

*Full Length Research Paper*

## **Peculiarities of loanwords in Kinyarwanda noun class**

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**Kinyarwanda, like many other languages in contact, has hosted foreign words to meet the needs of its daily life vocabulary and activity. In addition to the lexical need filling, Kinyarwanda borrowed foreign words not only out of need for foreign words but also for prestige. This paper focuses on one of the most important sociolinguistic phenomenon that takes place when two or more languages come into contact. Kinyarwanda has borrowed foreign words out of need in various areas and loanwords have been allocated to Kinyarwanda noun class system. The work discusses and analyses how French and English loanwords have been allocated to key areas of influence and the nominal class system of Kinyarwanda. The data were collected from various sources, including publications, conversation, newspapers, Bible literature, school textbooks, commercial posters, and hoardings.**

**Key words:** Loanwords, language contact, sociolinguistic, allocation, noun class.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The objective of this article is to show how loanwords are allocated to noun classes in Kinyarwanda. It focuses on some specific morphological aspects of loanwords that have been hosted into Kinyarwanda noun classes and finds out why and how these words fit in the Kinyarwanda noun class system. It presents the coexistence of foreign words with local words, their sociolinguistic and cultural impact, especially in nouns.

Kinyarwanda hosted a wide range of foreign words. The loanwords were accommodated in a different linguistic system of noun classes. The criteria for allocating a loanword to a noun class are frequently debatable. Some classes seem to be more hospitable than others are. Some loanwords enter the noun class system before the others, and these are said to be established loans and nonce borrowings. The latter are "lexical items from another language that have not yet been used with sufficient frequency to be regarded as established loans" (Poplack and Sankoff, 1988).

Like other Bantu languages, loanwords in Kinyarwanda are allocated to the nominal classes in various ways. They may be allocated to noun classes according to semantic characteristics (animate or inanimate beings) or morphophonological ones (initial syllable, stem, and

consonants beginning the stem).

Obviously, not all the areas of life have integrated foreign words at the same pace. For example, fishing, crafts, and livestock have very few words of foreign origin. The richest areas that attracted more words of foreign origin are technology and religion because of the need of filling the lexical gap.

The high presence of French loanwords testifies that French lent to Kinyarwanda more words than any other language. This is understandable because of the historical ties between Rwanda and two European French-speaking countries: Belgium and France. Rwanda got independence from the colonial master, Belgium, on 1 July 1962, but it continued the ties it had enjoyed during the colonial era. Later on, with the military coup that brought the late President Juvenal Habyarimana to power, France was in a better shape to exercise its influence over Rwanda.

Some loanwords indebted from Rose (1995) shall be used in the section of loanword assignment to noun classes in order to use examples from various sources. Loanwords travel long distances. They are passed on from one language to another and one can never be sure whether they will settle down. Trask (1994, p.13) explains



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the interlanguage borrowing by giving the example of the word 'coffee'.

Many centuries ago, the people of Ethiopia discovered that a delicious hot beverage could be made from the beans of a bush, which grew locally. They passed on the beverage and their name for it to the neighbours, the Arabs. The Arabs in turn passed both on to the Turks, who became famous for the skill at preparing the beverage. The Turks then introduced both the drink and the name to the Europeans, and particularly to the Italians, who also became famous for their distinctive way of preparing the stuff. English visitors to Italy returned home full of enthusiasm for the new beverage, and the ancient Ethiopian name finally passed into English in the form *coffee*.

The word "coffee" has acquired its name from the word *Kaffa*, a highland region of southwestern Ethiopia, where coffee has been cultivated for a long time. Following the rapid expansion and trade of Arabs, the word passed from Ethiopian onto Arabic under the name *Qah'wa*. Later on, it became the Ottoman Turkish *Kahve*. The Italian word *caffè* has likely been borrowed from the Turkish word *Kahve*. The English word "coffee" comes from *caffè*. The French word *café* was probably borrowed from the Turkish word *Kahve*.

With regard to the above story on "coffee", the itinerary of translingual borrowing of the word "coffee" may be Ethiopian→Arabic→Turkish→Italian→English.

Kinyarwanda has extensively borrowed from a good number of languages, mostly from French and English. However, some other languages like German, Italian, Spanish, Latin and African languages such as Kiswahili, Luganda, Lingala, Shi, Haavu, and Kirundi have also contributed to the enrichment of the Kinyarwanda language.

With regard to languages in similar situations, Kiswahili is one of the African languages that also hosted loanwords from foreign languages. Loanwords in Kiswahili were primarily brought in by Arab traders or "Arabicised" Africans, who had established their colonies on the eastern coast of East Africa (Mombasa, Sofala, Pemba, Zanzibar and Kisilwa) at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Arabs had been in contact with Bantu speaking people primarily for trade reasons: slaves, spices, and clothes. This explains the presence of loanwords from Arabic and Bantu languages in today's Kiswahili. Some other words came from English and Hindi. In return, Kiswahili lent some of its vocabulary to sister languages in East and Central Africa.

On the other hand, some languages in similar situations, like Norwegian, have kept the original foreign words. Some loanwords have not yet been fully assimilated. They have retained their spelling in Norwegian. These are words such as *lunch*, *home rule*, *heat*, *darling*, *London*, *boarding house*, *all right*, *baby*, *dominion*, *dress*, *meeting*, *bookmaker*, *busy*, *butler*, *business*, etc.

## ASSIGNMENT OF LOANWORDS TO NOMINAL CLASSES

Katamba (1993, p. 235) indicates that "nouns are assigned to different classes, often on a minimally semantic basis, depending on whether they refer to a human/animate, or on the basis of salient properties of the entity denoted by a noun such as its shape or size."

It is in this perspective that loanwords have been integrated into the existing Kinyarwanda noun class system. Of course, some noun classes have been more receptive than others, especially classes 1/2 and classes 9/6.

With reference to Kiswahili, Zawawi (1979, p. 59) finds out that there are two major ways a loanword may be assimilated to a noun class:

Frequently, if the first syllable of the word is reminiscent of a native class prefix the noun is treated as belonging to the corresponding class [...] When there is no similarity between prefixes and initial syllables, or where certain semantic features override such similarities, a common technique of assimilation in Swahili is to assign loan nouns to N-Class (Classes 5 and 9), the invariable class where the class prefix is normally *zero* before polysyllabic stems beginning with a voiceless consonant [...].

In Kinyarwanda, classes 1/2 and 9/6 have hosted more loanwords than any other nominal class. Loanwords denoting animates are allocated to classes 1/2. Kinyarwanda does not allow any other concepts in these classes, although this is possible for other languages such as Kiswahili. Classes 9/6 accommodate most loanwords denoting inanimate beings.

Prefix markers play a very important role in this process. Most linguists agree that loanwords that have an initial syllable that resembles a recognizable class prefix are allocated to classes other than 9 and 5. Those that have no identifiable prefixes generally go to classes 9 and 5 because they have zero noun prefix.

According to Contini (1995), most loanwords denoting inanimates (with no recognizable class prefix) are allocated to classes 5 and 9 in Kiswahili:

The fact that classes 5 and 9 most commonly have a zero prefix might lead one to expect that these classes would be especially hospitable to loanwords, particularly words whose initial syllable does not resemble a recognizable class prefix, a point that has been made by several Swahili scholars. Zawawi (1979, 127) suggests that such nouns may first be incorporated into class 9, and may later be recategorized as class 5 (the latter has the advantage of distinguishing singular from plural).

Unlike loanwords in Kiswahili, loanwords in Kinyarwanda with a non-recognizable noun prefix are mainly allocated to class 9 and rarely to class 5. Other loanwords denoting inanimate beings with non-recognizable noun prefix may go to classes 3 /4, 7/8, 11/10, and 14. The allocation does not always follow the general protocol of noun classification. For example, class 14 generally denotes

abstract concepts. Some loanwords, which express concrete reality or locations, may be allocated to this class. For example, *u-bu-ringiti* 'blanket', *u Bu-suwisi* 'Switzerland', both are allocated to class 14 whereas they do not express abstractness. Class 9, whose counterpart is generally class 10, couples with class 6 for English and French loanwords, the most predominant augment in loanwords being *i-*.

Apart from loanwords denoting animates that are allocated to classes 1 and 2, the allocation of loanwords does not usually follow the semantic groupings but rather the phonological characteristics of the nominal prefix.

In this regard, the researcher supports Ngorosho and Jeffrey (2004) when she says, "loanwords are generally placed in the noun class that fits their phonological form rather than the class that might fit their semantic characteristics."

The same view is shared by Demuth (2000, p.220). She states, "loanwords can be incorporated into the noun class system on a phonological basis if both the consonant and the vowel of the first syllable (of the noun class prefix) correspond to a possible noun class prefix."

Thus, there may be a loanword that shows irregular pairing, for example, class 5: *i-koti* 'coat' pairs with

class6: *a-ma-koti* 'coats'; while concrete loanwords, nouns of class 14: *u-bu-ringiti* 'blanket' has no pairing. Class 14 is generally a class denoting abstract nouns. Class 11: *u-ru-papuro* 'paper' pairs with class 10, *i-m-papuro* 'papers'. Classes 12 and 13 that denote diminutives may host loanwords like *a-ka-bati* 'cupboard', and *u-tu-bati* 'cupboard', whereas they do not express any idea of smallness, contempt, or appreciation.

The loanword *u-bu-ringiti* is incorporated into class 14 because of the vowel insertion (epenthetic vowel) requirements. *U-ru-papuro* and *i-m-papuro* are allocated to classes 11 and 10 because of the assimilation rules, while *a-ka-bati* and *u-tu-bati* follow Dahl's phonological law (a nominal stem beginning with a voiced consonant sound, /β/, has a noun prefix beginning with a voiceless consonant sound, /k/ in singular and /t/ in plural).

Classes 1/2 denotes animates (terms related to human beings: kinship, titles, professions, etc). In general, the agreement nominal prefix markers are *-mu-* in singular (class 1) and *-ba-* in plural (class 2). Many French loanwords have been allocated to this class of animates. The loanwords are presented in three columns to show the current word in Kinyarwanda, the original word and the gloss in English.

Loanword	French	English
<i>u-mu-ny-afurika</i>	<i>africain</i>	African
<i>a-ba-ny-afurika</i>	<i>africains</i>	Africans
<i>u-mu-goronome</i>	<i>agronome</i>	agriculture engineer
<i>a-ba-goronome</i>	<i>agronomes</i>	agriculture engineers
<i>(u-mu)-ambasaderi</i>	<i>ambassadeur</i>	ambassador
<i>(a)-ba-mbasaderi</i>	<i>ambassadeurs</i>	ambassadors
<i>u-mu-divantisiti</i>	<i>adventiste</i>	Adventist
<i>a-ba-divantisiti</i>	<i>adventistes</i>	Adventists
<i>(u-mu)-konseye</i>	<i>conseiller</i>	advisor
<i>(a)-ba-konseye</i>	<i>conseillers</i>	advisors
<i>u-mu-arabu</i>	<i>arabe</i>	Arab
<i>a-ba-arabu</i>	<i>arabes</i>	Arabs
<i>u-mu-seribateri</i>	<i>célibataire</i>	single, bachelor, spinster
<i>a-ba-seribateri</i>	<i>célibataires</i>	single, bachelors, spinsters
<i>u-mu-fiyanse</i>	<i>fiancé/e</i>	fiancé/e
<i>a-ba-fiyanse</i>	<i>fiancés</i>	fiancés
<i>u-mu-polisi</i>	<i>policier</i>	policeman
<i>a-ba-polisi</i>	<i>policier</i>	policemen
<i>u-mu-suruveya</i>	<i>surveillant</i>	supervisor
<i>a-ba-suruveya</i>	<i>surveillants</i>	supervisors

Classes 3/4 generally denote plants, ditches, natural phenomena (fire, wind, light, darkness, rainbow, lightning), rivers, bundles, farms, and some parts of the body (hair, heart, liver, head, back, temple, navel). However, some loanwords (including some abstract

nouns) that do not fall into this semantic group, may be found in this class. The agreement nominal prefix markers are *-mu-* in singular (class 3) and *-mi-* in plural (class 4).

Loanword	French	English
<i>u-mu-batizo</i>	<i>baptême</i>	baptism
<i>i-mi-batizo</i>	<i>baptêmes</i>	baptisms
<i>u-mu-dari</i>	<i>médaille</i>	medal
<i>i-mi-dari</i>	<i>médailles</i>	medals
<i>u-mu-deri</i>	<i>modèle</i>	model, fashion
<i>i-mi-deri</i>	<i>modèles</i>	models, fashions
<i>u-mu-leti</i>	<i>omelette</i>	omelette
<i>i-mi-leti</i>	<i>omelettes</i>	omelettes
<i>u-mu-nota</i>	<i>minute</i>	minute
<i>i-mi-nota</i>	<i>minutes</i>	minutes
<i>u-mu-sigiti</i>	<i>mosquée</i>	mosque
<i>i-mi-sigiti</i>	<i>mosquées</i>	mosques
<i>u-mu-vino</i>	<i>vin</i>	wine
<i>i-mi-vino</i>	<i>vins</i>	wines
<i>u-mu-zika</i>	<i>musique</i>	music
<i>i-mi-zika</i>	<i>musique</i>	kinds of music

Classes 5/6 denotes paired parts of the body such as eye, ear, breast, cheek, nose/nostrils. With loanwords, there is no fixed rule as such. The agreement nominal prefix markers in singular (class 5) are *-ri-* or *-ϕ-* and *-ma-*

in plural (class 6). Few French and English loanwords have been allocated to class 5, simply because there was no need of borrowing words denoting parts of the body. Loanwords allocated to class 5 refer to other realities.

Loanword	French	English
<i>i-ϕ-koti</i>	<i>veste</i>	coat
<i>a-ma-koti</i>	<i>vestes</i>	coats
<i>i-ϕ-rimbi</i>	<i>limbe</i>	limbo, graveyard
<i>a-ma-rimbi</i>	<i>limbes</i>	graveyards
<i>i-ϕ-lonji</i>	<i>orange</i>	orange
<i>a-ma-ronji</i>	<i>oranges</i>	oranges
<i>i-ϕ-nota</i>	<i>note</i>	school grade
<i>a-ma-nota</i>	<i>notes</i>	school grades
<i>i-ϕ-note</i>	<i>note</i>	musical note
<i>a-ma-note</i>	<i>notes</i>	musical notes

Classes 7/8 generally denote things, plants, trees, languages, and pejoratives. However, some loanwords that do not fall into this semantic grouping may also be found in this class. For example, the word *ibitaro*, “hospital”, which has the same singular and plural form, falls into class 8 (the plural of class 7). The agreement nominal prefix markers are *-gi-/-ki-/-ci-* in singular (class 7) and generally *-bi-* in plural (class 8), at least for the “standard” Kinyarwanda, the variety of Kinyarwanda spoken in central, southern, western, eastern parts of Rwanda. It is referred to as standard because it is the form that has been used in formal education and written in books and official documents due to the fact that the first missionaries who transcribed Kinyarwanda and who

were staying in these areas were referring to it as the formal Kinyarwanda. It was mostly used by the monarchs of Rwanda and their collaborators.

Classes 9/6 or 9/10 are the most hospitable classes. All non-identifiable nominal prefixes with the first syllable of the source word are assigned to this class. In general, class 9 includes nouns denoting most animals, some household effects and natural phenomena. Loanwords denoting things, plants, and some animals that were not known before the colonial period, have been integrated into class 9.

Uncountable nouns denoting mass and liquids, which normally fall in class 6, have also been hosted in class 9.

<b>Loanword</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>i-gi-tansi</i>	<i>quittance</i>	receipt
<i>i-bi-tansi</i>	<i>quittances</i>	receipts
<i>i-gi-tari</i>	<i>hectare</i>	hectare
<i>i-bi-tari</i>	<i>hectares</i>	hectars
<i>i-ki-nini</i>	<i>quinine</i>	quinine, tablet
<i>i-bi-nini</i>	<i>quinines</i>	quinines, tables
<i>i-ki-ringiti</i>	<i>couverture</i>	blanket
<i>i-bi-ringiti</i>	<i>couverture</i>	blankets
<i>i-ki-nyoteri</i>	<i>clignoteur</i>	indicator
<i>i-bi-nyoteri</i>	<i>clignoteur</i>	indicators
<i>i-ki-zamini</i>	<i>examen</i>	exam
<i>i-bi-zamini</i>	<i>examens</i>	exam
<i>i-ki-lometero</i>	<i>kilomètre</i>	kilometre
<i>i-bi-lometero</i>	<i>kilomètres</i>	kilometres
<i>i-cy-arabu</i>	<i>arabe</i>	Arabic
<i>i-cy-esipanyole</i>	<i>espagnol</i>	Spanish
<i>i-cy-ongereza</i>	<i>anglais</i>	English
<i>i-gi-faransa</i>	<i>français</i>	French
<i>i-gi-heburayo</i>	<i>hébreu</i>	Hebrew
<i>i-gi-porutigali</i>	<i>portugais</i>	Portuguese
<i>i-gi-shinwa</i>	<i>chinois</i>	Chinese
<i>i-gi-taliyani</i>	<i>italien</i>	Italian
<i>i-ki-latini</i>	<i>latin</i>	Latin
<i>i-ki-gereki</i>	<i>grec</i>	Greek

<b>Loanword</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>i-kaye</i> (class 9)	<i>cahier</i>	notebook
<i>a-ma-kaye</i> (class 6)	<i>cahiers</i>	notebooks
<i>i-karoti</i> (class 9)	<i>carotte</i>	carrot
<i>za karoti</i> (class 10)	<i>carottes</i>	carrots
<i>i-sarubeti</i> (class 9)	<i>salopette</i>	dungarees
<i>a-ma-sarubeti</i> (class 6)	<i>salopettes</i>	dungarees
<i>i-bayoneti</i> (class 9)	<i>baïllonnette</i>	bayonet
<i>a-ma-bayoneti</i> (class 6)	<i>baïllonnette</i>	bayonet
<i>i-baro</i> (class 6)	<i>ballot</i>	bundle
<i>a-ma-balo</i> (class 6)	<i>ballots</i>	bundles
<i>dovi</i> (class 9)	<i>devis</i>	estimate
<i>za dovi</i> (class 10)	<i>devis</i>	estimate
<i>i-dendo</i> (class 9)	<i>dindon</i>	turkey cock
<i>za dendo</i> (class 10)	<i>dindons</i>	turkey cocks
<i>i-tabuliye</i> (class 9)	<i>tablier</i>	apron
<i>a-ma-tabuliye</i> (class 6)	<i>tabliers</i>	aprons
<i>gare</i> (class 9)	<i>gare</i>	bus station
<i>za gare</i> (class 10)	<i>gares</i>	bus stations
<i>pureyavi</i> (class 9)	<i>préavis</i>	notice
<i>za pureyavi</i> (class 10)	<i>préavis</i>	notices
<i>segiteri</i> (class 9)	<i>secteur</i>	sector
<i>a-ma-segiteri</i> (class 6)	<i>secteurs</i>	sectors
<i>peteroli</i> (class 9)	<i>pétrole</i>	oil

Class 11 denotes thin and long entities, some body parts, augmentatives, depreciation and pejorative items. It usually pairs with class 10, and exceptionally with class 6. Apart from augmentative and pejorative items, which

may be formed by adding the prefix marker -ru-, there are only three fully integrated French loanwords that have been hosted by class 11 *urupapuro*, 'papier', *urufaranga*, 'franc', *urushinge*, 'aiguille':

Loanword	French	English
<i>u-ru-papuro</i> (class 11)	<i>papier</i>	sheet of paper
<i>i-m-papuro</i> (class 10)	<i>papiers</i>	sheets of paper
<i>u-ru-faranga</i> (class 11)	<i>franc</i>	franc
<i>a-ma-faranga</i> (class 6)	<i>francs</i>	francs
<i>u-ru-shinge</i> (class 11)	<i>seringue</i>	needle
<i>i-n-shinge</i> (class 10)	<i>seringues</i>	needles

Classes 12 and 13 denote diminutives with the idea of contempt, smallness, and appreciation. The prefix marker of the diminutive -ka-/-ga- (class 12) in singular and -tu-/-du- (class 13) in plural. The augment preceding the diminutive prefix marker is generally a- in singular and u- in plural. Morphologically speaking, the loanword *akabati* behaves like a diminutive, but semantically it is not. The word *akabare*, from *cabaret*, 'pub', has also morphological features of a diminutive, but in the real sense it is not. Let us consider the word *akabati* in the following sentences:

Class 12: A-**ka**-bati **ka**-anjye **ka**-nini **ka**-mwe **ga**-pima ibiro mirongwitanu. 'My big cupboard weighs 50 kilos'.

Class 13: U-**tu**-bati **tu**-anjye **tu**-nini **tu**-biri **du**-pima ibiro ijana: 'My two big cupboards weigh 100 kilos'.

In order to decide whether the loanword belongs to a given nominal class, the agreement of nominal prefix markers has been considered. Although the loanwords *akabati* 'cupboard' and *akabare*, *cabaret* 'pub' do not embody any idea of smallness or depreciation, they are to be classified into class 12 because of their concord morphemes. Some other abstract nouns can also be found in class 12 (without any idea of concreteness, with no plural in class 13). This is the case for *akaga* 'misfortune', *agahinda* 'sorrow', *agahomamunwa* 'disbelief'.

Loanword	French	English
<i>a-ga-shantiye</i>	<i>petit chantier</i>	small building site
<i>u-du-shantiye</i>	<i>petits chantiers</i>	small building sites
<i>a-ga-shapule</i>	<i>petit chapelet</i>	small rosary
<i>u-du-shapule</i>	<i>petits chapelets</i>	small rosaries
<i>a-ga-kanifu</i>	<i>petit canif</i>	small penknife
<i>u-du-kanifu</i>	<i>petits canifs</i>	small penknives
<i>a-ga-kabutura</i>	<i>petite culotte</i>	small shorts
<i>u-du-kabutura</i>	<i>petites culottes</i>	small shorts
<i>a-ga-kasho</i>	<i>petit cachot</i>	small jail
<i>u-du-kasho</i>	<i>petits cachots</i>	small jails
<i>a-ka-base</i>	<i>petit bassin</i>	small basin
<i>u-tu-base</i>	<i>petits bassins</i>	small basins
<i>a-ka-butike</i>	<i>petite boutique</i>	small shop
<i>a-ka-butike</i>	<i>petites boutiques</i>	small shops
<i>a-ka-gato</i>	<i>petit gâteau</i>	small cake
<i>u-tu-gato</i>	<i>petits gâteaux</i>	small cakes
<i>a-ka-mangazine</i>	<i>petit magasin</i>	small store/warehouse
<i>u-tu-mangazine</i>	<i>petits magasins</i>	small stores/warehouses
<i>a-ka-valize</i>	<i>petite valise</i>	small suitcase
<i>u-tu-valize</i>	<i>petites valises</i>	small suitcases

The above diminutives come from the following loanwords: *i-shantiye* 'building site', *i-shapule* 'rosary', *i-kanifu* 'knife', *i-kabutura* 'shorts', *i-kasho* 'jail', *i-base* 'basin', *i-butike* 'shop', *i-gato* 'cake', *i-mangazine* 'store', *ivalize* 'suitcase'.

Class 14 generally denotes abstract nouns. As

previously said, abstract items are hardly borrowable. Not many abstract loanwords have been integrated in this class, except those denoting religious concepts. Curiously enough, concrete nouns of foreign origin can be found in this class. Most foreign words denoting countries are also found in class 14.

Loanword	French	English
<i>u-bu-kirisito</i>	<i>chrétienté</i>	Christianity
<i>u-bu-nani</i>	<i>Bonne Année</i>	New Year Day
<i>u-bu-padiri</i>	<i>praîtrise</i>	priesthood
<i>u-bu-pagani</i>	<i>paganisme</i>	paganism
<i>u-bu-ringiti</i>	<i>couverture</i>	blanket
<i>(i-bi-ringiti, class 8)</i>	<i>couvertures</i>	blankets
<i>u-bu-saseridoti</i>	<i>sacerdoce</i>	priesthood
<i>u-bu-roso</i>	<i>brosse</i>	brush
<i>u Bu-holandi</i>	<i>Hollande</i>	The Netherlands
<i>u Bu-suwisi</i>	<i>Suisse</i>	Switzerland
<i>u Bu-taliyani</i>	<i>Italie</i>	Italy
<i>u Bu-rusiya</i>	<i>Russie</i>	Russia
<i>u Bu-biligi</i>	<i>Belgique</i>	Belgium
<i>u Bu-faransa</i>	<i>France</i>	France

Class 15 denotes nouns of some parts of the body, months of the year, and all infinitives. Loanwords of

recent integration in this class are French verbal forms. The distinctive nominal prefix marker is *gu-/ku-*.

Loanword	French	English
<i>gu-fotora</i>	<i>photocopier</i>	to photocopy
<i>gu-fotora</i>	<i>photographier</i>	to take a picture
<i>gu-kaveringa</i>	<i>couvrir</i>	to cover
<i>gu-kilika</i>	<i>faire un dé clic</i>	to click
<i>gu-kilinyota</i>	<i>clignoter</i>	to blink
<i>gu-koloriya</i>	<i>colorier</i>	to colour
<i>gu-kopera</i>	<i>copier</i>	to cheat (an exam)
<i>gu-sabota</i>	<i>saboter</i>	to botch
<i>gu-sharija</i>	<i>charger</i>	to charge (a battery)
<i>gu-sinya</i>	<i>signer</i>	to sign
<i>gu-sona</i>	<i>sonner</i>	to ring
<i>gu-tirisha</i>	<i>tricher</i>	to cheat
<i>ku-batiza</i>	<i>baptizer</i>	to baptize
<i>ku-buransha</i>	<i>brancher</i>	to plug
<i>ku-defila</i>	<i>défiler</i>	to march
<i>ku-defuriza</i>	<i>défriser</i>	to straighten (hair)
<i>ku-depoza</i>	<i>déposer</i>	to deposit
<i>ku-nota</i>	<i>noter</i>	to take notes
<i>ku-verisa</i>	<i>verser</i>	to deposit on one's bank account
<i>ku-vibura</i>	<i>vibrer</i>	to vibrate

As for locatives, there are no loanwords in class 16 (the distinctive prefix marker, *-ha-*, indicates a location). As for classes 17 and 19, toponyms of foreign origins are preceded by a preposition. They are respectively

preceded by *mu* for class and *i* for class 19. Generally before a location beginning with a vowel), *muri*, 'in'/to' is used for countries, and *i*, 'in'/ 'to' for cities.

Loanword	French	English
<i>mu Buholandi</i>	<i>en Hollande</i>	in/to The Netherlands
<i>mu Bwongereza</i>	<i>en Anglettere</i>	in/to England
<i>mu Bufaransa</i>	<i>en France</i>	in/to France
<i>mu Busuwisi</i>	<i>en Suisse</i>	in/to Switzerland
<i>mu Butaliyani</i>	<i>en Italie</i>	in/to Italy
<i>muri Amerika</i>	<i>en Amérique</i>	in/to America
<i>muri Afurika y'Epfo</i>	<i>en Afrique du Sud</i>	in South Africa
<i>muri Hongiriya</i>	<i>en Hongrie</i>	in/to Hungary
<i>muri Egiputa</i>	<i>en Egypte</i>	in/to Egypt
<i>i Kayiro</i>	<i>au Caire</i>	in/to Cairo
<i>i Londere</i>	<i>à Londres</i>	in/to London
<i>i Buruseli</i>	<i>à Bruxelles</i>	in/to Brussels
<i>i Nyuyoke</i>	<i>à New York</i>	in/to New York
<i>i Roma</i>	<i>à Rome</i>	in/to Rome
<i>i Liyo</i>	<i>à Lyon</i>	in/to Lyon

## MORPHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LOANWORDS

The morphological adaptation of loanwords is generally operated in one of the four ways: addition, deletion, derivation, and reduplication. Loanwords take Kinyarwanda morphological features when they are allocated to noun classes. In view of the loanword adaptation, some theories are applied, mainly the epenthesis that consists of breaking impermissible consonant clusters and inserting a vowel in between two consonants. Another theory is that of assimilation whereby with the progressive assimilation the second sound is affected by the preceding one and the regressive assimilation whereby the sound that comes first is affected by the following one. In this paper, the morphological adaptation is operated as follows:

### Addition

In general, a loanword adds an augment and an affix (usually by prefixing or/and suffixing) to the stem of a word. This is the most frequent method of integration. Although a loanword may be integrated into the borrowing language, it does not always find full acceptance in the host language system. Thus, it can preserve or lose original segments and create new ones. This is the case observed in loanwords having the nominal prefix *-ma-* of class 6 or *za* attested in plural nouns of class 10. The morpheme *za-* is usually an

adjectival or pronominal prefix. The nominal prefixes *-ma-* and *za* are good cases to illustrate the addition process in loanword adaptation in Kinyarwanda. The two morphemes are used alternatively, but with fully assimilated loanwords, *-ma-* (always preceded by an augment, *-a*) tends to predominate over *za* (no augment before it).

The following sentences consider one agreement from the native words of class 10 and class 6:

*I-nka za-njye za-rishije*: 'My cows have grazed'.  
*A-ma-tama ma-nini a-maze ku-byimb-uk-a*: 'Big cheeks are no longer swollen'.

The agreement in two loanwords (*avoka/ivoka*: avocado; *bisi*: bus) in the same noun class introduces an alternative morpheme. Thus, two options are observed:

1. *Za voka zireze*: 'Avocados are ripe'.
2. *A-ma-voka areze*: 'Avocados are ripe'.
1. *Za bisi zatinze*: 'Buses have delayed'.
2. *A-ma-bisi yatinze*: 'Buses have delayed'.

The word *ivoka* 'an avocado' will be *amavoka* or *za voka* in plural. The plural word *za voka* has no augment, which should normally be *i-*, if class markers of noun class 10 are taken into account. This shows that some loanwords have ambivalent forms when they have not yet been fully adopted by the nominal class system.

However, the plural forms below show that some loanwords have found full acceptance in the host language:

<b>Kinyarwanda</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>a-ba-voka</i>	<i>avocats</i>	lawyers
<i>a-ba-biligi</i>	<i>belges</i>	Belgians
<i>a-ba-faransa</i>	<i>français</i> (people)	French
<i>a-ma-foto</i>	<i>photos</i>	photos/pictures
<i>gu-foto-ra</i>	<i>photocopier</i>	photocopy
<i>gu-foto-ra</i>	<i>photographier</i>	take a picture
<i>gu-sabota</i>	<i>saboter</i>	to botch
<i>i-foto</i>	<i>photo</i>	photo/picture
<i>i-gi-faransa</i>	<i>français</i> (language)	French
<i>i-m-papuro</i>	<i>papiers</i>	papers
<i>ku-defiriza</i>	<i>défriser</i>	straighten (hair)
<i>ku-depoza</i>	<i>deposer</i>	deposit/ hand out
<i>u-mu-avoka</i>	<i>avocat</i>	lawyer
<i>u-mu-biligi</i>	<i>belge</i>	Belgian
<i>u-mu-faransa</i>	<i>français</i> (people)	French
<i>u-ru-papuro</i>	<i>papier</i>	paper

### Deletion

One element of the source word is omitted to simplify the spelling or the pronunciation, especially when the original

form is hard to pronounce or to write to fit the host language system. In Leta, 'L'Etat', and Loni, 'L'ONU', it is the apostrophe that is omitted.

<b>Kinyarwanda</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>gu-fotora</i>	<i>photocopier, photographier</i>	photocopy/take a picture
<i>u-mu-fana</i>	<i>fanatique</i>	fanatic
<i>ruwiri</i>	<i>l'huile</i>	cooking oil
<i>Leta</i>	<i>l'Etat</i>	the State
<i>isinya</i>	<i>signature</i>	signature
<i>ku-iy-aranja</i>	<i>s'arranger</i>	to manage
<i>Loni</i>	<i>l'ONU</i>	The UN

The structure of a loanword does not often conform to the original Kinyarwanda. Some omit the augment, while

others keep it, or simply use it alternatively. Some loanwords have omitted the augment:

<b>Kinyarwanda</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>moto</i>	<i>motocyclette</i>	motorcycle
<i>radiyo</i>	<i>radio</i>	radio
<i>madamu</i>	<i>madamu</i>	madam
<i>mazutu</i>	<i>mazout</i>	diesel
<i>telefone</i>	<i>téléphone</i>	telephone
<i>kashe</i>	<i>cachet</i>	seal, stamp
<i>gasutamo</i>	<i>douane</i>	custom
<i>kokelische</i>	<i>coqueliche</i>	whooping-cough
<i>kilizilyia</i>	<i>église</i>	Church
<i>politiki</i>	<i>politique</i>	politics, political, policy
<i>ruwiri</i>	<i>l'huile</i>	cooking oil, especially peanut oil
<i>ruswa</i>	<i>reçois</i>	bribe, corruption
<i>sinya</i>	<i>signature</i>	signature

Some loanwords have retained the augment:

Kinyarwanda	French	English
<i>umudari</i>	<i>médaille</i>	medal
<i>umuderi</i>	<i>modèle</i>	model
<i>umusilimu</i>	<i>musulman</i>	muslim
<i>urupapuro</i>	<i>papier</i>	paper
<i>ifoto</i>	<i>photo</i>	photo
<i>ifarine</i>	<i>farine</i>	flour

Some loanwords that delete the nominal prefix in singular and that take the alternative intrusive morpheme *za-* or *ma-* in the plural:

Kinyarwanda	French	English
<i>(i)-ϕ-feri</i>	<i>frein</i>	brake
<i>(i)- ϕ-radiyo</i>	<i>radio</i>	radio
<i>(i)- ϕ-bariyeri</i>	<i>barrière</i>	barrier, road-block
<i>(umu)-ϕ-muzika</i>	<i>musique</i>	music
<i>(umu) -ϕ-diregiteri</i>	<i>directeur</i>	director
<i>(i)- ϕ-kote</i>	<i>veste</i>	coat
<i>(i)- ϕ-winga</i>	<i>raie</i>	wing, hair ray/stripe
<i>(i)- ϕ-kiliziya</i>	<i>église</i>	Church (from the Greek <i>ecclesia</i> )

## Derivation

According to Hockett (1958, p. 416), derivation is the part of morphology that “deals with the structure of the stems”. Some verbal loanwords are formed by derivational suffixes (verbal extensions). These are to be distinguished from formal suffixes that have no meaning in themselves. Verbal extensions whereby derivational suffixes are added to the verbal root help to form many other verbs. In Kinyarwanda, there are seven types of derivational suffixes, which help in the formation of verbs. Integrated verbal loanwords have accepted this process of derivation. To form a verb, you need a nominal prefix showing the infinitive *gu-* or *ku-*, followed by a verbal root beginning by a consonant. Thus, the structure will be Nominal Prefix + Verbal Root + (Extensions) + Final Vowel.

For example, the verbal loanword *gu-fotor-a* originates from the French *photographier* ‘to take a picture/photograph’, or *photocopier* ‘to make a photocopy’. Verbal loanwords accept the process of derivation by adding a suffix to the verbal root:

- (1) *-ir/-er-*: a suffix referred to as applicative (to do something for somebody), for example, *gu-fotor-era* ‘to take a photograph for somebody’/ ‘photocopy for somebody’.
- (2) *-an-*: a suffix referred to as associative, for example,

*gu-fotor-an-a* ‘to take a picture each other’.

(3) *-ish/-esh-*: a suffix referred to as causative (to have something done by somebody else, to cause to do, to make somebody do something), for example, *gu-fotor-esh-a* ‘to have a document photocopied’, ‘to have a photograph taken’.

(4) *-ik/-ek-*: a suffix referring to ability: to be able to, for example, *gu-fotor-ek-a* ‘easy/able to be photographed or photocopied’.

(5) *-u-*: a suffix referred to as passive, for example, *gu-fotor-w-a* ‘to be taken a photograph’.

(6) *-ur-*: a suffix referred to as a reversive, for example, *gu-pakur-ur-a* ‘to unload’.

(7) *-agur-*: a suffix referred to as repetitive, for example, *gu-siny-agur-a* ‘to sign several times’.

The way derivation operates in Kinyarwanda nominal morphology is entirely based on prefixing and suffixing. In English or French, derivation is more complex. Derivation, compounding and deletion, are sometimes related.

Scalise (1986, p.11) states that “words can be found that have undergone derivation and then compounding, but not compounding then derivation [...] and that deletion operation can eliminate only a dummy element, or a formative explicitly mentioned in the structure index (for examples, *you* in imperatives), or the designated representative of a category [...]”.

## Reduplication

The stem or the part of the loanword is repeated in the same way Kinyarwanda adjectival or nominal stems are reduplicated. For example, in the words *ki-re-ki-re* 'a tall thing', and *u-ru-ntu-ru-ntu* 'human intrigue', the stem is reduplicated to show the action of signing a document several times.

Nurse and Philippson (2003, p. 88) explain that "in all kinds of non-verbal words, reduplication is particularly frequent with monosyllabic stems, which indicates a rhythmic preference for polysyllabic stems. Semantically, reduplication often appears to indicate smallness and/or repetition or intention."

For example, the colour adjective *buru-ru* comes from the French word *bleu* (blue). The last syllable of the stem is reduplicated. Interestingly enough, Rwandans borrowed only the word *bururu* to denote the blue colour, unlike other colours that existed before the contact with the external world. This would imply that originally the word to denote the "blue" reality did not exist, and that it was neither strongly perceived nor known. Such a reality was not exploited. However, according to the conversation I had had with old Rwandan people, they would use the word *juru* (a corresponding word of the word of *Zulu*), "sky", to denote the blue colour, especially the light-blue colour.

With verbal loanwords, some morphemes are reduplicated. For example, the repetitive action *gu-sinya-siny-a* 'to sign several times', comes from the loanword *gu-siny-a*, *signer* meaning 'to sign'. The newly borrowed verb *gu-kilik-a* 'to click', is often reduplicated to show the repetitive action of clicking several times on a computer, *gu-kilika-kilika*, in a way that may lead to defective functioning.

## MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGES OF FRENCH LOANWORDS

Most French loanwords have undergone deep morphological changes in Kinyarwanda. This explains their seniority or the chronology of these loans. The common nominal structure of a Kinyarwanda word is: augment-nominal prefix-stem. The verb and other parts of speech do not have any augment. The infinitive has a nominal prefix, a root, a suffix (optional), and a final vowel (always -a). Most loanwords comply with this structure. Here are just a few examples below to indicate some morphological changes. The adaptation from the lending language to the borrowing one is a long process. It does not happen haphazardly. It makes its way in the daily conversation, the media, and the print.

### Examples

(1) *calendrier* → *kalendari* (plural: *za kalendari*)

'calendar': The loanword (*i*)- $\phi$ -*kalendari* follows the structure CVC. It is sometimes written with an augment. The nominal prefix is - $\phi$ -.

(2) *francs* → *a-ma-faranga* (singular: *i-faranga*)

'francs': The word has fully been integrated. It has taken the augment a-, which usually precedes class 6 prefix marker -ma-, the identifying mark of nouns denoting masses and liquids, and plural nouns denoting some parts of the human body. The stem is -*faranga*. The singular is *i- $\phi$ -faranga* or *u-ru-faranga*.

(3) *essuie-mains* → *esuwime* (plural: *a-ma-esuwime*)

'hand towel': This compound word has lost most of its morphological features. The word *essuie* has become *esu-*, and *mains*, -*me*. It has the augment *i-*, the nominal prefix - $\phi$ -. The stem becomes -*swime*.

(4) *belge* → *u-mu-biligi* (plural: *a-ba-biligi*) 'Belgians':

The word has fully been adapted into the Kinyarwanda structure. It has the augment *u-* in singular and *a-* in plural, the nominal prefix -mu- for noun class 1 (-*ba-* for the plural), and the stem -*biligi*.

(5) *carte* → *i-karita* (plural: *a-ma-karita*) 'maps':

This word has been fully integrated. It has the augment *i-*, the nominal prefix - $\phi$ - of the noun class 9, the stem -*karita*. The plural takes the nominal prefix marker -*ma-* of class 6.

(6) *reçois* → *ruswa* (plural: *zaruswa*) 'bribe',

'corruption': The word has totally changed its original form *reç-ois* 'take', but it has not fully been integrated. It has been hosted by class 9. Unlike most loanwords, which have fully been integrated, it has neither augment nor a nominal prefix. It means tip, bribe, or corruption.

(7) *papier* → *u-ru-papuro* (plural: *i-m-papuro*) 'sheet

of paper': The word has fully been integrated. It has the augment *u-*, the nominal prefix -*ru-* of class 11. The stem -*papuro* still retains the features of the source word, *papier* 'paper'.

(8) *cahier* → *i-kaye* (plural: *a-ma-kaye*) 'notebooks':

This word has also been fully integrated. It has the augment *i-*, the nominal prefix - $\phi$ - of noun class 9, the stem -*kaye*. The plural takes -*ma-* of the noun class 6.

(9) *sucre* → *i-sukari* (uncountable) 'sugar':

The word has fully been integrated. It has the augment of class 9. The nominal prefix is - $\phi$ -. The stem is -*sukari*.

(10) *fraudeur* → *u-mu-foroderi* (plural: *a-ba-foroderi*)

'smuggler': The word has taken all the forms of a Kinyarwanda word. It has the augment *u-*, the nominal prefix -*mu-*, and the stem -*foroderi*.

## MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGES OF ENGLISH LOANWORDS

English loanwords are the most recent borrowed words (nonce borrowings) in Kinyarwanda. This is due to the influence English has had as an international language for the last three centuries. Early English loanwords came into Kinyarwanda via Kiswahili.

## Examples

(1) **lift** → *i-rifuti* (plural: *a-ma-rifuti*): The word has been integrated into class 9, which usually couples with class 10. The plural for *irifuti* is *amarifuti* (class 6). In general class 5, which denotes pairing nouns (*i-φ-bere*, *a-ma-bere* ‘a breast’, ‘breasts’; *i-ji-sho*, *a-ma-so* ‘eye’, ‘eyes’, couples with class 6. However, with loanwords class 9 very often couples with class 6. The word has the augment *i-*, the nominal prefix *-φ-*, the stem *-rifuti*.

(2) **boy** → *u-mu-boyi* (plural: *a-ba-boyi*): The word has fully been adapted to Kinyarwanda morphology. The augment *u-* in singular (plural *-a-*) denotes common nouns of persons. The nominal prefix is *-mu-* in singular and *-ba-* in plural. The stem *-boyi-* has retained the original form of the source language.

(3) **cake** → *i-keke* (plural: *za keke*): The word has been integrated into class 9. The plural is either *a-ma-kek-e* (class 6) or *zakeke* (class 10). The nominal prefix morpheme *za* is an intrusive segment because it is attested in loanwords only. The word ‘cake’/keik/ is mispronounced /keke/. Thus, the spelling *ikeke* is influenced by the pronunciation. The diphthong /ei/ is reduced to a single vowel sound /e/ in the stem *-keke*. Words such as paper /peipə/, later /leitə/, maker /meikə/, tape /teip/, lake/leik/, are also mispronounced \*/pepa/, \*/leta/, \*/mekə/, \*/teke/, \*/tepe/, \*/leke/.

(4) **star** → *u-mu-sitare* (plural: *a-ba-sitare*): This word may be confused with *umusitari* from Kiswahili (*mustari*, plural: *mistari*) meaning a ‘geometrical line’. The loanword *umusitare* has fully been integrated. It has the augment *u-* and the nominal prefix *-mu-* that marks common names of persons. The stem is *-sitare*.

(5) **casualty** → *u-mu-kajoliti* (plural *a-ba-kajoliti*): The loanword *umukajoliti* has taken all the morphemes of the Kinyarwanda noun class system. The augment *u-* and the nominal prefix *-mu-* designate common names of persons. Long stems such as *-kajuwaliti* are very rare in Kinyarwanda. You hardly find a stem of more than three syllables.

(6) **goal** → *i-gori* (plural: *a-ma-gori*): Class 5 (singular) and class 6 (plural) have hosted the loanword *igori* ‘football match score’. It has the augment *i-*, the nominal prefix *-φ-*, the stem *-gori*. Usually most loanwords denoting things are hosted in class 9 (singular) and class 6 or 10 (plural).

(7) **note** → *i-note* (plural: *i-note*, *a-ma-note*): The word *inote* may denote a bank note or a musical instrument. Apart from the augment *i-*, the whole word has been preserved. *i-note* belongs to class 9 (singular) and 10

(plural). When class 9 couples with class 6, the word becomes *amanote* ‘musical notes’.

(8) **steam** → *i-sitimu* (plural: *a-ma-sitimu*): The word *i-sitimu* that came into Kinyarwanda via Kiswahili has been fully integrated into class 9 (singular). The plural *a-ma-sitimu* belongs to class 6.

(9) **bucket** → *i-m-begeti* (plural: *i-m-begeti*): The word bucket that lent its form to *i-(m)-begeti* has completely changed its form in Kinyarwanda. The word *indobo* is used alongside *imbegeti* and they are both doublets. It is hardly identifiable as a loanword from English. It has been hosted by classes 9/10.

Some loanwords change their original form completely and they are hardly identifiable with their source.

## Examples

(1) **Kunyuzura**: a verb from the adjective “new”, which means to initiate a new comer in a learning institution, especially in a secondary school, university, or in the army. It has totally adapted to the nominal morphological derivation of Kinyarwanda.

(2) **Icyongereza**: ‘English language’.

(3) **Umwongereza**: ‘an English person’.

(4) **Abongereza**: ‘English persons’.

## SEMANTIC ASPECTS OF LOANWORDS

Loanword adaptation does not take place without any semantic sliding for a number of adopted loanwords. This raises a very important question whether one should apply with reservations the terms nativization or naturalization both used in loanword adaptation. The use of the term nativization is too strong and emphatic for a loanword. A loanword does not enjoy all the rights a “native” word is entitled to, i.e., it does not keep its original meaning and in some cases it does not have a fixed morphological and phonological status. However, the terms fostering and naturalisation could apply to loanword adaptation because they help us understand that the acceptance of a loanword depends on the perception and the attitude of the speaker of  $L_1$ . The speaker does not totally accept a foreign word without conditions. Loanwords undergo strenuous changes. The speaker can fully adopt the loanword. He can broaden the meaning of a loanword, distort it, or narrow it. Thus, the following ways are examined:

## 1. Extension

Loanword	Source word	English	Meaning extension
<i>ikinini</i>	<i>quinine</i>	quinine	quinine, tablet
<i>umushomeri</i>	<i>chômeur</i>	unemployed	delinquent/idle person
<i>imodoka</i>	motor-car	automobile	all vehicles
<i>tagisi</i>	<i>taxi</i>	taxi	all transport vehicles
<i>umubatizo</i>	<i>baptiso (Greek)</i>	baptism	all kinds of baptism
<i>umunyeshuli</i>	<i>Schule (German)</i>	school	pupil, student
<i>politiki</i>	<i>politique</i>	politics	deceit, intrigues
<i>ibuku</i>	book	book	identity booklet
<i>kunyuzura</i>	new	to make new	to initiate a new comer
<i>ubunani</i>	<i>Bonne Année</i>	New Year	any other feast

## 2. Deviation

Loanword	Source word	English	Meaning deviation
<i>ruswa</i>	<i>reçois</i>	receive, take	bribe, corruption, tip
<i>mitingi</i>	<i>meeting</i>	meeting	political rallye
<i>umupagani</i>	<i>paganus (Latin)</i>	pagan	non-Christian, evildoer
<i>umusilimu</i>	<i>muslim</i>	muslim	smart, civilised, literate
<i>gukopera</i>	<i>copier</i>	to copy	to cheat an exam
<i>goromisheli</i>	<i>C'est gros mon cher!</i>	It is big, my dear!	variety of banana

## 3. Restriction

Loanword	Source word	English	Meaning restriction
<i>basheliye</i>	<i>bachelier</i>	bachelor	a 2-3 year degree holder
<i>lisansiye</i>	<i>licencié</i>	licence	a 4-5 year degree holder
<i>odiyanse</i>	<i>audience</i>	audience	appointment
<i>umudogiteri</i>	<i>docteur</i>	doctor	medical doctor only
<i>kiriziya</i>	<i>ecclesia (Greek)</i>	church	Roman Catholic Church
<i>iferu</i>	<i>fer</i>	iron	iron (for ironing clothes)
<i>ruwiri</i>	<i>l'huile</i>	oil	peanut cooking oil
<i>ifarine</i>	<i>farine</i>	flour	wheat flour only
<i>isizeni</i>	<i>season</i>	season	coffee harvest only

Jouannet (1983, p.12) stresses that there have been many changes in Kinyarwanda due to the influx of French loanwords: French influence upon Kinyarwanda speeds up the process of lexical innovation (either spontaneous or deliberate) through neologisms (semantic and/or formal) and borrowing (either partial or total). An examination of the semantic distance between a French word and the same word as borrowed into Kinyarwanda attests on the one hand semantic equivalence, extension or restriction, and on the other hand "resemanticisation" through metonymy, melioration or pejoration.

Here are a couple of loanwords that reflect these semantic changes (extension, deviation, restriction). Some loanwords have partially or totally lost their original French meaning (Kayigema, 2010).

(1) *ruswa* (from *reçois*) 'receive', 'take': The word

means bribe, tip, corruption. How come that a word, which originally meant 'take', 'receive', now means 'bribe'? The Belgian employer, with insistence and exaggeration, used to thank his employee by giving him some tips, some rewards, saying *reçois* 'take'. Because the local employee could not perceive the correct pronunciation, he mispronounced the word /rəswa/ as /ruskwa/. Gradually, it meant any gift given to a good worker in recognition for an accomplished task, a rendered service. Today, the word has totally deviated from its original meaning. It even shifted from one part of speech (the verb *recevoir* in French, the donor language) and moved to another part of speech (*ruswa* as a noun in the recipient language).

(2) *mitingi* (from *meeting*) 'meeting': Originally, the word is an English word that came into Kinyarwanda via French. It refers to political rallies or intrigues. It does not

mean 'meeting' with the idea of gathering to discuss important matters other than political. The plural is: *za mitingi*.

**(3) itagisi (from taxi) 'taxi':** The meaning has been extended to all transport vehicles carrying passengers. A hired car and minibus for passenger transport are referred to as *itagisi*.

**(4) gukopera (from copier) 'to copy':** The word means any type of cheating in an examination. It mainly implies the action of looking at another person's question or answer sheet with the intent of cheating.

**(5) ruwiri (from l'huile) 'oil':** The meaning is restricted to some vegetable cooking oil, especially peanut, cotton, sunflower, and soybean oil. For other types of oil (palm-oil, kerosene, gasoline, lotion), the word *amavuta*, 'oil', is applied.

**(6) umuderi (from modèle) 'model', 'pattern':** The word *umuderi* (plural, *imideri*) comes from *modèle*, 'model'. It means 'fashion'. It has been integrated by class 3/4.

**(7) ifarini (from farine) 'flour':** The word denotes wheat flour only used in baking. For other types of flour the word *ifu* is used. The meaning is restricted to flour for bakery because it is used for a particular purpose, that of making bread.

**(8) isukari (from sucre) 'sugar':** In many cases the word has kept its original meaning. However, it can denote any sugared stuff. Most of the time the word *isukari* is also referred to denote diabetes.

**(9) umupagani (from Latin paganus) 'heathen', 'pagan':** The Latin word *paganus* means 'villager'. Originally, most Christians lived in the city of Rome, although primarily composed of lower social class of slaves. They were quite different from the rural population that worshiped many gods/idols. Villagers were less cultured than urban Christians. The latter were baptised people and they were believed to be "good mannered" and "cultured" people. By extension, the word *paganus* meant 'an idolater', 'a non-baptised' or 'non-converted' person to the Christian faith. In Rwanda, the word has often been used by Catholics and Protestants to designate any person who does not belong to any religion, especially Christianity. In a broader sense, it means 'a sinful person', 'a rude person'.

Due to the strategic position English language has enjoyed in the world as an international language from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Rwanda has felt the need of using English in various areas, especially in commerce, technology, and science. It has been compulsory to learn it by all cost in order to travel, study, and communicate with nationals of English speaking countries.

After the 1994 genocide, with the influx of returnees from exile in English speaking countries, the use of English became an urgent need, if not a must, in Rwanda. Currently, as asserted by Jenkins (2003, p.2), more than 24,000 Rwandans speak English. Rwanda is one of the territories where English is spoken as an "official (institutionalized) second language (L<sub>2</sub>) in the

fields such as government, law and education". English seems to be gaining more influence over French. The motivation of using a prestigious language like English is not proper to Rwanda only. The success of English has very often upset the French because their language is losing (internally and externally) the monopoly it used to enjoy in the past.

## CONCLUSION

Loanwords from a donor language closer to the language system of the borrowing language or having the same family as the beneficiary language adapt more easily than those from a more distant language. This is observable with loanwords from Kiswahili and interlacustrine languages loanwords in Kinyarwanda. They do not change as much as other languages would do.

Morphology, syntax, phonology, orthography, and semantics are interrelated in a loanword study. However, syntax seems to be less affected than other language areas. It is quite understandable that people borrow more words and sounds than grammatical structures. Words and their meanings, letters, sounds, and suprasegments from a donor language adapt to the sentence structure of the beneficiary language. The most borrowed parts of speech are nouns and verbs, especially because all the languages of the world have at least the two parts of speech. In addition, they express more concrete realities than adjectives, articles, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

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