexical object, but a discourse particle such as baasi ‘really’ or buzima ‘indeed’ has no effect on the meaning. It is further noted that a prosodic break, which puts the lexical object in a right-dislocated position, disallows a mirative (and the depreciative) reading. Yet, the verum and intensity readings are still possible in the presence of an intervening word or a prosodic break. This revelation puts prosody in doubt as to whether it can be used as a diagnostic for OM doubling.

4 Predicate doubling

Rukiga presents two kinds of predicate doubling constructions, that is, topic doubling and in situ doubling (Asiimwe & Van der Wal, forthcoming). Topic doubling constructions consist of an infinitive verb in the sentence initial position, functioning as the topic followed by the same verb in inflected form as shown in (23).

\(^7\) Buzima can even come in the sentence initial position, but not baasi.
(23) Okwéshongora yááyéshongora.
  o-ku-eshongor-a y-aa-eshongor-a
AUG-15-sing-FV 1SM-sing-FV
‘Singing she sang.’

In-situ doubling constructions according to Asiimwe and Van der Wal (forthcoming) present a nominalized element in class 14, as in (24), or a predicate doubling that occurs with the focus marker na ‘even’, illustrated in (25).

(24) (A boy jumps and screams after seeing a cockroach moving in front of him)
E-ki-yénje bu-yénje ni-ki-ku-rect-er-á w-áá-guruk-a?8
AUG-7-cockroach 14-cockroach IPFV-7SM-1OM-bring-APPL-FV 2SG.SM-N.PST-jump-FV
‘How can a mere cockroach make you jump (in fear)?’

(25) (A girl was given her grandfather’s coat to wash but she went ahead and ironed it too)
Ekooti ya shwenkúru n’ókugígorora yáágígorora.
e-kooti y-a shwenkuru na o-ku-gi-gorora a-aa-gi-goror-a
AUG-9-coat 9-CONN 1.grandfather even AUG-15-90M-iron 1SM-N.PST-90M-iron-FV
‘She even ironed grandfather’s coat.’

Predicate doubling constructions in Rukiga are associated with multiple interpretations depending on the context as illustrated in (26) (see also Asiimwe & Van der Wal forthcoming).9

(26) Okwéshongora Joy yááyéshongora.
  o-ku-eshongor-a Joy a-aa-yeshongor-a
AUG-15-sing-FV 1Joy 1SM-N.PST-sing-FV
‘Singing, Joy has sung.’

There are at least five contexts outlined for the topic doubling construction in (26):

Context 1: Did she really sing? ‘She DID sing.’ [verum]
Context 2: She was expected to sing and may be dance ‘Singing she sang (but she did not dance).’ [contrast]
Context 3: She was not prepared to take part in the singing competition (She went ahead and sang anyway) [depreciative]
Context 4: She sang really well. [intensive]
Context 5: She had never been heard singing or never participated in any singing competition. She is not a professional singer. But she sang very well and this is something that was totally unexpected by the speaker. [mirative]

There are more interpretations elicited for topic doubling than in-situ doubling. In the context of an in-situ doubling sentence given in (27) (repeated from (25)), a girl performed a task that she was not assigned, something that surprised the speaker. Other than the mirative meaning expressed in this construction, the presence of na may simply realise an additive meaning (see Asiimwe & Van der Wal forthcoming).

(27) (It was unexpected of the girl to wash and iron the coat as well; the speaker did not know that the girl even knew how to iron.)
Ekooti ya shwenkúru n’ókugígorora yáágígorora.
e-kooti y-a shwenkuru na o-ku-gi-gorora a-aa-gi-goror-a
AUG-9-coat 9-CONN 1.grandfather even AUG-15-9-iron 1SM-N.PST-90M-iron-FV
‘She even ironed grandfather’s coat.’

---

8 In addition, an extra nominalizer nyá- can be added in the proclitic position and becomes ekíyénje nyabuyenje.
9 Besides Rukiga, predicate doubling is associated with mirativity in some other Bantu languages such as Kirundi (JD62) and Kítharaka (ES4) (Van der Wal (ed.) forthcoming).
There are subtle differences between the various interpretations that can be expressed by predicate doubling namely, depreciative, intensive, and mirative. Based on the contexts given for the sentence in (26), concerning the depreciative reading, the speaker does not show any surprise. It does not matter whether Joy sings well or not; after all, she was not prepared for the singing competition. Another way to look at the depreciative meaning is to consider a situation where the speaker disapproves or is disappointed in the manner in which the singing was done. Regarding the intensive interpretation, even if the singing was done really well, this does not surprise the speaker because that was expected since Joy is known to be a good (professional) singer. But with mirativity, Joy had never been heard singing, and her singing was great, as though she had been singing for a long time, something the speaker did not expect.

Similarly, as shown already in Context 1 for (26), it is possible to derive one reading, such as verum, without necessarily triggering a mirative reading. It is also possible for the speaker to put emphasis on the predicate without necessarily inducing a surprise meaning. If, for example, the intention is to remove doubt, the speaker can use the sentence in (26) to signal that ‘CERTAINLY Joy sang well’.

It is important to note, however, that the various interpretations associated with predicate doubling may overlap, as we noted with OM doubling (Section 3). For example, both the intensity and mirative readings can be realised simultaneously. A situation may have happened at a scale higher than the expected range hence drawing the intensity reading. In addition, if the situation was never expected to happen at above the expected level, it will trigger the surprise emotion in the interlocutor. Joy in (26) is not known to be a singer. But when she got onto the stage, she sang extremely well eliciting both the intensity and mirative interpretations.

Looking further at the structure of predicate doubling, a sentence containing a transitive verb as demonstrated in (28), the lexical object can occur either following the infinitive verb (28a) or the finite verb (28b). However, as shown in (28b), both the finite and infinitive verbs require to occur with an OM when an object NP follows the finite verb. In the same vein, (28c) shows that the finite verb requires to have an OM when the object follows the infinitive verb. In addition, if an object marker is to be used in the absence of an object NP, it must appear in both the infinitive and finite verbs as in (28d) (see also Asimwe & Van der Wal forthcoming). For the mirative reading to be derived, the context for (28) suggests that the interlocutors had expressed doubt as to whether grandfather could repair the bicycle, considering that the bicycle had many serious issues to fix, or perhaps grandfather was not known to be a bicycle mechanic. The predicate doubling construction expresses that the action was unexpected. As demonstrated in (28)b-c, OM doubling is possible in predicate doubling, which serves to reinforce the mirative reading (see a discussion on the co-occurrence of mirative strategies in Section 7.1).

   Lit: ‘To fix the bicycle, he has fixed it.’
   ‘He has fixed the bicycle.’

b. O-ku-*(gi)-kánik-a y-áá.*(gi)-kánik-a ×é-gáari.
   Lit: ‘To fix it, he has fixed it, the bicycle.
   ‘He has fixed the bicycle.’

   Lit: ‘To fix it the bicycle, he has fixed it
   ‘He has fixed the bicycle.’

d. O-ku-*(gi)-kánik-a y-áá.*(gi)-kánik-a.
   AUG-15-9OM-repair-FV 1SG.SM-N.PST-9OM-repair-FV
   ‘To fix it, he has fixed it.
   ‘He has fixed the bicycle.’

As already noted with OM doubling (Section 3, also see Section 5 for the particle -o), the mirative meaning in predicate doubling can typically be reinforced by discourse markers: baasi ‘really’ (29) and buzima ‘indeed’ as in (30).10

---

10 Buzima can be used at the beginning of the sentence, in the middle between non-finite and finite verbs or at the end of the sentence.
To summarise, this section has discussed predicate doubling as one of the syntactic strategies Rukiga uses to derive a mirative interpretation. We have noted that predicate doubling is associated with multiple readings. Some of the interpretations can be triggered simultaneously or each reading can be conveyed independently. Looking back at examples (26) and (29)-(30), for instance, each of the interpretations can be realised independently but it is also possible to derive some of the readings concurrently such as the verum, depreciative, intensity and mirativity. In the next section, I examine the particle -o with regard to its role in conveying miratives in Rukiga.

5. The particle -o

Asiimwe & Van der Wal (2021) examine the morphological particle -o present in Rukiga, which plays multiple roles in the language.\(^{11}\) The particle stands as an independent morpheme taking an appropriate noun class agreement marker. Initially it was a pronoun (31) having developed from the demonstrative. It further evolved into a contrastive marker as illustrated in (32) and continued along the grammaticalisation path to become a mirative marker as shown in (33) and assuming other functions.

Asiimwe & Van der Wal (2021: 3)

(31) Tu-gyend-é né=bo.
1PL.SM-go-SBJV with=2.PRO
‘Let us go with them.’

Asiimwe & Van der Wal (2021: 3)

(32) O-kwéézi kwó nákúreeba.
15-CM 1SG.SM-N.PST-15CM-see-FV
‘The moon I have seen (the sun and/or the stars maybe I have not seen)’

Asiimwe & Van der Wal (2021: 3)

(33) E-n-jára y-ó y-áá-gw-a.
9CM-9PST-Fall-FV
‘It has really rained (it unexpectedly rained so heavily or for a long time).

The Rukiga morphological particle -o expresses mirativity as a secondary function. In other words, mirativity is not embedded in the particle but the interpretation is pragmatically induced in a given speech context. The mirative reading is further attested in example (34)b from Asiimwe and Van der Wal (2021: 9). Its presence conveys an unexpected and surprising state of affairs. The example in (34)a is a declarative sentence that is unmarked for mirativity.\(^{12}\) When the particle is introduced in the clause (34)b, it comes along with the reading that something unexpected happened.

---

\(^{11}\) The particle -o can also appear as -e depending on the noun it occurs with. For example, nouns in class 1 take -e (Asiimwe & Van der Wal 2021: 4).

\(^{12}\) One consultant argued that even without the particle -o, in the example given in (35a), the unexpectedness reading can be realised by a rising intonation. This may be true although with the presence of the particle, the surprise reading is more explicit.
Abantu biija.
a-ba-nitu ba-i-j-a
AUG-2-person 2SM.N.PST-come-FV
‘People came.’

Asiimwe & Van der Wal (2021: 3)

b. Context: Someone has a function or has organized an event and sends out invitations. For one reason or another, s/he does not expect many guests to turn up. Many guests turn up, to the surprise of the host.13 Abantu bo biija.
a-ba-nitu ba-o ba-i-j-a
AUG-2-person 2-CM 2SM.N.PST-come-FV
‘People really came (many people turned up, more than those expected).’

In the context illustrated in (35), a house help served sweet potatoes that were too soft (sweet potatoes are expected to be a little bit hard when cooked), an indication that they have been overcooked. This is how the person who was served reacted expressing that she did not expect to be served sweet potatoes that were too soft.

b. E-bi-takuri by-ó w-áá-bi-ték-a!
AUG-8-sweet,potatoes 8-CM 2SG.SM.N.PST-8OM-cook-FV
‘You have really (over)cooked the sweet potatoes!’

The sentence presented in (36)b, according to Asiimwe and Van der Wal (2021), is exclamative and not a mirative. The authors draw a thin line between exclamatives and miratives, arguing that a mirative reading involves surprise to the speaker, while in an exclamative interpretation, the speaker is surprised "with respect to a scalar extent that has surpassed the current expectation" (Asiimwe & Van der Wal 2021:19).

Asiimwe & Van der Wal 2021:20)

(36) Context: Mother is amazed by the love and special care her two-year-old twins show each other.
Mbwénu b-ó a-ba b-o…!
DM 2-CM DEM-2.PROX 2-CM
‘As for these ones…!’

Both miratives and exclamatives involve violation of expectation (cf. Unger 2018). Moreover, Aikhenvald (2012:436), notes that “the overtones of surprise and new and unexpected information are characteristic of other categories, including exclamatives…” Whereas English exclamatives are formally marked with interrogative words ‘what’ and ‘how’ (Collins 2005), e.g., ‘What a beautiful house’, Rukiga does not have such formal syntactic means of marking exclamatives. For instance, the exclamative ‘What a beautiful house!’ is rendered as in (37)a or (37)b. Depending on the context, both (37)a and (37)b can be interpreted as exclamatives and both can express mirativity — any situation, event or state of affairs that arouses surprise in the speaker can be treated as a mirative. A detailed study of exclamatives in Rukiga (and possibly how exclamatives relate with miratives) is left for future research.

(37) a. Enju eboniré báasi!
e-n-ju e-bonér-iré baasi
AUG-9-house 9SM-be.beautiful-PFV really
‘The house is really beautiful’.
‘What a beautiful house!’

b. Enju kw’eboniré!
e-n-ju ku e-boner-iré
AUG-9-house COMP 9SM-be.beautiful-PFV
‘The house is really beautiful’.
‘What a beautiful house!’

13 The basic meaning of -ó is a contrastive marker. It is therefore glossed as CM.
Discourse markers can co-occur with the particle -o to reinforce the mirative reading. The illustrations in (38a) and (38b) show the use of the particle and the discourse markers. Although baasi (38a) and buzima (38b) in the context where the particle -o is used can relay a mirative meaning, their primary role is to express intensity or emphasis.

(38)  
a. Abantu bó bíija báasi.  
a-ba-ntu ba-o ba-ij-a baasi  
AUG-2-person 2-CM 2SM.N.PST-come-FV DM  
‘People really came (many people turned up, more than those expected).’

b. Abantu bó bíija buzima.  
a-ba-ntu ba-o ba-ij-a buzima  
AUG-2-person 2-CM 2SM.N.PST-come-FV DM  
‘People really came (many people turned up, more than those expected).’

In summary, the particle -o has overtones of mirativity (see Asiimwe & Van der Wal 2021 for a discussion on the origin and multiple functions of the particle). The expression of surprise encoded in the particle -o is purely pragmatic. Section 6 below discusses particle ku, which also plays various roles in the language.

6. The particle ku

This section describes ku as a particle that expresses mirativity in Rukiga besides other various (syntactic) roles it performs. Ku functions as a complementizer and a conditional marker. It also marks a temporal sequence and also functions as a contrastive conjunction. Each of these functions is illustrated in turn in the following.

As a complementizer, ku in Rukiga follows verbs of perception and knowledge as illustrated in (39) and (40) as also observed for nti in Ruruuli-Runyara (Sørensen & Witzlack-Makarevich 2020).

(39)  
nimmanyá k’óry’ ómweshongozi.  
ni-n-many-a ku o-ri o-mu-eshongor-i  
IPFV-1SG.SM-know-FV COMP 2SG.SM-be AUG-1-sing-NMLZ  
‘I know that you are a singer.’

(40)  
nkaija naayereebra kú buzima yaabir’ ery’ éngamíra.  
n-kai-ij-a n-aa-e-reer-e-a ku buzima y-aa-ba-ire  
1SG.SM-F-PST-come-FV 1SG.SM-N.PST-REFL-see-APPL-FV COMP indeed 9SM-N.PST-be-PFV  
e-ri e-n-gamíra 9SM-be AUG-9-camel  
‘I came and confirmed that it was indeed a camel.’

Another syntactic use of the particle is to introduce a conditional clause, as in (41) and (42).

(41)  
nimuzá khuheebwa ebicónco kú muraayeshongoré gye.  
ni-mu-z-a ku-h-ebw-a e-bi-conco ku mu-raa-eshongor-e gye  
IPFV-2PL.SM-go 15-give-PASS-FV AUG-8-gift COMP 2PL.SM-N,FUT-sing-SBJV well  
‘You will receive gifts if you sing well.’

(42)  
kw’óriijé kare nitugyendá niwe.  
ku o-ra-ij-e kare ni-tu-gyend-a na=iwe  
COMP 2SG.SM-N,FUT-come-SBJV early IPFV-1PL.SM-go-FV with=2SG.PRO  
‘If you come early, we shall go with you.’

---

14 Ku is treated in Taylor (1985) generally as a marker of indirect (factual) statements.

15 Rukiga has other two complementizers ngu and nti. I have already shown in Section 1.1 that ngu, which is the most used complementizer in Rukiga, can also be used as a mirative marker.

16 Ku is primarily a complementizer. It is therefore glossed as COMP irrespective of the role it plays.
In addition, the particle is used as a temporal clause conjunction as illustrated in (43) and (44).

(43) Tukateer’ ishênt’ ésimu kù twahikir’ ómúka.
    tu-ka-teer-er-a  ishento  e-simu  ku  tu-a-hik-ire
    o-mu-ka
    AUG-18-home
    ‘We rang her uncle when we arrived home.’

(44) Kù twataahir’ ómu mótoka tút’ enjura yaatandiká kugwa.
    ku  tu-a-taah-ire  o-mu  motoka  tu-ti  e-n-jura
    1PL.SM-PST-enter-PFV  AUG-18  9.car  1PL-like.this  AUG-9-rain
    y-aa-tandik-a  ku-gw-a
    9SM-N.PST-start-FV  15-fall-FV
    ‘As soon as we entered the car, it started to rain.’

As illustrated in (45)-(46), ku is also used as a contrastive conjunction loosely translated as ‘but’.

(45) Nyówe  kù nindaÁbahô piki yaa burúru
    nyowe  ku  n-n-reeba=ho  piki  y-a  bururu
    1SG.PRO  1PL.SM-pst-enter-PFV  9.motorcycle  9-CONN blue
    ‘(but) For me what I see there is a blue motorcycle.’

(46) Ekihuunyirá ku nikindéeba nyómushana!
    e-ki-huunyira  ku  ni-ki-n-reeb-a  nyomushana
    AUG-7-owl  1PL.SM-PST-enter-PFV  9.motorcycle  9-CONN day
    ‘But the owl is looking at me yet it is during the day!’
    Int: ‘How come the owl is looking at me yet it is during the day?’

As we have observed with the strategies discussed in Sections 3-5, the particle ku realizes a verum reading as well, as illustrated in (47).

(47) (My friend does not think that the visitors are in the house)
    Ku  ba-ri=mu  ó-mu  n-ju
    2PL.SM-be=18  AUG-18  9-house
    ‘I am certain that they (the visitors) are in the house.’

On the other hand, ku encodes speaker’s unexpectedness or surprise, as illustrated in (48) and (49).

(48) (They have not been the best singers. I am surprised they sang so beautifully!)
    Ku  b-aa-yeshongor-á  gye!
    1PL.SM-N.PST-sing-FV  well
    ‘They sang really well.’

(49) (Bob used not to eat jackfruit because of its very strong smell. When he tasted it, he found it very tasty.)
    Ku  e-nur-ire
    1PL.SM-PST-arrive-PFV  9-be.be.sweet-PFV
    ‘Oh, it tastes sweet! [sudden realisation, surprise]

17 Ku can co-occur with an interjection of surprise kyo as in ‘Kyo, ku enuzire!’ to emphasize the mirative reading.
As we saw in the preceding sections (3-5), that mirative strategies can co-occur with a discourse marker (such as buzima and baasi and to strengthen the mirative reading, it is felicitous for ku to co-occur with the discourse marker buzima as in (50) although it is ungrammatical for ku to appear with baasi ‘really’ in the same clause (51).

(50) (they are upcoming singers)
ku  b-aa-yeshongor-á  gye  buzima!
COMP  2SM-N.PST-sing-FV  well  indeed
‘(Surprisingly,) they sang really well.’

(51) *ku  b-aa-yeshongor-á  gye  baasi!
COMP  2SM-N.PST-sing-FV  well  really
‘They sang really well.’

With the various functions of ku listed above, it remains to be seen whether it is the same ku that grammaticalised into different particles to perform different roles, or these are different morphemes altogether. Also, it is not clear at this point whether ku as discussed above is the same ku that takes an augment (oku). According to Taylor (1985: 6), ku and oku are in free variation but this does not seem to be the case. Their source may be the same but the two particles offer different roles as can be seen from their translations in (52) for ku and (53) for oku. In these syntactic contexts, it is not possible to substitute one for the other; for example, as shown in (55), the construction is ill-formed. Moreover, oku does not yield a mirative interpretation. A detailed investigation of the origin and functions of the particle (o)ku remains a topic for future studies.

Taylor (1985: 17, glosses adapted)

(52) Baijuka kú yaagambir’ ékyo
ba-aa-ijuk-a  ku  a-aa-gamb-ire  e-ki-o
2SG.SM-N.PST-remember-FV  COMP  1SM-N.PST-say-PFV  DEM-7-MED
‘They remembered that he had said so.’

(53) Yijuk’ ókw’ ámugizir’ ati…
a-a-ijuk-a  oku  a-mu-gir-ire  a-ti…
1SM-N.PST-remember-FV  how  1SM-10M-say-PFV  1-COMP
‘He remembered how he had told him/her that “…’

(54) Ntéékyererez’ ókú byagyzire
n-teekeyererez-a  oku  bi-a-gyend-ire
1SG.OM-narrate-IMP  how  8SM-PST-go-PFV
‘Tell me how it all happened.’

(55) *N-téékyererez-a  kú  by-a-gyenz-ire
1SG.OM-narrate-IMP  how  8SM-PST-go-PFV
Int: ‘Tell me how it all happened.’

It is probable that the mirative ku evolved from its use as a contrastive conjunction as illustrated in (45) and (46). The interpretation of the particle ku as a mirative marker, as we have seen with the other strategies, expresses the contrast between what is normal and expected and what happens, which the speaker did not expect. The next section (7) discusses the co-occurrence of the different strategies examined in the preceding sections. I will show that the four strategies discussed, namely OM doubling, predicate doubling, the -o particle, and the particle ku, can be combined.

7. An overview of the four mirative strategies

Four mirative strategies in Rukiga have been examined, namely OM doubling (Section 3), predicate doubling (Section 4), the particle -o (Section 5), and ku (Section 6). Each of these strategies has multiple (pragmatic) roles it plays in the language, as we have seen. We will now see in Section 7.1 that these strategies can co-occur. I will then give a brief comparative analysis of the strategies in Section 7.2.
7.1 Co-occurrence of the three strategies. It is possible to have the particle -o with OM doubling in the same sentence. The particle -o can also be used in a predicate doubling construction and OM doubling is possible in a predicate doubling construction as well. The particle -o can be used in OM doubling constructions for the readings already observed in the preceding sections as further illustrated in (56). The particle may come after the object NP (56)a or it may intervene between the object marked verb and the object NP (56)b. It can also precede the verb as indicated in (56) (but see Asiimwe & Van der Wal 2021 for the morphosyntactic properties of the -o particle). The interpretations do not change with a change in position of the particle in an OM doubling construction.

(56) a. Táata y-áá-bió-téek-a e-bi-hímba by-o.
   1.father 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean 8-CM
   Lit: ‘Father has really cooked them, the beans.’
   ‘Father has really cooked the beans.’

b. Táata y-áá-bi-téek-a by-ó e-bi-hímba.
   1.father 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean 8-CM
   Lit: ‘Father has really cooked them, the beans.’
   ‘Father has really cooked the beans.’

c. Táata by-ó y-áá-bi-téek-a e-bi-hímba.
   1.father 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean 8-CM
   Lit: ‘Father has really cooked them, the beans.’
   ‘Father has really cooked the beans.’

The sentences in (56)a-c can be used in the following contexts. Note that intonation may vary depending on the interpretation intended.

Context 1: Certainly, father cooked the beans. [verum]
Context 2: The beans were not properly cooked, ironically disapproving or even disappointed in the manner in which they were cooked. [depreciative]
Context 3: I am surprised father cooked the beans so well [mirativity]
Context 4: Father cooked the beans (and maybe he didn’t cook peas, meat, etc.) [contrast]
Context 5: The beans are overcooked [intensity]

The -o particle can be used in a predicate doubling construction and the interpretations of verum focus, depreciative, intensity, contrast and mirativity are all obtainable. For the mirative reading, specifically, it is more explicit when the two strategies co-occur as in (57) and (58) below.

(57) Okusheka kwé Busingye yáasheka.
    o-ku-shek-a ku-o Busingye a-aa-shek-a
    ‘As for laughing, Busingye has (really) laughed.’
   Context 1: It is true Busingye laughed. [verum focus]
   Context 2: The situation was not funny but she laughed anyway.
       She may also have laughed in a manner that was irritating [depreciative]
   Context 3: She has laughed really hard. [intensity]
   Context 4: She laughed (but she did not sing) [contrast]
   Context 5: I am surprised she laughed that hard. [mirativity]

(58) Okubitéeka kwé yáábitéeka.
    o-ku-bi-teek-a ku-o a-aa-bi-téek-a
    AUG-15-8OM-cook-FV 15-CM 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV
    ‘He has (really) cooked them.’
   Context 1: It is true he cooked the beans. [verum focus]
   Context 2: He has overcooked the beans. [intensity]
Context 3: He cooked the beans (but he did not eat them) [contrast]

Context 4: The beans were not properly cooked, ironically disapproving [depreciative]
or even disappointed in the manner in which they were cooked.

Context 5: I am surprised that he cooked the beans. [mirativity]

When the subject of an intransitive verb is explicit and right-dislocated as given in (59), and the predicate doubling construction contains the -o particle, the particle can either agree with the initial infinitive verb (59)a or the subject (59)b. In either case, the lexical subject is optional but the mirative reading remains.

(59) a. Okugwa kwé yáágwa (énjúra)
   o-ku-gw-a ku-o a-aa-gw-a é-njúra
   'It has really rained (heavily or for a long time, more than expected).
   b. O-ku-gw-a y-ó (é-n-júra) y-áá-gw-a
   AUG-15-fall-FV 9-CM AUG-9-rain 9SM-N.PST-fall-FV
   'It has really rained (heavily or for a long time, more than expected).

Similarly, the particle is free to agree with the infinitive verb (60)b or the lexical object when the OM is present (60)a in an infinitive transitive verb as well in a predicate doubling syntactic environment. The particle -o can agree with the infinitive verb without the OM but in the absence of the OM, the -o particle must agree with the sentence initial infinitive predicate (60)c, as the ungrammatical form of (60)d shows. Regardless of the configuration, the same interpretations hold namely, verum, mirativity, depressive, intensity and contrastive interpretations.

   AUG-15-12OM-repair-FV 12-CM 1SM-N.PST-12OM-repair-FV
   'To repair it, he has repaired it.’
   'He has repaired it’
   AUG-15-12OM-repair-FV 15-CM 1SM-N.PST-12OM-repair-FV
   'To repair it, he has repaired it.’
   'He has repaired it’
   'As for repairing, he has repaired it.’
   d. *Okukanika ko yaakakanika.

Furthermore, it is possible for OM doubling, predicate doubling and the particle -o to be combined as in (61).

(61) Okubiítéék’ ébihimba byó yáábbiítéeka
   o-ku-bi-teek-a e-bi-hima bi-o a-aa-bi-téek-a
   AUG-15-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean 8-CM 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV
   'To cook the beans, he has cooked them.’
   'He has cooked the beans (I am surprised that he was able to cook the beans, or I didn’t expect the beans to be well-cooked).

The sentences in (62) and (64) illustrate how the particle ku interacts with all the other three strategies. The particle can be used in a predicate doubling construction co-occurring with the particle -o. It can also be used in OM doubling. However, the particle -o does not seem to occur in the same phrase with ku as the form in (63) is ungrammatical. To avoid conflict, particle -o moves to the initial position in the phrase containing an infinitive verb if the particle ku is present in a clause containing a finite verb (64), giving rise to only a verum interpretation.
(62) (The group was not known on the music scene. But when they stepped on the stage, they surprised everyone)
Okéshéngora ku baaéshéngoró gye buzima!
o-kw-esongor-a ku ba-aa-yesongor-a gye buzima
AUG-15-sing-FV COMP 2SM-N.PST-sing-FV well indeed
‘Truly, they sang so beautifully (I did not know they could sing so well).’

(63) *Okubitéké’ ébihimba ku kwé y-áá-bi-téek-a.
o-ku-bi-teek-a e-bi-himba ku ku-o a-aa-bi-teek-a
AUG-15-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean COMP 15-CM 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV
‘As for cooking the beans, he has cooked them.’

(64) Kwé okubitéké’ ébihimba ku yáábitéeka.
ku-o o-ku-bi-teek-a e-bi-himba ku a-aa-bi-teek-a
15-CM AUG-15-8OM-cook-FV AUG-8-bean COMP 1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV
‘As for cooking beans he DID cook them (It is true he has cooked the beans; I am sure of what I am talking
about).’

It is observed that in natural speech, it is more prevalent for two strategies to combine. For example, it is typical for the particle -o to be used in a predicate doubling construction. Although different strategies can be combined in one construction, it is uncommon to find all the four strategies combined; that will be too much. After all, even if strategies are combined, the interpretation remains more or less the same — only that the interpretation is reinforced.

7.2 Comparison of the mirative strategies. We have noted that each of the four strategies discussed is multifunctional and the mirative interpretation is not part of the semantic denotation of any of the strategies. Mirativity is expressed using particle -o, OM doubling, particle ku, and by way of predicate doubling. We have noted that different strategies can be combined. For instance, predicate doubling, OM doubling, the particle -o can be used in the same construction for a reinforced mirative interpretation. Depending on the context, one or more interpretations can be realised by a single strategy or a combination of different strategies. There is no interpretation that is unique to one strategy. Table 1 summarises the (pragmatic) interpretations associated with each of the four strategies discussed. It can be seen from the table that predicate doubling and the particle -o are associated with all the five pragmatic functions while particle ku may not have fully developed to assume many pragmatic roles.

Table 1: Possible pragmatic interpretations associated with the four strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OM doubling</th>
<th>Predicate doubling</th>
<th>Particle -o</th>
<th>Particle ku</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mirativity</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrastive (Topic)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verum</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciative</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Conclusion

In this study, I have presented data showing that Rukiga does not have dedicated mirative morphology unlike some other languages that have grammaticalised affixes (e.g., Simeonova 2015: 1). The strategies discussed include OM doubling, predicate doubling, the particle -o and ku. These strategies do not exclusively express mirativity but have other roles they play in the language. Mirativity comes as an additional pragmatic function and is highly context-dependent. It has also emerged that the mirative strategies discussed can be combined. A combination of two or more mirative strategies gives rise to a more explicit and reinforced mirative reading.

18 Later observations seem to suggest that ku can realise an intensity reading.

(i) E-n-jóra ku y-áá-gw-a!
AUG-9-rain COMP 9SM-N.PST-fall-FV
‘It has really rained (so heavily)!’
Prosody plays a role in the expression of miratives although this has not been dealt with in this study. Therefore, future studies may look into the role of prosody in conveying mirativity in Bantu languages generally. In addition, discourse particles have only been introduced. A detailed study of their pragmatic functions with respect to the expression of mirativity in Rukiga or related languages can be carried out. On the whole, studies on mirativity have not been popular in Bantu languages (and African languages generally). It is therefore worthwhile to consider examining the category in other Bantu languages to establish whether there are some languages with grammaticalised morphological affixes that convey mirativity and/or the strategies other Bantu languages use to express mirativity. This study reveals that even if Rukiga does not have an inherent mirative system, there are interesting revelations about the strategies that encode mirativity in terms of their multifunctional nature and the way they interact in the grammar.

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>applicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUG</td>
<td>augment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>contrastive marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONN</td>
<td>connective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
<td>complementizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>discourse marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F,PST</td>
<td>far past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>future tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FV</td>
<td>final vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF</td>
<td>infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPFV</td>
<td>imperfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMLZ</td>
<td>nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N,FUT</td>
<td>near future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N,PST</td>
<td>near past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OM</td>
<td>object marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPFV</td>
<td>perfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFL</td>
<td>reflexive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFV</td>
<td>perfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>plural (person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROX</td>
<td>proximal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBJV</td>
<td>subjunctive mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>singular (person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>subject marker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References


Allen Asimwe
Department of African Languages
Makerere University
asiimwea94@gmail.com