

**VERBAL STRATEGIES AND INTERPERSONAL MEANINGS OF
IMPOLITE METAPRAGMATIC COMMENTS IN KIRUNDI FICTIONAL
CONVERSATIONS**

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis:

To the memory of my late dear parents Didace Ntiruvakure and Joséphine Nibizi,

Your journey here on earth ended while I was pursuing these PhD studies and before I was able to achieve them; and we, your children, had to accept God's will. I will always be indebted to you as your son. If you had been there, you would have been happy to see the fruit of the many sacrifices you made for me, caring for me, taking me to school, encouraging me to pursue my education, etc.

May God rest your souls in eternal peace.

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May God rest your soul in eternal peace.

To my family: my dear wife Claudine Hakizimana, my dear children Anne Lesley

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal relationships are enacted during interaction where they are created, maintained, or transformed through language use. Whereas it has been argued in linguistic pragmatic studies that impoliteness is used to exercise power, little has been done to show how power relations are contextually challenged and readjusted between interactants by means of their impolite talk. This study, situated in sociopragmatics within linguistic pragmatics, sought to fill the gap by analyzing how participants in Kirundi fictional conversations used impolite metapragmatic comments (MPCs) to exercise power, readjust and redefine power relations between them. The objectives of the study were to examine lexically encoded impolite MPCs and their implicated meanings of power relations, to analyze impolite MPCs involving grammatical manipulations and the meanings of power relations they convey, and to examine impolite MPCs with rhetorical strategies and their use to express power relations. The philosophical stance of this study was social constructivism, considering meanings as socially constructed between human beings. The research was qualitative in nature. It is an inquiry into verbal strategies and interpersonal meanings in impolite metacommunication. The study looked into the meanings of power relations negotiated between Kirundi fictional interactants through impolite MPCs. The Discourse Analysis method was used in the study. The theory underpinning the study was Jonathan Culpeper's Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness. Using purposive sampling, the researcher collected 41 Kirundi fictional texts in which impolite MPCs were used, comprising 30 excerpts of audio-recorded conversations from *Ninde* plays, 10 excerpts of written conversations from 'written plays' and 1 excerpt of a written conversation from the category 'other written texts', the number of which was determined by the criterion of thematic saturation during the iterative process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The findings of the study indicated that impoliteness in interaction is closely associated with the exercise of power, in agreement with previous studies. Besides, it was found that speakers used different linguistic and rhetorical strategies in impolite MPCs to evaluate speech as inappropriate and to exercise power, often in the sense of readjusting power relations. Lexically, speakers manipulated an array of verbs to express different negative evaluations of their co-communicators' speech behavior. Morphological strategies included the use of augmentative and diminutive affixes, coinage, and compounding. Syntactic choices were also made like the manipulation of modality, lexical and clausal substitution, and elliptical and evidential constructions. Finally, speakers used the rhetorical devices of repetition, parallelism, irony, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, metonymy, as well as wordplay expressed as phonetic play, sounds in onomatopoeic form and homonymy. The findings showed that intensification or more markedness of impoliteness in MPCs implied their use to achieve readjustment or redefinition of power relations. The study filled the gap concerning how interactants challenge power relations via linguistic means and in context. It concluded that impoliteness is strongly associated with exercise of power and that contextually relevant linguistic and/or rhetorical strategies contribute to either reinforcing or challenging power relations.

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Figure 1: Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness.72

LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of symbols and abbreviations which were used in the study.

On the one hand, the symbols were used in both the source text (ST) in Kirundi within an Excerpt and the target text (TT), i.e. the translated text, in English.

On the other hand, the abbreviations of grammatical markers of affixation, tense, mood, grammatical category, and others, were used for grammatical description of a part of speech in a metapragmatic comment (MPC) being analyzed.

Symbols:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| → | The arrow indicated the line number, in the text of an Excerpt, in which there was the MPC which was the focus of the analysis |
| { | The left brace was placed before two MPCs that formed a pair, with the second MPC in the pair being a repetition of the first MPC. |
| ... | The three dots added between numbered lines in an Excerpt indicate the omission of some sentences of the transcribed text by the researcher because he judged them as not significant concerning the co-text needed for the understanding, analysis and interpretation of the MPC under study. |
| [| The left bracket was placed at the beginning of each of two utterances which follow each other, in two consecutive turns by two interactants, in order to mark those utterances as overlapping utterances during their performance. |

ABBREVIATIONS

AFF:	affirmative
APPL:	applicative
AUG:	augment
AUGV:	augmentative
AUG _x :	augment of class x
BEN:	benefactive
CAUS:	causative
DEM:	demonstrative
DEON. MOD:	deontic modality
DIM:	diminutive
DYN. MOD:	dynamic modality
FV:	final vowel
IMP:	imperative mood
IND:	indicative mood
MPC:	a metapragmatic comment
NEG:	negation
NEUT:	neutral
NM:	noun marker
NPA:	neutro-passive
NP _x :	noun prefix of class x
OBJ:	object
OC _x :	object concord of class x
OPT:	optative mood
PAMI:	a parodistic mimicking

PASS:	passive voice
PAST:	past tense, past time
PERF:	perfective aspect
PERS:	personal
Pl:	plural
POSS:	possessive
PRES CONT:	present continuous
PRON:	pronoun
REC PAST:	recent past
REPET:	repetitive
REPOR:	reportative
SC _x :	subject concord of class x
Sg:	singular
SUBJ:	subject
SUBJV:	subjunctive mood
SUBSEC:	subsecutive mood
TNS:	tense
TT:	target text (the translated text)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the background to the study, presents a brief picture of what has been done previously in the research about metapragmatics and impoliteness and identifies a research gap. Moreover, in this chapter, the research problem is stated as well as the research aim and objectives, followed by the research questions. In addition, the chapter deals with the rationale and the significance of the study as well as its scope. It is also concerned with the operational definitions of key terms. Finally, the limitations of the study are pointed out together with ways to overcome them.

1.1 Background to the study

This study is on impolite MPCs. It draws data from Kirundi fictional conversations. Characters in these conversations are considered as playing the roles of speaker and listener like in real life everyday interaction. Linguistic impoliteness is studied within sociopragmatics (cf. Culpeper, 2011), a sub-area of pragmatics; and the study on MPCs is situated within metapragmatics, also an area of inquiry in pragmatics. Metapragmatics is concerned, among other things, with how language users reflect on speech behavior and talk about its (in)appropriateness in interaction.

In this section on the background to the study, the elements of Kirundi culture which pertain to the appropriate speech behavior are briefly discussed; and metapragmatics is introduced together with the related notions of metalanguage and metacommunication. Moreover, the section deals with how participants in interaction make and interpret linguistic choices and how the latter inform the definition of interpersonal relationships.

The pragmatic notions of politeness and impoliteness are briefly introduced as well as the manner in which they affect relationships between interactants.

MPCs are instances of the reflexive use of language to talk about talk. Metapragmatics is concerned with the (in)appropriateness of speech behavior and its effects on interpersonal relationships. Considerations about ‘proper’ behavior vary from culture to culture (De Geer & Tulviste, 2002, p. 330). Therefore, it is important to consider the cultural aspect of communication even when it comes to studying metacommunicative utterances. Below is a subsection on Kirundi language and culture and the dimension of ‘appropriateness’ of language use within this culture.

1.1.1 Kirundi language and culture and appropriate speech behavior

Kirundi is spoken in the whole of Burundian territory as the native language of about 10 million speakers¹ and as a national language. It is classified as JD62 in Guthrie’s updated referential system of the classification of Bantu languages (Maho, 2003), and is one of the several Great Lakes Bantu languages that form a large dialect continuum (Bukuru, 2003) known in Guthrie’s classification as D60 Rwanda-Rundi group (Maho, 2003). Apart from Kirundi, this dialect continuum includes Kinyarwanda (JD61), the national language of Rwanda, and other related languages in the neighborhood along the eastern and western borders of Burundi such as Kiha (JD66) and Kihangaza (JD65) in Tanzania and a few others spoken in the eastern DR Congo (Bukuru, 2003; Maho, 2003).

The Burundian population have a common language, ‘Ikirundi’ or Kirundi, and a common culture (Naniwe-Kaburahe, 2008, p. 149). The language-and-culture nexus

¹ Statistical estimate of Burundian population as of 2016 by the Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of Burundi (ISTEEBU) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Retrieved January 2019 from http://www.isteebu.bi/images/rapports/rapport_projections%20_2016.pdf

(Bell, 2010; Kramsch, 2011; Trosborg, 2010) applies to the Kirundi linguistic and cultural context to a great extent. Shared norms define a culture (Stamper, Liu, Hafkamp & Ades, 2000). Burundians have in common the norms of language use which are in keeping with Kirundi tradition and culture, whereby politeness is valued as the foundation of good education and behavior (Horicubonye, 2005, p. 79). Thus, from their young age, children are taught how to speak politely in different social contexts (Ntahokaja, 1978). There exist sociocultural norms and conventions which guide Kirundi speech performance in such a way that the speaker does not produce utterances which are socially unacceptable (Nkurikiye, 1991).

Part of the conventions of language use is the cultural norm concerning who has the right to speak in public as in social gatherings and in which order. In Kirundi culture and tradition, this depends on factors like socio-economic status, gender and age, whereby status comes first, followed by gender and finally age (Albert, 1964/1972). Concerning gender in the family and in the social setting at large, men are generally more powerful than women in terms of gender relations, in accordance with the patriarchal social order of the Burundian society. Moreover, the above-mentioned factors of status, gender, and age are used to determine the extent to which one's speech behavior is deemed appropriate or not in a given communicative situation.

Albert (1964/1972) studied how speech behavior in the traditional Burundian society was culturally patterned and experienced among Kirundi speakers. According to her, politeness is conventionally a norm for conversations and interpersonal relations in Kirundi customs. Indeed, this is valid for both the traditional and the modern Burundian society. However, some of the interactional practices described by the author are no longer of usage. As a way of illustration, to show respect to their parents or

grandparents, children no longer have to kneel before them. Still, children today must physically display a sign of humility and respect in front of parents or other adult people, for example by not standing near where the latter are sitting. In connection with this, Ntahokaja (1978, p. 22) observes that a well-brought up child does not pass near parents or other adult persons when they are eating; and in contexts where s/he is allowed to pass near them, s/he must show respect by bowing down. Kirundi speakers express politeness both physically and verbally in interaction by using an array of facial and verbal means.

In the family, apart from the expectations concerning appropriate behavior for a child, adult people are expected to serve as models of well-behaved people, in accordance with Kirundi customs. Interpersonal relationships are regulated by the norm of respect for those who are superior to oneself. Regarding a couple, the wife is expected to respect her husband. As Ntahokaja (1978) claims, in Kirundi tradition, a man could be rude to his wife, not because he did not love her, but because he wanted her to get used to respecting him. Could this mean the exercise of power which is stated as the purpose of impolite behavior in studies on (im)politeness? The exercise of power is an important aspect to be considered in this study on impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations.

As Kim & Spencer-Oatey (2021, p. 202) observe, cultural patterning includes cultural values, interactional norms, the ways in which communicative activities are conceptualized and role responsibilities. The three first elements are respectively exemplified in Kirundi culture by truth-telling, politeness, and conceptualizations concerning rights and obligations regulating speaking in public (Albert, 1964/1972; Ntahokaja, 1978). The element of role responsibilities is elaborated on below as we

discuss role relations in interaction as an important aspect in interpersonal pragmatics, with particular focus on the family setting.

Role relations are relationships between participants in interaction which are in agreement with their social roles. Examples include relations such as employer/employee, teacher/student, landlord/tenant, etc., whereby social expectations about rights and obligations are key defining criteria (Kim & Spencer-Oatey, 2021). In connection with this, the concept '*role*' in sociology is understood in terms of the social role played by a person in his society and is defined as "the set of expectations that the society has on the behavior of an individual occupying a particular social position" (Brandle, 2011, p. 507). In other words, there are expectations regarding the behavior of an individual in relation with others and in accordance with their social roles. In connection with this, Turner (2001, p. 233) observes that in society an individual person behaves in a meaningful way based on his/her social role and each person has a specific role; a role being defined in sociology in terms of expectations concerning rights and duties. Among the factors contributing to how a person behaves we have the situations, positions and kinds of relationships one is engaged in (Turner, 2001). As Kim & Spencer-Oatey (2021, p. 201) claim, role relations of communicators influence their power and distance, the two notions in Brown & Levinson (1978/1987). Little is known about how role relations are linguistically expressed in impolite MPCs.

People engage in interaction having different roles: husband and wife, or parent and child in a family; driver and passenger on a journey; etc. In the family, and particularly in the village setting which is the focus of this study, role relations are clearly defined in agreement with Kirundi culture. Thus, for example, the man as the husband and the head of the family oversees everything concerning the family and does mainly works

which demand more physical strength like building a house or a fence, whereas his wife is in charge of the house chores as housewife. However, crop farming activities in general are shared by both the husband and his wife (Ntahokaja, 1978, p. 39). Here again, some form of complementarity is observed between the couple regarding how to carry out farming activities. Thus, for instance, the man would be the one to cut grass in order to clear the arable land before assisting his wife in the ploughing activity.

Observance of the social and cultural norms concerning harmonious relationships between people is approved of among Kirundi users, whereas flouting them is disapproved of. Works of art conveying Kirundi culture, such as Kirundi plays, contain a lot of instances of metapragmatic utterances as a form of expression of disapproval of inappropriate speech behavior. Kirundi plays constitute the main source of data for this study and, as already said, they are rich in MPCs. Thus, for instance, the “*Ninde*” plays series has the literal meaning “who is that?”, as Nibafasha (2017, p. 1) rightly puts it. Originally, “*Ni nde?*” is a short question which is indirectly asked to an invisible audience in the play’s tagline, asking whom the misbehaving characters within the play could be representing in the society. Taglines are linguistic devices, made of one short sentence or two, which are used to catch the audience’s attention notably in films and writings (Mahlknecht, 2015; Munthe & Lestari, 2016).

In each *Ninde* play, we have a tagline which comes after a chunk of conversation. The latter is generally an utterance by a character followed by a response by another character; and it is extracted from the *Ninde* play and placed at the beginning of the play. In the tagline, we hear two voices, a woman and a man who are not characters, expressing disapproval of the specific bad behavior (generally a rude, inconsiderate speech behavior) highlighted in the short extract of conversation. The criticized bad

behavior illustrates a type of verbal behavior that is undesired and which is encountered within the play. The tagline has the form of a repeated metapragmatic utterance and, in all *Ninde* plays, it reads as follows:

- (1) Woman (W): *Mhm. Uyo yoba ari wewe?* ‘Mhm. Are you that person?’
 Man (M): *Mhm. Eka data si jewe.* ‘Mhm. No, I’m not.’
 W: *None yoba ari jewe?* ‘Am I that person, then?’
 M: *Eka na wewe si wewe. Ariko ni bande ga ntu?* ‘No, you aren’t either.
 So, who are they?’

Here, the question “*Ni bande?*” ‘Who are they?’ is the plural of “*Ni nde?*” ‘Who is [he/she] that?’. As already said, the tagline comes immediately after some form of verbal behavior which is culturally inappropriate in the specific context, as illustrated in the following chunk of conversation from *Ninde* play “*Akamaramaza*” ‘What a shame!’:

Two women W1 and W2 have been having a verbal dispute:

- (2) W1 (scornfully shouting at W2, with threats to harm her if she dares come back):
Genda urijanye, sha! Uzobe ukigaruka.
 ‘Go away! You’re just lucky, I was going to harm you. For your safety, never come back!’
 W2 (replying to W1, threatening to revenge):
Nanje, umenye neza ko bitazoherera aho.
 ‘I will revenge against you, I promise you.’

The first *Ninde* play was broadcast on radio in 1981 (Nibafasha, 2017) at Burundi radio and television RTNB (Radio Télévision Nationale du Burundi), which is the owner of all the *Ninde* plays and in charge of their production and broadcasting. From that time, RTNB hired a group of *Ninde* actors who, under the supervision of an official team from the institution, act out every *Ninde* play which is therefore audio/video-taped and

archived at RTNB. The *Ninde* group of actors work together with the officials from RTNB for the planning and production of the *Ninde* plays (Nibafasha, 2017).

As Nibafasha (2017, p. 1) claims, and we do agree with her, human relationships, in everyday encounters and in their different forms and happenings, are enacted by characters in *Ninde* plays. This is why these plays were chosen as one of the sources of data for this study on metacommunication, which indeed involves interpersonal relationships in a great measure. Next, we briefly discuss this form of linguistic communication and the related area of study within pragmatics known as metapragmatics.

1.1.2 Metalanguage, metacommunication and metapragmatics

One of the characteristic features of language is its capacity to reflect upon itself. We often use language to talk about it, to refer to it, or, in other words, to reflect on it (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007). This is metalanguage, or a higher-level language use to describe language as the object of study (Crystal, 2008; Hübler & Bublitz, 2007) or language about language (Jakobson, 1980; Lucy, 1993). By way of illustration, let us give the following example taken from Bateson (1972, p. 126):

(3) *The word, 'cat', has no fur and cannot scratch.* (Metalinguistic message)

This example illustrates metalanguage, whereby language is what is being talked about (Bateson, 1972, p. 72).

In connection with this, metalanguage is when language is talked about, for example as a topic or in theory and concerning either the structure or the use of that language (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007, p. 1). In a similar vein, Simpson (1997, p. 39) defines metalanguage as talking, spontaneously or not, about the use, structure, or meaning of

language. The above example (3) illustrates the three levels of ‘language structure’ (at word level), ‘language use’ and ‘language meaning’, as referred to by Simpson in his definition of metalanguage above; and it refers as to one of the universal features of language, i.e. arbitrariness. In fact, the metalinguistic utterance “*The word, ‘cat’, has no fur and cannot scratch*” means that there is nothing defining the pet animal known as a cat, such as ‘having fur’ and ‘scratching’, in the word ‘cat’ per se, in the same way we would say that there is no ‘dogginess’ in the word ‘dog’. Through this description, we note that the metalinguistic utterance in (3) does not involve any aspect of interpersonal communication; it is purely language used to talk about language or, in other words, metalanguage.

On the other hand, we also use language to communicate about previous or forthcoming communication, in such a way to manage the ongoing talk and often to involve interpersonal relationships; and this is metacommunication (Baltzersen, 2013; Bussmann, 1996; Sluzki & Bavelas, 1995). An illustrative example was also taken from Bateson (1972, p. 126):

- (4) *My telling you where to find the cat was friendly.* (Metacommunicative message, involving ‘interpersonal relationships’)

Metacommunicative messages are conveyed in meta-utterances, which interactants use as a way of intervening in ongoing interaction (Hübler & Bubnitz, 2007, p. 1). They pertain to metacommunication, which is communicating about communication (Bateson, 1951, cited in Sluzki & Bavelas, 1995, p. 28). From the communication theory, language is viewed as a ‘code’ (Crystal, 2008, pp. 82-83) used in communication; and, therefore, communicators may talk about such code as in the metacommunicative utterances (3) and (4) below, which both are examples of metacommunicative messages involving ‘codification’:

(5) *Finish your sentences!* (Hübler & Bublitiz, 2007, p. 15)

(6) *That was aptly said.* (Hübler & Bublitiz, 2007, p. 20)

This study focused on metacommunication and only dealt with utterances conveying metacommunicative messages which involve interpersonal relationships as is shown in (4) above, where the speaker explicitly refers to a ‘friendly’ relationship with his/her addressee. The study does not deal with metalinguistic messages (metalanguage) like (3). In example (4), the speaker does self-evaluation concerning the manner in which he/she talked to his/her fellow about where the cat was. We evaluate language use when we intentionally reflect about what we say, that is, we pay attention to them and reflect upon them (Anton, 1998, p. 201). In this case, we are ‘metacommunicating’ or talking about talk (cf. Ruesch & Bateson, 1958 and Leeds-Hurwitz, 1989, cited in Anton, 1998).

The pragmatics of how people use language to talk *about* their own speech or that of other people is called metapragmatics. In fact, the affix *meta* in the terms metalanguage, metapragmatics, and metacommunication carries the meaning ‘about’ or ‘dealing with’ (Hübler & Bublitiz, 2007). Since a metacommunicative utterance, shortened as meta-utterance, is produced as a comment on some speech or speech behavior, it is also referred to as a metapragmatic comment (MPC) (e.g. Hübler, 2011). The example sentences (4), (5) and (6) above are MPCs. The MPC (4) explicitly involves relationships between communicators (cf. the use of the word “friendly” in it). More examples of MPCs which are explicitly about relationships are the following:

(7) *Stop being so patronizing!* (Hübler, 2011, p. 109)

(8) *Why are you getting so aggressive all of a sudden?* (Hübler & Bublitiz, 2007, p. 8)

All the example sentences (4), (5), (6), (7) and (8) have in common the fact that they convey some evaluation of language use. Examples (5) and (6) show an evaluation of

how something was said (or written down for (5)). Examples (4), (7) and (8) clearly point to the interpersonal relationships being enacted within a specific context in an ongoing interaction, specifically a friendly talk in (4), a patronizing way of talking in (7), and an aggressive speech behavior in (8). In form, the different evaluative meta-utterances involve different linguistic choices made by the speakers performing them, such as the sentence mood (i.e. affirmative, imperative, and interrogative) and the tone. Moreover, some of these MPCs convey the interpersonal relations in an explicit manner ((4), (7) and (8) as already said), whereas others may be doing so implicitly depending on the context of their use (cf. (5) and (6)). Explicitness versus implicitness of one's expression is also another kind of choice in language use.

As we discuss linguistic choices in communication, it is important to recall that there exist 'conversational constraints' as to what we can choose to say and the manner in which we can say it (Kim, 1994; Kim, Sharkey & Singelis, 1994). According to Kim (1994), conversational constraints are such things as "concern for clarity and concern for not hurting the hearer's feelings" (p. 128). In Kim's enunciation appear elements of two pragmatic principles, namely the Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle (CP) with its maxim of clarity or manner and Brown & Levinson's (1987) Politeness Principle which says that speakers normally care about being polite by avoiding acts that threaten their addressee's face. The two principles are about conversational norms.

Such norms are the basis for evaluating the appropriateness of communicative behavior (Hübler, 2011), a notion that involves speakers and what they say or do in interaction. Examples (4) and (6) express two opposite positions as regards norms of politeness. Whereas (4) sounds polite as the speaker tries to maintain harmonious relations with his interlocutor, (6) is an impolite MPC. In fact, utterance (6) is likely to hurt the

addressee's feelings or threaten his face (Brown & Levinson, 1987), notably through the imposition brought about by the use of the imperative mood, the tone with which the meta-utterance is performed, and its content.

1.1.3 Linguistic choices in interaction and interpersonal relationships

Speakers, as rational actors, make linguistic choices in order to achieve specific interactional goals (Kim et al.1994; Mey, 2001; Myers-Scotton, 1998). Such choices and their functions in actual language use deserve due attention among pragmaticists (Borutti, 1984). Indeed, pragmatics is concerned with the messages conveyed by the speaker's utterance and their effects, among other things (Chen, 1996; Fraser, 1996). Such effects often lie at the interpersonal level inasmuch as communication takes place within social confines and is generally aimed at either creating social relations, or making speech acts like persuading, promising, etc. (Canale, 2013, p. 3). In connection with this, Deppermann (2011, p. 425) defines 'pragmatics' in a wide sense and includes, among its concerns, the functions of language in interaction and how social identities and relationships are indexed in language use.

Relationships between human beings are enacted through language use in everyday interaction (Agha, 2007; Ayometzi, 2007; Conville & Rogers, 1998; Duck, 1995; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003; Koch, Forgas, & Matovic, 2013; Sigman, 1998; Stewart, 1998). In pragmatics, there has not yet been a harmonized terminology to talk about the use of language to enact interpersonal relations in interaction; scholars have referred to the same concept using different labels: 'rapport management' (Spencer-Oatey, 2000b, 2005; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009), 'interpersonal management' (Fischer, 2006), 'relational work' (Locher, 2010, 2012, 2013; Locher & Watts, 2005, 2008; Watts, 2008).

Pragmatics scholars have been interested in studying language use and interpersonal relations. In social encounters, in fact, people do more than exchange information as they also need to manage their interpersonal relations (Sanford & Roach, 1987, p. 301). In communication theory, it is claimed that while talking, we communicate at two levels: the content of the utterances and our relationship as wished or perceived (Sanford & Roach, 1987, p. 301).

Concerning relationships in interaction, cultural dimensions come in. In fact, culture informs the enactment of relationships through language use (Floyd, 2006; Hinde, 1976; Liska, 1998; Spencer-Oatey, 2000a, 2000b, 2002). Besides, there is an important connection between cultural expectation and the notion of (in-) appropriateness in language use (Suzuki, 2007). And the way participants in interaction judge a certain language use as appropriate or not within the context is much dependent on the relationships which they perceive they have at the very moment of interaction.

Lakoff (1973) makes the following observation: someone is requesting their friend to close the window and, instead of using the type of request which characterizes friendship and familiarity “Shut the window”, s/he switches to “Please shut the window”. Here, the use of the word ‘please’ will give clues to the addressee to get an understanding that something has changed in his/her relationship with the speaker and surely in a negative way (Lakoff, 1973: 295, 302, cited in Terkourafi, 2008, p. 46).

Lakoff’s line of thinking here is that the single word “please” is responsible for a change of meaning in terms of the ‘relational work’ encoded in the request utterance “*Please* shut the window”. In fact, the speaker says this to a friend instead of the more direct and friendly request “Shut the window”. Therefore, such speaker’s choice to use “please” in his/her request is a message to the addressee that something has changed

between him/her and the speaker himself as far as their ‘friendly’ relations are concerned. In other words, this implies that their relationship has changed from ‘friendly’ to ‘less-friendly’, an indication that something wrong has taken place in their relationships. Using a direct/unmitigated request would mean a status quo in the relationships between the two interactants. However, by using a seemingly ‘polite’ request in an interactional context where it is not required, the speaker redefines the kind of interpersonal relationship s/he wants or perceives between him/her and the interlocutor at the moment of speaking.

In connection with what is said above, we next look at how politeness and impoliteness, as linguistic choices, are used to shape relations between interactants.

1.1.4 Politeness and impoliteness: Linguistic choices with relational effects in interaction

Politeness is an interactional strategy for preserving face and maintaining good/positive/harmonious social relationships (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Holmes, 1995; Janney & Arndt, 2005; Kasper, 1990) or “maintaining the equilibrium of interpersonal relationships” (Watts, 2005, p. 43). In other words, politeness as a strategy is used to stabilize personal relationships of participants in interaction (Kienpointner, 1997, p. 259). In this regard, Dindia (2003) contends that maintaining a relationship means preserving not only that relationship but also its fundamental nature in its current state. In an endeavor to study such communicative strategy, Lakoff (1973) summarized rules of polite speech in conversation as “(1) *Don’t impose*, (2) *Give options* and (3) *Make A feel good; Be friendly*” (Lakoff, 1973, cited in Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 14; italics is mine). A decade after, Leech (1983) suggested six maxims of politeness which guide speakers who want to strategically avoid conflict (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 14). Further work on politeness was Brown & Levinson’s (1987) Politeness Principle (PP),

which is a linguistic theory that accounts for the speaker's use of politeness strategies for the sake of saving their interlocutor's face. The term "face" was originally used by Goffman (1967, p. 5) to mean "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" or, as he elaborated further on the notion, the kind of 'self', with positive and approved social qualities, which an individual believes he/she has.

Brown & Levinson (1987) adopted Goffman's term and went further to distinguish between two types of face. The '*negative face*' is "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction-i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition", whereas the '*positive face*' is "the positive, consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). Under their PP, founded on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, Brown and Levinson claimed that speakers adopt politeness strategies in order to minimize face-threatening acts (FTA). In other words, being polite means using, as much as possible, conversational strategies that minimize FTAs in such a way that one's interlocutor will feel comfortable in the interaction.

Criticism directed at the above classic politeness theories includes the fact that they are based on the notion of 'face' which is viewed in terms of individuals' psychological "wants", which, however, should be seen as the 'self' defined socially and in relationship to 'others' (Bargiela-Chiappini 2003: 1463, cited in Culpeper, 2008, p. 20). Moreover, the two influential works on politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) tend to ignore the important fact that the speaker and hearer construct or

negotiate meanings together. However, they have been a good foundation for much more thinking into (im)politeness in interaction (Culpeper, 2008).

Thus, building on the above-mentioned politeness theory, other scholars realized that participants in everyday interaction do not always behave politely, they behave impolitely as well and for specific interactional goals and in specific contexts. Apart from language, other means of communicating (im)politeness include facial expression, gesture and body stance (Holmes & Schnurr, 2017). Linguistic (or verbal) expression of impoliteness is the concern of this study as well as the meanings of its use to manage interpersonal relationships in interaction.

People in routine conversations do not always aim to maintain existing relationships. They also choose strategies to challenge such relationships, *modify* them or *redefine* them, to use Rogers & Escudero's (2004, p. 19) terms, which are applied to the work people do about interpersonal relationships. Impoliteness is one of such strategies which interactants use to cause disharmony in relationships (Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann, 2003), giving the latter new meanings. Culpeper (1998, p. 86) argues that impoliteness is common in drama and that, therefore, it is interesting to study it in this context. In our study, we are concerned with impolite MPCs produced by characters in fictional conversations within selected texts.

As pointed out above, participants in conversations often and intentionally make utterances which are face-threatening. In this regard, impoliteness is not synonymous with 'failure to be polite', unlike the traditional belief (Culpeper, 2008). In many interactional contexts, in fact, speakers intentionally and purposefully choose to be impolite (Beebe, 1995; Bousfield, 2008b; Culpeper 1996, 2008). Such choice is motivated by the interpersonal function which speakers intend to achieve through their

impolite behavior. Concerning the actual speaker's intention to be impolite, neither the interlocutor nor the analyst is likely to get it with exactitude; however, either the addressee or the linguist can reconstruct the speaker's 'plausible' intention of speaking rudely based on adequate evidence (Culpeper et al., 2003). Part of such evidence which helps one to reconstruct the speaker's intention is what one knows about a participant in other previous conversations or about his/her social roles (Mooney, 2004).

Bousfield (2008b, p. 74) emphasizes the importance of the roles which participants currently play in the ongoing interaction, what they are doing in the present conversation, what has been going on before the present encounter, how emotionally the participants are relating, and relations regarding power, rights and obligations. Some of these elements, such as the emotional and relational ones, pertain to the extratextual sources which Mooney (2004) talks about above.

Mooney (2004, p. 901) contends that when studying impoliteness, what is more important is whether a given utterance conveys impoliteness and how it does so, rather than the speaker's intention or lack of intention to be impolite. In case the utterance was potentially impolite and yet the addressee did not realize that their co-communicator was speaking impolitely, the analyst can look at how the former failed to notice it; and in case the speaker was impolite in his speech but unintentionally, the analyst should examine what the interlocutor perceived (Mooney, 2004, p. 901).

People speak impolitely in order to exercise power, as proven by a number of studies (e.g. Beebe, 1995; Culpeper, 1996, 2008, 2016; Harris, 1984). This is the premise of the impoliteness theory as propounded by Culpeper (1996) and which has been followed by a growing number of works on the phenomenon of impoliteness in conversation.

In the following subsection, we look at fictional conversations as adequate sources for studying impoliteness in language use, besides drawing data from naturally occurring conversations.

1.1.5 Impoliteness in fictional conversations: Characters as ‘speakers’ and ‘listeners’

Apart from the actor-spectator communication in a play being performed on stage, there is communication taking place between characters in the (fictional) context defined in the play (Elam, 1980, p. 83), a context whose detailed aspects vary from scene to scene. Dramatic characters are perceived as participants in events of talk and communication (Elam, 1980). Through their exchange of speech, characters play the roles of speaker and listener, with the necessary interactional competence for making the right choices about language use (Coultas, 2003; Elam, 1980).

Fictional conversations constitute a form of communication (Elam, 1980; Piwek, 2008, Zou, 2010) which is worth analyzing in linguistic studies. In fact, language use in fiction resembles the language we use in real-world communication (Walsh, 2007, pp. 15-16). In a similar vein, Leech & Short (2007, p. 134) contend that fictional conversations are an imitation of language used in everyday interaction. A play performed on stage certainly displays aspects of the culture and social norms of the concerned society (Elam, 1980, p. 32).

Conversation in a dramatic performance involves speaker and addressee as it is in ordinary conversation. Lakoff (1981, p. 31) recognizes this fact, but observes that dramatic performances lack many aspects of spontaneity in the way it is experienced in ordinary conversation. While it is true that ordinary conversations are more spontaneous than dramatic performances, it is also true that the verbal exchanges that

take place in dramatic performances have many aspects in common with real-life daily conversations. Besides the speakers and listeners as participants, such conversational aspects include: a well-defined communicative context (though fictional), deixis, turn-taking, adjacency pairs, etc. As Steensig (2010, pp. 103-104) rightly observes, as it is for talk-in-interaction, we have in dramatic communication the phenomenon of ‘adjacency pairs’ whereby a question is followed by an answer, an invitation by an acceptance or rejection, etc. Moreover, fictional conversations have in common with routine real-life conversations such features as repetition, hesitation, and frequently occurring ungrammaticality (Zou, 2010). Fictional dialogue displays other conversational features such as listener’s backchannel, which is generally characteristic of social interaction (Ward & Tsukahara, 2000).

In a nutshell, there is speech exchange taking place between characters in plays or story narrative dialogues. Characters act as speakers and listeners; in fact, their speech exchange is organized in an interactive and interactional way, which is characteristic of dialogue as discourse in general (Herman, 1995). In other words, dramatic dialogue is a form of discourse. For terminological convenience, we shall refer to a dramatic dialogue as a fictional conversation, in accordance with the etymological meaning of ‘dialogue’ as an act of conversing through word (Herman, 1995, p. 1). Indeed, we realize that works of art, the performance of characters show different speech acts being enacted in the same way, and in the same contexts, such acts are actually performed in real-world interactions (Zou, 2010, p. 160). Put another way, characters, like everyday language users, make the appropriate linguistic choices to fit the context and to communicate their intended meaning. In the case of *Ninde* plays and other fictional texts selected for this study, every text refers to some real situations happening between Kirundi speakers, as is rightly claimed that every fictional text is in fact a reflection of

what actually takes place out there among the audience for which the fiction is written/performed (Warning & Beebe, 1980).

In his discussion of characterization and impoliteness, Culpeper (1998, p. 87) claims that behaviors of characters convey deep meanings since they are shaped by both the characters acting them out and the writer. The goals pursued by the authors and actors of Kirundi *Ninde* plays, which are performed and audio- and/or video-recorded, and written texts including written plays, from which impolite MPCs are drawn in this study, are to entertain people and more importantly to send them messages about inappropriate behaviors to avoid in society. Impoliteness is a marked behavior which occurs in metacommunication as it occurs in other forms of communication in everyday human encounters.

1.1.6 Impoliteness, markedness and metacommunication

The notion of markedness in pragmatics is applicable to linguistic choices in interaction; a linguistic choice is “any one way of saying something” (Gumperz, Aulakh & Kaltman, 1982, p. 30). Therefore, an unmarked linguistic choice is the one which is usual or expected, “normal, typical, or basic” (Battistella, 1996, p. 133). As regards a marked linguistic choice, it is ‘foregrounded’, that is, highlighted and drawing attention, “atypical, or more informative than” other choices (Battistella, 1996, p. 133). It has been argued that an unmarked choice observes the norm and supports the balance existing between interactants regarding their interpersonal relationships, which is the reason why it is the kind of choice which meet people’s expectations (Mendieta-Lombardo & Cintron, 1995, p. 567). On the other hand, a marked language choice has ‘unexpectedness’ as its defining feature (Myers-Scotton, 1998, p. 5). Moreover, an unexpected linguistic choice arouses our conscious questioning of why it is happening

(Crystal & Davy, 2013). Indeed, as Rice (2007, p. 80) observes, the marked linguistic item, which is unexpected, is perceived to be more noticeable than its unmarked, expected, counterpart.

Scholarship on (im)politeness categorizes speech behaviors in interaction as follows: ‘non-polite’ is “unmarked”, ‘polite’ is “positively marked”, while ‘impolite’ is “negatively marked” (Watts, 2005, p. xliii). In this study, we are interested in impoliteness, a negatively marked behavior, defined as follows:

Negatively marked behaviour, i.e. behaviour that has breached a social norm (judgements a and d), evokes negative evaluations such as impolite or overpolite (or any alternative lexeme such as rude, aggressive, insulting, sarcastic, etc. depending upon the degree of the violation and the type of conceptualization the inappropriate behaviour is profiled against).

(Locher & Watts, 2008, p. 79)

In everyday interaction, language users choose either to obey or not to obey the social norms concerning appropriate communication (Mackey, 2015; O’Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery & Fiske, 1994). Available literature in metapragmatics shows that language users adhere to the social conventions of language use while metacommunicating, aiming at maintaining good interpersonal relationships (e.g. Hongladarom, 2007; Pizziconi, 2007; Suzuki, 2007; Tanskanen, 2007). In effect, different studies have found that speakers obey interactional norms when they produce MPCs. Thus, for example, Thai speakers make MPCs in keeping with the cultural norm of maintaining smooth and harmonious relationships in interaction (Hongladarom, 2007). In the same way, Japanese speakers protect the addressee’s face while making MPCs (Pizziconi, 2007; Suzuki, 2007). Similarly, speakers in English and Chinese interpersonal communication generally observe norms as they maintain face in refusal speech acts (Chen, 1996, p. 9). Finally, communicators in written (online) computer-

mediated interaction in English care much about rapport building by maintaining good relationships with others in their communication as they use metapragmatic utterances (Tanskanen, 2007, p. 96).

Interpersonal relationships develop, change and do not remain static since they are constructed in interaction (Mandelbaum, 2003), in which they can be reproduced and transformed (Locher & Watts, 2008), redefined (Gross, 2006), readjusted (Myers-Scotton, 1998), modified (Amaya et al., 2012), or changed (Hill, Watson, Rivers & Joyce, 2007), through linguistic choices which language users make for either of those particular purposes. In relation to this, Duck (1995) stresses that relationships are ‘recreated’ or ‘revised’ in their own image during interaction where they are enacted (Duck, 1995, pp. 537-538). In this regard, personal relationships in terms of power relations can undergo modification notably through speakers’ choices used to ‘negotiate’ interpersonal relations (Agha, 2007; Locher & Bousfield, 2008; Myers-Scotton, 1983).

In previous research in metapragmatics, it had been mentioned in passing that an MPC such as “*You are repeating yourself*” can be used for “creating and *modifying identity*” when said as a criticism by a person who is showing that their status gives them the right to do so (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007, pp. 17-18, emphasis is mine). In connection with this, there is a need for a linguistic pragmatic inquiry into how such meta-utterance, when produced in actual interaction, is used by the speaker to convey a modification of identity. Moreover, a question still in need of being answered here concerns the nature of such MPC which can be used to modify identity in interaction. Specifically, the following question is raised: what kind of MPCs are used to enact a transformation, or readjustment, or modification of interpersonal relationships in communication?

While listening to some Kirundi *Ninde* plays, I noticed that actors manipulate language in various ways and this manipulation seems to address, implicitly or explicitly, their interpersonal relations, including their role relations. This is the case when characters are performing impolite MPCs.

Thus, for example, in an audio-recorded Kirundi *Ninde* play, a woman makes an implicit MPC in the form of a parodistic mimicking, which is impolite because the mimicking is ironical. While the woman is imitating her husband's words "*Jewe narakubwiye ku musi w'isoko ko nzoja **kurima***? 'Have I ever told you that *I will go to cultivate* on a market day?', she chooses to replace the verb "*kurima*" 'to cultivate land for farming' with the verb "*kurya*" 'to eat' saying: "*NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUSI W'ISOKO NSHOBOA **KURYA***?" 'HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT *I CAN EAT* ON A MARKET DAY?'. The woman deliberately chooses to replace the verb "*kurima*" 'to cultivate', originally used by her husband, with the verb "*kurya*" 'to eat'.

The wife's choice seems to cause more face-attack to her husband – besides ridicule brought about by mimicking itself – by sarcastically invoking his need to 'eat' despite his refusal to help her to 'cultivate' their farmland. Through her linguistic choice, she seems to involve a comparison of the social roles which they play, specifically regarding food production, and thus their role relations in the family. Little has been done in research on MPCs to show how the use of such an impolite MPC affects the interpersonal relations particularly power and role relations.

As shown above, more works on the use of MPCs had emphasized on metapragmatic acts which are done in compliance with the social norms and which therefore serve to maintain good relationships between interactants. Little work had been done on linguistic choices used in metapragmatic comments in connection with the change or

transformation of relationships in interaction. Moreover, little had been done to study impolite MPCs and the interpersonal meanings which they convey. Therefore, this study sought to fill the gap by investigating how impolite talk in metacommunication is associated with exercise of power and how impolite MPCs are used by interactants for a readjustment or transformation of power relations between them.

The need to do more research on the phenomenon of impoliteness in language use had been talked about (Locher & Bousfield 2008). According to Locher and Bousfield, whereas politeness has been highly researched on, ‘impoliteness’ has comparatively received little attention; yet, both phenomena are key to our understanding of what actually goes on in interpersonal communication. The authors conclude saying that, in the views of several researchers, we still need to know more about the phenomenon of impoliteness (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, pp. 4-5). Moreover, the available research on linguistic impoliteness has mostly focused on English language and, therefore, there is need for more works on impoliteness in other languages and cultures and particularly impoliteness research involving stylistic aspects and drawing data from fiction (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 780). In fact, conversations in fiction are a rich source of stylistic aspects of language use because they contain violations of features of interaction which, interestingly, can tell us much about how interaction is organized and structured by participants (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, pp. 759-760).

The following is the statement of the research problem for the study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Interpersonal relationships are enacted during interaction where they are created, maintained, or transformed through language use. Whereas it has been argued in linguistic pragmatic studies that impoliteness is used to exercise power, little has been

done to show how power relations are contextually challenged and readjusted between interactants by means of their impolite talk.

While I was listening to Kirundi *Ninde* plays, before I had an idea about this study, I observed that characters use a variety of verbal strategies to manipulate impolite MPCs in specific contexts. In one *Ninde* play, a woman, while mimicking her husband's refusal to help her in farming activities, deliberately chooses to replace his word “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’ with her own word “*kurya*” ‘to eat’ in her impolite MPC. By doing so, she seems to express the contrast of their current individual social roles as far as food production is concerned. She implicitly shows herself as ‘food producer and provider for the family’ and her husband as ‘lazy consumer of the food she produces’. And there is an association between people's social roles and their power relations. Given such language manipulation, I was interested in investigating how interactants manipulate language for the purpose of addressing their role relations and power relations, particularly how they verbally enact redefinition of power relations, which is a gap identified in this research.

Therefore, the study sought to fill the gap by analyzing how interpersonal relations, specifically power relations, are expressed, readjusted, or redefined in interaction through the use of impolite MPCs from Kirundi fictional conversations.

The aim and objectives of the study are presented below.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this study was to analyze impolite MPCs by interactants in Kirundi fictional conversations and to explain the function of speakers' lexical, grammatical and rhetorical strategies in expressing and redefining power relations.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To examine how impolite MPCs are lexically expressed and their interpersonal meanings concerning power relations in Kirundi fictional conversations.
2. To explain speakers' grammatical choices in impolite MPCs and their effects on the expression of power relations in Kirundi fictional conversations.
3. To examine speakers' rhetorical devices in impolite MPCs and their function in conveying power relations in Kirundi fictional conversations.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions in this study were the following:

For objective 1:

- What lexical choices are made by participants in Kirundi fictional conversations to encode impolite MPCs?
- Which interpersonal function do these impolite MPCs achieve regarding power relations?
- How do such lexical choices affect the definition of such relations?

For objective 2:

- What grammatical structures do speakers strategically choose while making impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations?
- Which meanings do the impolite MPCs with such grammatical structures convey in terms of power relations between interactants?
- How do the grammatical choices in the impolite MPCs contribute to the achievement of the intended metacommunicative meanings?

For objective 3:

- What rhetorical devices do participants in Kirundi fictional conversations use in impolite MPCs?
- What interpersonal relationships, particularly power relations, are expressed through the use of such impolite MPCs?
- How do the rhetorical devices affect the metacommunicative message conveyed by impolite MPCs concerning power relations?

1.5 Rationale and Significance of the Study

Metapragmatic comments (MPCs) are some of the linguistic resources people use to manage interpersonal relationships (Unuabonah, 2017). Previous studies on metacommunication have focused on polite MPCs, showing that they are used to maintain harmonious relationships. However, in routine conversations, people not only maintain, but also challenge, *modify* or *redefine* relationships (Rogers & Escudero, 2004), including power relations. It has been argued that impoliteness is a strategy used by interactants to cause disharmony in relationships (Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann, 2003), therefore shaping afresh such relations. Nevertheless, available literature that I have reviewed only mentions that interpersonal relations are transformed or modified without providing a data-based account of how this transformation of relationships is verbally enacted in interaction.

The idea to carry out this study started with my observation of linguistic and rhetorical manipulation by characters producing impolite MPCs in Kirundi *Ninde* plays, as I was listening to such plays being broadcast on Burundi national radio. Such speakers' strategies aroused my attention concerning the ways they manipulated language in impolite MPCs and apparently for meanings pertaining to their social roles and their relations. This is how I found interest in analyzing the phenomenon of impoliteness in

MPCs in Kirundi. Time and financial constraints could not allow me to extend the study to other languages.

This study has significance. In a collection of impoliteness studies, Locher & Bousfield (2008, p. 13) expressed the need for more studies on verbal impoliteness in order to get more understanding of this phenomenon. It is true that further impoliteness studies have been done after Locher and Bousfield's remark; however, still research gaps exist. We can mention, for instance, the fact that little academic work has been done to address the phenomenon of impoliteness within MPCs. The available literature shows studies done on the metapragmatics of impoliteness, that is, metapragmatic expressions used to talk about the phenomenon of impoliteness (e.g. Spencer-Oatey, 2011), instead of meta-utterances which are impolite themselves.

This study is significant in that it contributes knowledge about how interpersonal relationships are constructed in interaction through particular linguistic choices in impolite MPCs. In fact, as Hongladarom (2007, p. 31) rightly observed, analyzing metapragmatic comments gives us more understanding of the communication activity and our own values and identities as everyday communicators, what Deppermann (2011, p. 425) referred to as the function of MPCs to index interactants' interpersonal relations and their identities as social actors, which is an aspect covered in pragmatics.

The study also has a theoretical significance. Based on fictional conversations, in which fictional speakers (i.e. characters) do engage in interpersonal communication in the same way people do in everyday life (Zou, 2010, p. 160), the research contributed to the unveiling of specific interpersonal meanings conveyed by speakers' MPCs that are impolite. In fact, a number of linguistic studies have stressed the usefulness of analyzing the language used in fictional conversations (Caldas-Coulthard, 1984; Leech & Short,

2007; Nykänen & Koivisto, 2016; Urbanová, 2007). It has been observed that pragmatic analysis of speakers' styles in fictional conversations is valid and very significant on the practical and theoretical sides (Zou, 2010, p. 160); indeed, it is in such conversations that we come across various stylistic constructions used by the author with details in the different ways in which different styles are used (Urbanová, 2007, p. 41).

In a similar vein, McIntyre & Bousfield (2017, p. 759) argued that, in pragmatics, it is worth analyzing interactions between characters in fictional texts, particularly for testing the applicability of pragmatic theories. They emphasize the fact that fiction displays stylistic effects including conflict, humour, etc., which are employed in the fiction in violation of some interactional principles; and they conclude that violations of that kind can give us insights into how interaction takes place, which pragmaticians can use to reconsider and review pragmatic theories (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, pp. 759-760). Therefore, this constitutes an academic significance for a linguistic pragmatic study of fiction (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 760). Indeed, conflict and impoliteness were the focus of this study as well as such violations of interactional norms. Therefore, given that conflict is commonplace in drama, the latter proved to be a rich source of data for our study on impoliteness and the results of the study revealed interesting aspects of style and language use in impolite MPCs. And while talking about his suggested model for understanding impoliteness, Culpeper (2011, p. 255) made an appeal that further studies should test his proposals; therefore, the theoretical significance of this study is that it contributed to providing more data-based evidence that supports his model.

After stating the significance of the study, the next step is to delimit it and establish its scope.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is situated within pragmatics, more specifically in *sociopragmatics* (that is “pragmatics and society”) which, together with *pragmalinguistics* (that is “pragmatics and linguistic form”) constitute the two sub-areas of pragmatics (Leech, 2014, p. ix). It is within sociopragmatics that research on linguistic (im)politeness is done (Culpeper, 2011); indeed, the associated notions of face, politeness, impoliteness, and relationships are all sociopragmatic phenomena (Clift & Haugh, 2021, p. 624).

The study uses a Discourse analysis (DA) method to shed light on how power relations are enacted and redefined by interactants through the use of impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations. It does not use a Critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach and, therefore, does not analyze CDA aspects of inquiry such as inequality or injustice in the exercise of power among participants in discourse and does not take side with the powerless interactants, contrary to the aims of CDA studies (Wodak, 1989, p. xiv).

This study is based on Kirundi fictional conversations from plays, audio-taped or written, and from other texts involving dialogues between characters. Although its data are drawn from literary texts, this pragmatic study is not concerned with the literary aspects of the fictional texts. The study is limited to the analysis of the interpersonal meanings encoded in the impolite meta-utterances performed by the characters, who are referred to as speakers throughout the study. Stylistic aspects of such utterances are analyzed as linguistic choices conveying particular communicative meanings. In this regard, other meanings pertaining to literary analysis and criticism, for example at the level of communication between the playwright and the audience or the story writer and the reader, are not the concern of this linguistic pragmatic study.

Furthermore, research has shown that impoliteness can be used as a means to achieve entertainment and for attracting the audience's or the reader's attention and that this is commonplace in media and in fictional texts (e.g. Lorenzo-Dus, 2009; Lorenzo-Dus, Bou-Franch, & Blitvich, 2013). However, the present study is not concerned with this entertainment aspect of impoliteness, even though it is based on data from fictional texts.

Finally, during the analysis of speakers' linguistic choices in impolite MPCs, verbal cues as well as non-verbal cues, namely the vocal cues, are used. Specifically, the verbal expression and the intonation accompanying it, both of which constitute an utterance, are the subject of analysis; and this is another aspect of the scope of the present study. In other words, other non-verbal cues such as glances, winks, nodding, gestures and the like are not relied upon during the analysis. Therefore, given the nature and scope of the study, it is not necessary to collect visual data.

The following subsection is about the definition of key terms as they are used in the study.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key Terms

The terms which are key to one's study and which may take different interpretations by different people in different scholarly contexts need to be conceptualized and operationalized for a common understanding of what is being referred to through a particular term being used, throughout the research (Berg, 2001). In fact, we need definitions because they enable us to get a better understanding and scope of what we are studying (Leech & Short, 1981, p. 10). Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the meaning adopted in this work for the following concepts relevant to this study: metapragmatics; evaluative metapragmatic comment (MPC); relational work in

interaction; impoliteness as a negatively marked behavior; status, role and power in interaction; and fictional conversation.

1.7.1 Metapragmatics

In this study, we conceptualize the term metapragmatics as the pragmatic study of explicit and implicit metacommunication, a definition which combines two of the several readings of metapragmatics (see Hübler, 2011). In other words, metapragmatics is “the pragmatics of actually performed meta-utterances that serve as means of commenting on and interfering with ongoing discourse or text” (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007, p. 6). Therefore, in metapragmatics, we study metapragmatic comments, which are metapragmatic utterances (meta-utterances) used notably to assess the (in)appropriateness of language use. An utterance or a linguistic expression is said to be metapragmatic when it is used as a description or an explanation of, or an elaboration on, the pragmatics of a given speech (Lee, 2007, p. 119). As already mentioned, one of the uses of meta-utterances is to evaluate whether some speech behavior is appropriate or not.

1.7.2 Metapragmatic comment

A metapragmatic comment (MPC) is a comment on some language use; it generally has the communicative function of evaluation, thus the labeling ‘evaluative metapragmatic comment’ (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007). The evaluative nature of MPCs is stressed in some definitions of metapragmatic discourse in relation to evaluation, like when Gal (2006, p.177) contends that metapragmatic discourse comments on or evaluates language use. MPCs that are evaluative may focus on the talk of one’s interlocutor or on one’s talk as speaker in the case of self-evaluation (Schiffrin, 1980; Hübler, 2011).

1.7.3 Relational work in interaction

Relationships are enacted during communication in everyday life. According to Conville & Rogers (1998, p. ix) “a relationship is the kind of association that is instantiated by talk ...”. Participants in interaction establish interpersonal relationships amongst themselves by means of the language they are using (Ciliberti & Anderson, 2007). Through language use interactants define and negotiate relationships (Locher, 2013, p. 4457). This is referred to as rapport management (Spencer-Oatey, 2000b, 2002, 2005) or interpersonal management (Fischer, 2006), or relational work (Locher, 2013; Locher & Watts, 2008; Watts, 2008).

In interaction, participants’ behaviors which involve enactment of interpersonal relationships include politeness and impoliteness. Below is a subsection on impoliteness as one of the key terms in this study.

1.7.4 Impoliteness: A negatively marked behavior

Linguistic impoliteness has been defined differently, but most definitions have in common the fact that impoliteness involves a deliberate attack of the interlocutor’s face (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 3). In other words, it is a conflictive communication in which one intentionally behaves to cause “face loss” of the target (Bousfield, 2008a, p. 132; Culpeper, 2008, p. 36).

Impoliteness takes place in talk when a speaker strategizes by using linguistic resources enabling him/her to achieve face-attack and strengthening the face threat conveyed by his communicative act (Culpeper 1998, p. 85), causing therefore disruption of harmony in interpersonal relationships. Impoliteness is a negatively marked behavior, compared to non-polite behavior which is neutral and politeness which is a positively marked behavior (Watts, 2005, p. xliii).

1.7.5 Status, role and power in interaction

Any social interaction involves power between participants in the same way it does for social distance (Culpeper, 2008, p. 17). Power in interpersonal relationships has diverse forms of expression in terms of behavior, verbal and non-verbal, among which is impoliteness (e.g. Locher & Bousfield, 2008). In this study about relationships between speaker and addressee and their (im)polite behavior in interaction, the term ‘*power*’ is used following Wartenberg’s (1990) definition:

A social agent *A* has *power over* another social agent *B* if and only if *A* strategically constrains *B*’s action-environment.

(Wartenberg 1990, 85, cited in Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 9; emphasis is original)

Applying his definition to impoliteness in language use, we can say that a speaker who exercises power over his/her addressee does so because he/she is in a position allowing him/her to impose constraint on his/her interlocutor in such a way that the latter participant finds it difficult to retaliate to impoliteness with impoliteness.

There are various types of power, one of which is ‘*legitimate power*’. This kind of power depends on the social roles which a participant has vis-à-vis another, and vice-versa, and which are somehow “formally institutionalized”; it is one of the five types of power distinguished by French & Raven (1959) (French & Raven, 1959, cited in Spencer-Oatey & Žegarac, 2017, p. 121). There is, therefore, an association between the social roles of interactants and the power relations between them (Cf. French & Raven, 1959). Connected with this is the notion of role relation.

There is a close link between impoliteness, the exercise of power and the social roles of participants in interaction. Role relationships involve the social roles of interactants, such as teacher-student, doctor-patient, in accordance with which they generally behave (Knapp, Vangelisti & Caughlin, 2014, p. 31). In this study, the notions of ‘*status*’ and

‘role’ were defined in Agha’s (2007, p. 242) terms: “A *status* defines who a person is (child, ophthalmologist) and a *role* defines what that person is expected to do (go to school, perform eye surgery).” (emphasis is mine).

1.7.6 Fictional conversation

In this study, the term ‘conversation’ means ‘talk-exchange’ and refers to any language use in interaction which involves two or several persons (Akmajian, Demers, Farmer & Harnish, 2001, p. 387).

In connection with this, *fictional conversations* are instances of talk-exchange between two or more characters in a fictional text such as a literary one (Nykänen & Koivisto, 2016, p. 1). A fictional conversation consists of characters interacting among themselves. It is one of the forms of communication taking place in fiction besides the communication between the author and the reader, or the playwright and the audience, and between the narrator and the narratee (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 762). Actors in drama or characters in written dialogues within written texts are chosen by playwrights or narrators to represent speakers in everyday, naturally-occurring, conversations.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in terms of not having a wide variety of sources of Kirundi fictional conversations from which to sample data. In fact, the available sources of data in which we were able to find conversations portraying naturally-occurring Kirundi conversations were Kirundi *Ninde* plays, the major source of our data, and some Kirundi written plays and collections of stories containing dialogues between characters. However, this limitation did not impoverish the study and its findings because its main source of data, that is *Ninde* plays, was rich in terms of diversity of

contexts of interaction, topics covered and characters involved in the different plays. Moreover, this source of data presented advantages thanks to the very large volume of plays performed, audio-recorded and archived at Burundi national radio. In fact, available *Ninde* plays exceeded hundreds of hours of audio-taped conversations, because every *Ninde* play runs for approximately 1 hour and more than a hundred of such plays were put at our disposal to consult for our data.

In the analysis of impolite MPCs and their interpersonal implications in Kirundi fictional conversations, the study was limited to the interpretation of verbal expression and only one aspect of the nonverbal expression (i.e. the tone or the vocal expression). In other words, the facial and postural expressions in interpersonal communication which go together with the verbal metapragmatic means were left out. Thus, the data analysis and the findings did not cover all the aspects of nonverbal communication. However, since no previous study had looked into the use of impolite MPCs and its implications in interpersonal communication in fictional conversations, particularly in Kirundi, further studies were recommended to deal with such nonverbal aspects left out.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has given the background for situating, defining and setting the roadmap of the study. The background section has focused on existing research on interpersonal relationships as they are established, maintained and manipulated during interaction. Given that people relate within the norms of their culture, a brief discussion of Kirundi language and culture has been given, inasmuch as the data are from Kirundi. It has been shown that analyzing data from fictional conversations is relevant and likely to yield interesting findings regarding the pragmatics of social interaction. Moreover, in this

chapter, the notion of metapragmatics has been introduced and other key concepts have been defined in the sense of their use throughout the study. The notions of impoliteness and power in interpersonal pragmatics have been introduced as well. Research gaps identified in previous studies on impoliteness and MPCs have been presented. The research problem and objectives has been stated; and, finally, a justification of ‘why’ the study is being done as well as its significance have been provided and the research has been delimited.

The next chapter is a review of the literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter Two presents a critical review of the literature relevant to the study, based on the research objectives and the major concepts of the study, namely impoliteness, metapragmatics, and interpersonal relationships. The review was done in such a way to draw conclusions concerning observed resemblances of points of view and findings as well as patterns that emerge from the reviewed literature.

First, the Chapter reviewed selected studies on impoliteness: the impoliteness phenomenon investigated in different languages and different settings and using different methods. Moreover, studies relevant to the impoliteness phenomenon and interpersonal relations in Kirundi were reviewed with particular emphasis on those which have used fictional conversations as data.

Second, the notion of metapragmatics in interaction was considered from the point of view of different linguistic studies. Then it was followed by a review of the research done on metapragmatics and (im)politeness in different languages and cultures, and finally the Chapter zeroed in on how metapragmatics has been covered in research on Kirundi language. The Chapter ended with a conclusion.

2.1 The Linguistic Phenomenon of Impoliteness

In interpersonal communication in everyday encounters, participants make choices concerning how to relate with each other through interaction, including the choices to be polite or impolite. According to Terkourafi (2008, p. 46), a participant cannot choose to exhibit behavior in between politeness and impoliteness, it is either one or the other. Related to Terkourafi's point of view is the scholarly position by some researchers that

politeness is an unmarked behavior while impoliteness is a marked behavior (e.g. Kienpointner, 1997; Meier, 1995).

However, other scholars argued for the existence of ‘non-polite’ behavior as the neutral or unmarked behavior and categorized politeness as the positively marked behavior and impoliteness as the negatively marked behavior (e.g. Locher & Watts, 2008; Schnurr, Marra & Holmes, 2008). In relation to this, politeness and impoliteness are not considered as two extremes that stand in opposition to each other but as two relational phenomena situated along a continuum (Locher & Bousfield, 2008; Locher & Watts, 2005; Mills, 2003; Schnurr, Marra & Holmes, 2008; Watts, 2003) from non-polite, through polite to over-polite, on the one hand, and from non-polite, through impolite to rude, on the other hand (Watts, 2005, cited in Culpeper, 2008, p. 22).

In this study, we embraced Watts’s (2005) position that impoliteness is a negatively marked behavior on the linguistic (im)politeness continuum. Thus, we considered polite behavior as a positively marked behavior and non-polite behavior as a neutral and unmarked behavior, which is common in routine conversations between friends and colleagues and, generally speaking, in intimate relationships. For convenience in this study, we considered all the behaviors labelled impolite and rude as pertaining to the same phenomenon of impoliteness.

The area of ‘impoliteness’ has been dealt with in various scientific disciplines with slight variation of what it refers to and with different labels such as ‘verbal aggression’ in social psychology, ‘verbal abuse’ in sociology, ‘hostile interpersonal communication’ in communication studies, ‘verbal conflict’ in conflict studies, ‘rudeness’ in history, and others (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017, p. 200). As noted by Culpeper and Hardaker, all such labels have been used to mean the same phenomenon

whereby emotionally negative behaviors are perceived by participants in social encounters. However, it is linguistic impoliteness, as dealt with in linguistic (pragmatic) research, which is more concerned with language aspects of impolite behavior; other disciplines have studied this behavior in terms of non-verbal communication with little focus on language (Culpeper & Hardaker, 2017). More specifically, this research on impoliteness in meta-utterances is situated in sociopragmatics, a sub-field of pragmatics. In fact, “The main home for impoliteness studies is sociopragmatics, a branch of linguistic pragmatics...” (Culpeper, 2011, p. 5).

The terms “*pragmalinguistics*” and “*sociopragmatics*” were first used by Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) in their distinction of the two subfields of pragmatics. On the one hand, pragmalinguistics is the study of the pragmatic meanings from the point of view of the linguistic forms and strategies used. On the other hand, sociopragmatics is the study of pragmatic meanings in relation to such aspects as the social distance between the language users, the relevant norms of appropriateness of language use and behaviors, face, identities, relationships, power, emotion, and others (Haugh, Kádár & Terkourafi, 2021; Marmaridou, 2011). Both sub-disciplines of pragmatics have in common the fact that they use the pragmatic notions of implicature, speech acts, deixis, politeness etc. (Haugh, Kádár & Terkourafi, 2021, p. 1). In the analysis of language use in sociopragmatics, the focus is, first, on the language users and, second, on utterances (Haugh, Kádár & Terkourafi, 2021, p. 5). This was echoed in Thomas’s (1983) claim that “Sociopragmatic decisions are *social* before they are linguistic...” (p. 104, emphasis is original).

Sociopragmatics is at the intersection between linguistics and other disciplines such as sociology, social psychology and anthropology. In fact, it involves the analysis of

language use to convey meaning and achieve things (linguistics), by considering the social conditions (sociology) under which such use of language takes place as well as the mental/psychological states ((social) psychology) and the cultural aspects (anthropology) of the language users (Haugh, Kádár & Terkourafi, 2021, pp. 4-5).

A speaker's social competence involves his/her ability to judge, for example, social behavior in social encounters. Moreover, concerning speech, the issues at hand are about what to say, how to say it, when and why to say it, and being able to make such judgments pertains to the area of pragmatics (Thomas, 1983, p. 104). With regard to competence on the sociopragmatic level, Thomas argued that participants in communication need to know what is appropriate, for instance what the proper speech behavior is, during interaction considering such things as the social distance which is between them, the relative power which is defined between them, and each one's rights and obligations vis-à-vis others (Thomas, 1983, p. 104). These are important things that come into play in the production and interpretation of (im)politeness.

Impoliteness has received attention from linguists in a variety of discourse types such as in family discourse (e.g. Vuchinich, 1990), in workplace discourse (Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Holmes & Schnurr, 2017; Schnurr, Marra & Holmes, 2008), in political discourse (Al-Dilaimy & Khalaf, 2015; Ardila, 2015; García-Pastor, 2008), in courtroom discourse (Archer, 2008; Harris, 1984; Penman, 1990), in army training discourse (Culpeper, 1996), in fictional texts (e.g. Culpeper, 1998; McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017), and others. Below we briefly reviewed some of the studies which have focused on impoliteness in language use.

Culpeper (1996) laid the foundation for many studies in linguistic impoliteness as it came up with an analytical framework for impoliteness. In fact, using data from

English, Culpeper formulated a number of impoliteness strategies which, he argues, interactants use in order to attack face of their co-communicators and achieve the interpersonal goal of exercising power through impolite behavior. Elaboration on such strategies is done below in this review of theories on impoliteness. For the sake of illustration of the influence of Culpeper's work, we give the example of Al-Dilaimy & Khalaf (2015) who used Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness model to analyze the impoliteness strategies used by interlocutors at Al-Jazeera satellite channel in the programme "Opposite Direction". The study used the data of a corpus made from an interview on the topic 'The Clash of Civilization and the Class of Religions'. Among the findings of Al-Dilaimy & Khalaf's (2015) study is that *ridiculing* one's interlocutor is one of the main impoliteness strategies used in interruptions in the analyzed verbal exchanges (p. 1570). However, how such strategy is linguistically encoded in actual conversations did not receive a detailed analysis in their study. This study attempted to fill the gap by showing, by means of a few examples, how speakers manipulate language in order to ridicule their addressees' opinions.

Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann (2003) identified some deficits in Culpeper's (1996) model and proposed some revisions within this model by saying that it is necessary to analyze impoliteness beyond the confines of an utterance. Their work builds on the impoliteness framework by Culpeper (1996). The limitation of the latter work, they argue, is that it is concerned with single impoliteness strategies, with focus on specific grammatical or lexical items, within an utterance, used by the speaker who is being impolite. In their study, they make a further step by considering the scope of discourse in order to analyze how impoliteness is meaningfully realized in language use; they also investigate the role of prosody in conveying impoliteness.

Culpeper (2005) studied impoliteness in the television entertainment quiz show ‘The Weakest Link’ which was broadcast on BBC since the year 2000, where he focused on how impoliteness can be both for entertainment and as a means of exercising power. Using his model (Culpeper, 1996), he investigated structural aspects of the TV show in order to uncover how such aspects lead to an increase of face-damage. The study concluded notably that a crucial role is played by prosodic aspects in achieving impoliteness through utterances, besides lexical and grammatical aspects. Concerning the latter aspects, his study revealed that speakers use structural “formula”, one-liners and catchphrases in a creative way in order to achieve entertainment. Another important conclusion by Culpeper (2005) is that, even though participants are verbally interacting in a fictional context, the targets of a potentially impolite (verbal) behavior show, through their reactions, their perceptions of some utterances to be contextually impolite or not within the show, as they react for example via counter-strategies and non-verbal means. This finding is significant as far as my study is concerned, since it constitutes evidence of impoliteness events taking place in fictional conversations in ways similar to what happens in everyday naturally-occurring conversations.

Culpeper’s study dealt with impoliteness in mimicry, but it was the kind of mimicry which did not involve a lot of phonetic distortion of the speech being imitated. His paper concluded that speakers used exaggeration while imitating their co-communicator’s words as they attempted to match with their prosody. The data were collected from a TV quiz show whose entertainment content involved verbal acts humiliating contestants. In common with his study, much of the data for my study were conversations aired through a communication medium, the radio.

Another study by Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann (2003) used data from a TV program. Specifically, they collected data from the documentary television series *The Clampers* (1998) of BBC, in the form of video-recordings of daily activities of the traffic wardens of London Councils clamping illegally parked cars and of adjudicators handling disputes, between car owners and traffic wardens, caused by penalties for illegal parking. Their study concluded that the analyzed disputes regarding car parking reveal that impoliteness is achieved not only through the use of lexical and grammatical strategies but also through the use of particular prosody. In this regard, Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann (2003, p.1576) stressed the importance of considering the behavior of interactants like the prosody which they use while performing the utterance understood as impolite as well as the context of the exchange under analysis. Another useful point made in the study is that the kind of response which an addressee gives to an utterance is a hint as to whether that utterance is to be understood as polite or impolite (Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann, 2003, p.1576).

The association between prosody and impoliteness, as raised in Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann (2003), was also a point of focus in Tselika's (2015) study on the relationship between a speaker's ironic tone and impoliteness. Tselika investigated irony as a face-aggravating strategy, using a variety of data from other works on irony, from notes taken via observation of real conversations and from movies. The study concluded that irony implies impoliteness because the ironic tone makes the speaker's utterance hypocritical and therefore impolite; and sometimes irony is used for criticism, which is also perceived by the target as a face-threatening act. This is especially true with sarcasm, a type of irony which is offensive in nature (Tselika, 2015). In fact, 'sarcasm' is the type of irony which the speaker (S) uses in order to cause an offense to the addressee (A) who is being mocked through the sarcastic utterance which, indeed,

targets A alone, contrary to a non-sarcastic ironical utterance whose targets include both S and A (Lakoff, 1977).

Conflict between characters in plays is commonplace and it contributes to the plot development and to keeping the audience interested in following the dramatic performance (Culpeper, 1998). Culpeper came up with this conclusion in his study of what impoliteness achieves in dramatic conversations, based on data from the film *Scent of a Woman* (1992); he carried out his research using his impoliteness model (1996). Like Culpeper's (1998) work, my study was based on data from dramatic conversations. Nevertheless, it was not concerned with such functions of impoliteness in plot development and in motivating the audience to keep following the acting out of the play, rather it sought to understand the interpersonal meanings expressed through impolite MPCs specifically concerning power relations between interactants (i.e. characters).

McIntyre & Bousfield (2017) discussed the importance of studying (im)politeness in fictional texts and its contribution to stylistics and pragmatics. According to them, insights gained from characters' violations of aspects of interaction in fictional texts reveal a lot of interactional processes, which can inspire pragmaticians to reassess and revise pragmatic concepts and analytical frameworks. They concluded that fiction is useful for developing models and theories in linguistics as in the present case about impoliteness phenomenon (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 761).

In connection with this, more studies have been interested in impoliteness and fiction. Thus, for instance, Sani & Suhandoko (2020), using Culpeper's (1996) model to analyze data through content analysis, examined impoliteness strategies used by the main character in the Hancock movie. This study used Culpeper, Bousfield &

Wichmann's (2003) hint that we must take account of the response of the target of a potentially impolite utterance for us to judge such utterance as really involving impoliteness. Thus, Sani & Suhandoko (2020), in their analysis, looked at the response of the addressees and also related impoliteness to its function concerning enactment of power relations. They found that the strategy used more frequently in the analyzed movie data is positive impoliteness and the study concluded that it is because the speaker wanted to cause more harm to the face of their interlocutors and that positive impoliteness is a good tool for that. Moreover, the study found that silence is a form of impolite behavior in certain contexts.

Further topics covered in impoliteness studies include the link between emotion and impoliteness. Thus, for example, Šarić & Felberg (2015) focused on the emotional ways of achieving impoliteness and its various realizations. Their study used the media discourse, both print and online, on language and identity in the Croatian/Montenegrin language whereby participants (intellectuals, journalists, and editors) displayed disagreements; and the selected discourse was the one produced in the period 2010-2012. The authors found that impoliteness is realized through emotional appeal when discourse participants use inappropriate personal identity markers, which includes the following aspects: (a) first names used inappropriately, nicknames, first names given short forms in an informal way; (b) titles involving the use of insulting modifiers and invented titles; (c) modified forms of women's surnames; (d) pluralized surnames; and (e) labels with an ideological/ethnic background.

Many linguistic studies on impoliteness have considered the interpersonal aspects of this phenomenon in communication and have come to the conclusion that impoliteness is used to exercise power (Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Archer, 2008; Beebe, 1995;

García-Pastor, 2008; Mills, 2017; Sani & Suhandoko, 2020; Spencer-Oatey & Žegarac, 2017). However, power ‘manipulation’, ‘modification’, ‘transformation’, ‘readjustment’ or ‘contest’ have received little attention, even though these terms have been mentioned in a few studies but without an elaborate data-based analysis (e.g. Amaya et al., 2012; Conville & Rogers, 1998; Gross, 2006; Locher & Watts, 2008; Schnurr, Marra & Holmes, 2008). The work by Schnurr, Marra & Holmes (2008) is one of the few studies on the use of impoliteness to contest power relations. Their study analyzed how people with low status at workplace used impoliteness to contest power relations with their superiors in New Zealand. The study used examples of impolite verbal behavior among workers in their departments. For method, the study relied on data from routine interactions and verbal exchanges at meetings at three selected workplaces. The data were collected and audio/video-recorded by a research team of Victoria University. The study found that workers who are subordinate resolve to be impolite when talking to their superiors in order to exercise power over their superiors and thus subvert the hitherto existing power relations.

2.2 Impoliteness and Power Relations in Kirundi Fictional Conversations: Case of *Ninde* Plays

Nibafasha’s (2017, 2021) literary studies looked at the framing of gender power relations in the performance of Kirundi *Ninde* drama. The author discussed different types of verbal behaviors by *Ninde* characters, including impolite behavior, and how such behaviors reflect gender power relations in the Burundian contemporary society. Concerning the communicative effect of characters’ impolite behavior, whereas the author did not use any impoliteness theory to support her argument, she rightly put it that such behavior is a means used by characters to exercise power over another one. The author’s special interest was on how female characters negotiate power over male

characters in *Ninde* plays based on their social roles, as a reflection of lived realities or desired changes in the Burundian modern family. Her studies supported the idea that, indeed, gender power relations are not constant but dynamic.

The author presented only few cases of utterances illustrating threats, rudeness and insults as means used by characters to exercise power over others. Moreover, she did not probe into what types of impolite utterances do occur in the *Ninde* performances which she analyzed and how both the utterance type and the context of its occurrence contributed meaningfully to the expression of power relations between the interactants. Thus, for example, Nibafasha (2021, p. 78) illustrated an example of a woman using a conflictual or confrontational speech as she talked to her husband who seemed to flee away from his responsibilities as the head of family. However, the study did not exploit the details of the linguistic means used in such speech.

Within the utterances given in the author's example, we realize the presence of impolite talk, although it was not focused on enough in the analysis. In fact, while speaking to her husband, the wife mocks her husband by saying "Yooooa!", whose implicated meaning is 'shame on you!'. Moreover, the woman criticized and accused her husband that he shared the responsibility for any failure in the upbringing of their children as their father, which brings about confrontation. She told him: "*Mbe ico gihe aho narera nabi weho wari hehe? Wari he? Twaravyaranye!*" 'Where were you while I was bringing her up in bad manners? Where were you? We made children together!'. The setting where their argument was taking place lacked privacy because a man coming to visit them could hear them arguing when he was getting closer to them. This situation was likely to increase the husband's feeling of hurt caused by his wife's words. All these are pragmatic considerations to be made in a linguistic pragmatic study of speakers'

use of impolite talk in interaction and its implications for interpersonal relationships particularly power relations.

Our study addressed this gap by looking into the linguistic realizations of impolite utterances, with special focus on impolite MPCs, among characters in fictional conversations (including, but not limited to, *Ninde* plays) as well as their meanings concerning power relations between interactants. Fictional conversations, as our source of data, are considered to reflect in general the reality of individual language users in their everyday conversations within the social and cultural norms of language use (Burton & Carter, 2006; Elam, 1980; Leech & Short, 2007). The focus of our linguistic pragmatic study was therefore on the meanings about power relations as given by individual language users represented here by characters. Moreover, unlike Nibafasha (2017, 2021), our linguistic pragmatic study did not aim at demonstrating the vision of *Ninde* plays regarding gender power relations and how female characters deconstruct, through language and behavior, the absolute power of masculinity rooted in the Burundian tradition and culture.

Finally, Nibafasha (2017, p. 206) gave an example of a wife insulting her husband, thus demystifying his power and his superiority: in *Ninde* play “*Aha niho mba ndi*” ‘That is where I would have been’, a woman speaks impolitely to her husband:

Shantare: *Waramenyereye ibiraka sha! Sindakubesha uza gupfa nabi! Basha uza kugwara urukushi sindi bukubeshe./*
Well, you were used to part-time jobs! I am not lying to you, you are going to die badly! You are going to suffer from skin eruptions; I am not telling you lies.

Papa Fiston: *Uragakushagurika! Ko utanguye kuntuka.../* May you get skin eruption(rashes)! Since you begin to insult me...

Shantare: *Kushagurika nawe! /* Get skin eruption, you too!

Even though the analysis looked at the woman's (Shantare) impolite speech, it did not deal with the linguistic aspects of her impolite utterance and how this affects the expression of power relations. Moreover, the study focused more on what women said to men and thus almost left out utterances produced by men. Thus, for instance, in the example above, what is interesting for our pragmatic study is Papa Fiston's meta-utterance "*Uragakushagurika!*" 'May you get skin eruption (rashes)!' which he produced in reaction to the word "*urukushi*" 'skin eruptions' used by Shantare in her utterance "*Basha uza kugwara urukushi sindi bukubeshe*" 'You are going to suffer from skin eruptions [because of poverty]; I am not telling you lies'. Papa Fiston's utterance "*Uragakushagurika!*" /_{USC1-rakaOPT-kushi_{skin.eruptions} -agREPET-urAPPL, ACT-ikNPA² -a/} 'May you get skin eruption(rashes)!' is an expression which he used to comment on his wife's use of the word "*urukushi*" /_{uAUG11-ruNP11- kushi_{skin.eruptions/}} 'skin eruptions' while echoing it. By using this echoic expression, Papa Fiston metacommunicated about that word used by his wife and which he found inappropriate because it meant a disease ('skin eruptions') associated with extreme poverty in Kirundi tradition, which made the wife's utterance a serious insult to her husband.

The husband's expression "*Uragakushagurika!*" 'May you get skin eruption (rashes)!' is an implicit MPC. This MPC is impolite because it is an insult. Such utterance is of interest in metapragmatics and particularly in our pragmatic study of impolite MPCs, including their linguistic realizations and their interpersonal meanings. Below is a brief review of studies on metapragmatics.

² The derivational suffix *-ik-* is referred to as 'neutro-passive' (NPA), which is common in Bantu languages; it conveys the meaning that the subject is "potentially or factually affected by the action expressed by the verb" (Schadeberg 2003, p. 75, cited in Bostoen, Mberamihigo & De Schryver, 2012, p. 7).

2.3 Metapragmatics

Metapragmatics is a pragmatic study of how people use language to talk about some speech or some actual use of language (Hübler, 2011) or the pragmatics of metacommunicative utterances or expressions (e.g. Parvaresh & Tavangar, 2010; Ran, 2013). Metapragmatics is interested in the performance of metapragmatic utterances in interaction and focuses on the communicative practices and the meanings of interpersonal relationships as implicated in those utterances (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007).

Caffi (2006), in her study, distinguished three major senses of metapragmatics. The first sense of metapragmatics is that it is the debate about the theory of pragmatics and the major focus of this discipline, its epistemological underpinnings and what it covers as well as its boundaries. Its second sense is about the conditions of feasibility and efficiency as far as people's language use is concerned. The third sense is that metapragmatics is about the study of the competence of speakers showing how they judge their own behavior or that of somebody else as appropriate or not; and as such, it is concerned with the language users' practical knowledge about how to control, plan and reflect on the interaction in which they are engaged (Caffi, 2006, p. 82).

Haberland (2007) investigated how *language shift* in conversation may constitute a kind of metapragmatic act or comment. One of his examples for illustration is a conversation between a customer C and a hotel clerk H in Athens; both can speak Greek and English, but C wants to use Greek while H is preferring English. As their conversation goes on, each one trying to keep to their language of preference in this encounter, which sounds as an attempt for each one to pool the other towards their preferred language in this interaction, H finally concedes by shifting to Greek. The finding of the study is that speakers operate language shifts to implicate a metapragmatic comment/act which

helps in the management of their ongoing interaction. It is a kind of implicit metacommunication since it has no linguistic form representing the metapragmatic comment (Haberland, 2007, p. 139).

Studies in metapragmatics have also focused on the mode of expression of MPCs, explicit or implicit (e.g. Bussmann, 1996; Hübler & Bublitz, 2007; Hübler, 2007). Speakers explicitly evaluate the appropriateness of communicative behavior when they use linguistic expressions which intrinsically denote evaluation of language use. Pizziconi (2007) is one of the studies in explicit metapragmatics where speakers utilize various linguistic devices to refer to talk in different contexts. Her study dealt with how Japanese speakers produce explicit metapragmatic utterances like “*Yabun osore irimasuga, ...*” ‘Sorry for calling this late at night but,...’ (Pizziconi, 2007, pp. 54-55). In a similar fashion, Hongladarom (2007) analyzed explicit MPCs in Thai, with examples such as the use of formulaic expressions like disclaimers as in the following Thai expression “*yàa hǎa wāa wāa lǎəi ná*” ‘don’t blame (me) for criticizing (you)’.

Most metapragmatic studies in the literature provided examples of explicit metacommunication (Hongladarom, 2007; Morita, 2012; Overstreet & Yule, 2002; Pardo, 2013; Pizziconi, 2007; etc.). This could be related to the fact that “[e]xplicit metapragmatic acts seem to be the preferred because easier and more readily available option” (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007, p. 12). Very few instances of implicit metacommunication are illustrated in the available literature. In general terms, implicit communication refers to expressing something in an implicit rather than explicit manner (Bezuidenhout, 2010, p. 215). Some of the works done on implicit metacommunication are reviewed below.

Hongladarom (2007) discussed implicit metapragmatics which is marked by a form but which normally does not explicitly convey metacommunication. This is the metapragmatic function of the Thai discourse marker *kɔ̌*. In the following example, a student reports to a professor the opinion (criticism) of another lecturer about the professor's research work; the student adds the hedge *kɔ̌* to the lecturer's reported words "*kɔ̌ phǔn phóp wâa raw mii khwaam khít hěn thîi tàang kan mâak mâak*" 'Well, I just discovered that our opinions are very different.' According to Hongladarom (2007, pp. 43-44), the fact that student adds the hedge *kɔ̌* means that she is avoiding to express directly the criticism targeting the professor, even if she is just reporting that criticism as it was made by another lecturer. By so doing, the student "redresses her utterance". Hongladarom claims that the morpheme *kɔ̌* in such use has a metapragmatic dimension, although implicit.

Hübler (2007) looked at implicit MPCs achieved through the use of gestures accompanying statements. He studied how a gesture conveys, in an important way, a metapragmatic message concerning what is said. Among the examples which he gave is that of a woman reporting some story about her husband and making a statement about him but with a facial expression showing that she is not serious while saying so. Such metapragmatic comment instantiated by the woman's use of the gesture is implicit since she used no linguistic form to express it.

Hübler (2011) discussed parodistic mimicking (PAMI) as a form of implicit metacommunication. His study showed that an implicit MPC can be realized by means of a PAMI. According to him, "parody...is defined as *imitating the characteristic style of a speaker...with the intention to ridicule* or achieve a comic effect" (emphasis is mine) (p. 112). Hübler observed that while producing a PAMI a speaker is expressing

his/her disgust at what the interlocutor has just said or the manner in which it has been said. His study gave only one example to illustrate the phenomenon of parodistic mimicking:

Nick: I try not to ...
 George: Get involved. Um? Isn't that right?
 Nick: Yes ... that's right.
 George: I'd imagine not.
 Nick: I find it embarrassing.
 George (sarcastic): Oh, you do, hunh?
 Nick: Yes. Really. Quite.
 George (mimicking him): Yes. Really. Quite. (Then aloud, but to himself:) It's disgusting!
 (Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* New York: Pocket Books, 1966: 90)
 (Albee, 1966, cited in Hübler, 2011, pp. 112-113).

Parody, such as illustrated in this example, is a common verbal practice in everyday life interactions between human beings (Hübler, 2011, p. 113). The sarcastic meaning associated with the speaker's imitation of his/her interlocutor's words suggests that such words are inappropriate, in the same way echoic repetition implies inappropriateness of echoed words (cf. Sperber & Wilson, 1981). In a previous study, Culpeper (2005) also analyzed mimicry as a form of implicit MPC. His study looked at mimicry as "a caricatured re-presentation" made in such a way to reproduce the exact way of speaking of the person being imitated, including their use of intonation, and even their non-verbal behavior such as their use of gestures (p. 56). According to the author, imitating someone in an exaggerated manner to the extent of mimicking his gestural behavior involves "echoing" or repeating exactly their non-verbal behavior and, as such, such imitation sounds impolite because it involves irony and expresses a criticism (Culpeper. 2005, p. 57).

Whereas our study's focus is on impolite MPCs, it seeks to address a form of mimicry which is slightly different from that studied by Culpeper (2005). It is mimicry which is not based on the exact reproduction of someone's speech behavior, including the prosodic and the verbal aspects, but a kind of mimicry which involves a distortion, partial or total, of the words and/or the sounds of the speaker being imitated. Culpeper (2005) calls it imitation with distortion, though in his study there is little illustration of this feature of mimicking from his data. This particular kind of PAMI suggests that the participant using it is achieving an implicit MPC, which is evaluative.

PAMI is one of the acts of repetition which speakers use to express their attitudes towards the repeated utterances as produced by their co-communicators. Tannen (2007) described a form of repetition which she called "exact repetition" involving uttering the same words using a similar rhythm and which is of the type "allo-repetition (repetition of others)" as opposed to "self-repetition" (p. 63). Such repetition has some implicit emotive and evaluative meaning, what Suzuki (2007) refers to as "emotive and evaluative overtones (scorn, disbelief, hesitation, playfulness, emphasis, sarcasm, defiance, and mockery)" (p. 82).

Liu & You (2019) examined how MPCs are used to adjust salience in web-based intercultural written communication. The focus of their study was revision-oriented MPCs in peer evaluation (PE) interactions in an essay writing program. The source of the data was online intercultural communication within a cross-pacific exchange program between a university in south China and a Midwestern university in the United States; and the data were drawn from the 22nd exchange which took place in 2016. The online interactions took place between forty-four students, half of them were Chinese and others American. The students met online to evaluate peers' essays; the exercise

was aiming at improving their linguistic and intercultural competence. The researchers identified all MPCs, from which they then selected revision-oriented MPCs. The study used the sociocognitive approach (SCA) developed by Kecskes (2008, 2010, 2013, 2017), specifically its salience theory, to explore how MPCs are used to construct common ground in PE. The study found that MPCs were used for building common ground via their reflexivity and through adjustment of the salience of specific contextual factors. Therefore, pragmatic strategies were used within the MPCs like patterned moves (including context/frame setting, praise, critique, recommendation, and justification), foregrounding or backgrounding information, evidential markers and highlighting group identity.

Penz (2007) studied how MPCs were used to build common ground among participants in intercultural communication. She distinguished between message-related MPCs, which serve as a guide for the interpretation of the content of a message (through describing, summarizing, clarifying, reformulating past speech activities and projecting future activities), and procedure-related MPCs, which are used for the management of talk (by establishing a common understanding about the way of doing a speech activity). The data were collected from a group discussion during a workshop on language education within the framework of an international project in Europe. The participants to the workshop came from different backgrounds, including language teaching experts, researchers, teacher trainers, administrators and decision makers. The two-hour group discussion from which the data were collected had four participants from four countries, namely Malta, Poland, Romania and Switzerland. As the participants came from different countries and were working together for the first time, there was need for them to establish common ground so as to communicate effectively and do the task assigned to them by the project coordination.

The study used the ethnographic method of data collection, with participant observation, note taking, and audio-taping of interactions. One of the findings of the study is that participants had recourse to redressive strategies in formulating MPCs involving FTAs for the sake of politeness in their expression, notably by using mitigating devices. The study also concluded that there was a link between the use of MPCs and power: the speakers who frequently made MPCs, for example in an academic discussion, were those with a more powerful role in the ongoing activity. Note, however, that Penz (2007) associated power with frequent performance of MPCs by the same speaker, irrespective of the type of MPC, for example whether it is an impolite or a polite one. Thus, for example, Penz (2007, p. 288) argued that a participant who played a key role in defining the activities to be done in the group work was claiming authority, and thus power over others, in the ongoing activities.

Ciliberti & Anderson (2007) examined MPCs in theatrical texts, focusing on the communicative axis between the author and the audience, and thus leaving aside the other axis of communication between characters. They found that in theatrical texts explicit MPCs were aimed at enabling spectators to get a correct interpretation of what is being performed on stage. Thus, MPCs in this context played the explanatory or interpretative roles. Still talking of MPCs in theatrical texts, we realize that the authors did not deal with a different type of MPCs, that is, the MPCs which characters make among themselves as co-communicators in a manner similar to everyday interaction. Such type of MPCs used by a character in order to react to another character's speech or behavior deserve due attention.

As mentioned above, Penz (2007) looked at speakers' use of face-threatening MPCs and how they use redressive strategies such as the use of mitigating strategies in order

to sound polite. However, the implicit MPCs enacted through mimicry, as discussed in Culpeper (2005, 2011), undoubtedly implicate impolite behavior particularly when they are aimed at ridiculing the addressee who is being imitated and criticized for either what they have said or the way they have said it. Below is a subsection on more studies which have looked at metapragmatics and (im)politeness.

2.4 Metapragmatics and (im)politeness

Hongladarom (2007) investigated how norms of appropriate language use are evoked in MPCs. The study focused on how Thai speakers manipulate the illocutionary force of criticizing by having recourse to mitigating devices such as metapragmatic comments about what they are about to say or what they have just said. It revealed that the Thai culture guides people's linguistic choices in interaction and that consequently interactants need to be careful about which words they say and therefore respect each other by making the other feel good. The study stressed the fact that criticizing in Thai culture is not an appropriate choice and that even when one has to do so, they need to use devices to soften their criticism so as to maintain the face of their addressee and preserve harmonious relationship with them.

Culpeper (2011, chap 3) studied how metapragmatic comments about impoliteness can give us a better understanding of this phenomenon. More specifically, this study investigated the metalanguage, or people's use of terms, to describe the linguistic phenomenon of impoliteness. The study took a discursive approach to the understanding of the meaning of impoliteness through examining the terms which scholars have used, in verbal discussions and in writing, to describe and to refer to the broad phenomenon of impoliteness. The researcher, using a linguistic analysis, contrasted and compared the lexico-grammatical patterns of different terms (e.g. 'rude'

versus ‘impolite’). One of the conclusions of this study is that there is a nuance between ‘impoliteness’, which implies a communicative act, and some other labels of behavior like ‘inappropriateness’, of which impoliteness is a part but which may involve acts that are inappropriate but not communicative and, thus, not impolite.

Culpeper (2011) analyzed how interactants react to utterances which they judge to be impolite. He gave an example of a conversation between two pre-teenage sisters (S1 and S2): S2 produces the following metapragmatic comment “*That’s mean*” as an emotional reaction to her sister’s utterance “*Do you know anything about yo-yos?*”. S2 judges the latter utterance as impolite (cf. her use of the term ‘mean’) based notably on the intonation with which S1 has produced the utterance: heavy stress on the word ‘anything’ at its beginning, and sudden use of falling intonation. Such prosody makes S1’s utterance, though it has the form of a question, is a strong statement intentionally aimed at attacking S2’s face by saying that she does not know anything about yo-yos. In his study, Culpeper (2011) suggested that impoliteness is understood in interaction based on a number of factors, such as *who* says *what* to *whom* and *how*. People come in interaction having expectations concerning how they should be treated, as selves, by others. The ‘self’ involves one’s identity, one’s perceived identity values which one wants others to acknowledge and thus respect. This often arouses emotions in interaction when one feels that one’s co-communicator infringes their expectations or beliefs about how they deserve to be treated in interaction.

Related to Culpeper (2011, chap. 3) in terms of the coverage of the topics of metapragmatic comments and impoliteness is Spencer-Oatey (2011), which however adds a third dimension of emotion. Spencer-Oatey (2011) involves an investigation of people’s evaluative metapragmatic comments on other people’s behavior in interaction,

behavior judged either polite or impolite. Spencer-Oatey (2011) examined metapragmatic comments made by participants in workplace project partnerships, involving an emotion label (e.g. pleased, frustrated, annoying, offended, etc.) to define individual feelings about specific relations among them. These metapragmatic comments convey an evaluation of another person or what they had done as '(im)polite'. Her article used data from interviews done with participants of four different workplace project partnerships, 31 Chinese and 21 UK participants in total. An interactional discourse approach was used. In the study it was found that there were more metapragmatic emotion comments than (im)politeness comments.

In a similar vein, Simpson (1997) studied discussions and evaluative MPCs about impolite Thai pronouns or person-referring expressions when used in specific contexts and given the norms of appropriateness. His study used data from a corpus of recorded conversations and interviews, among students at Chiang Mai University in the north of Thailand, which were collected between November 1994 and July 1995, as well as elicited discussions with groups of Thai speakers. The study concluded that in Thai there exist norms of use of language which do not apply equally to men and women, specifically the use of pronouns especially those dubbed impolite once used by female speakers in public. In other words, the notions of politeness and impoliteness are ideologically gender-based in Thai language and culture, and this applies to impolite pronouns. Such ideology wants women to speak politely (Simpson, 1997, p. 58).

As discussed by Culpeper (2011 chap.3), studying impoliteness means that we look at verbal behaviors which are inappropriate in accordance with the norms of language use and the context of interaction. Below we have a brief review of the literature on the

phenomenon of impoliteness in relation to the notion of appropriate communicative behavior in Kirundi language and culture.

2.5 Metapragmatics and Appropriateness of Speech Behavior in Kirundi

Albert (1964/1972) analyzed Kirundi sociocultural norms regulating speech behavior. Norms of interaction vary from a speech community to another at least to some extent (Kachru, 2006, p. 252), although there are general social norms shared by communities worldwide. Albert's (1964/1972) study showed that in Kirundi culture, in the family setting, where cultural norms are first taught to children and are to be put into practice first by them, the father has authority over all the household members, his wife and children, and in all aspects. The father acts as both the physical and spiritual head and has general authority over the members of his household.' (Boyayo, 1970, p. 37). The power of a man is even semantically expressed in the Kirundi word "*umugabo*" 'a man' which derives from the verb "*kugaba*" meaning 'to rule over, dominate, be master', according to a translation of the word given by the Kirundi-English, English-Kirundi dictionary by Cox (1969, p. 33).

Albert's (1964/1972) study revealed that, according to Kirundi cultural norms, the criterion of seniority understood in terms of one's social rank and status, determines the order according to which people in public are allowed to speak. Thus, factors governing social interaction and (in)appropriateness of behavior in conversation include 'status' first, 'gender' which comes in second position and lastly 'age'. With regard to gender and age, females traditionally were expected not to speak at all in the public arena unless if they were told to speak, while younger people had to respect elders (Albert, 1964). Politeness had to characterize the behavior of people with lower social status, women and younger people (Albert, 1964). Even today, socio-economic and political status as

well as gender and age play an important role in determining how individuals have to behave in interaction with others.

Kirundi is rich in metapragmatic expressions describing different ways of speaking, but it is an area which has not yet gotten attention from linguists. Such expressions are encoded in verbs and include the following:

- (a) (i) *gufyinata* ‘to speak jokingly in a manner disliked by one’s addressee(s)’,
- (ii) *kwasama* ‘to speak as a spoiled child in a manner to cause annoyance to one’s addressee(s)’,
- (iii) *kvyeketwa* ‘to speak as a very spoiled child in a manner to cause annoyance of a higher degree to one’s addressee(s)’

The three metapragmatic verbs have the following common meaning: ‘to speak jokingly about either a serious affair which normally demands a serious consideration or a topic which the hearer judges as useless in the current circumstance’. However, they differ in the intensity of their negative connotation, which goes increasing from (i) to (iii). The following are more examples of such metacommunicative verbs:

- (b) *kudedemba*, *kudebagura* ‘to talk nonsense’, which also have a varying degree of negative connotation that is higher in ‘*kudebagura*’ more than ‘*kudedemba*’.
- (c) *Kuvumereza* ‘to call someone unceasingly and very loudly, more than is necessary for the current situation’.

Kirundi has many expressions for assessing the appropriateness of speech, some of which are formulaic expressions like proverbs or sayings. Thus, for example, in the metapragmatic saying “*Kuvuga menshi siko kuyamara*” ‘Delivering a longish speech does not make the topic under discussion exhausted’, the CP maxim of quantity is at work. Other metapragmatic expressions point to the norms of appropriate speech behavior, such as “*Ntakuvugana indya mu kanwa*” ‘You shouldn’t speak while having your food in the mouth’, “*Vugana umutima mu nda*” ‘Speak calmly’, which seem to

display a lot of cultural background. Still other metapragmatic expressions are: “*Uvuze ijambo neza*” ‘You have delivered a good speech’ (literally ‘you have delivered the speech in a good manner’). As far as I know, metapragmatic use of Kirundi has not yet received attention in research; and yet, it seems to reveal interesting pragmatic and cultural aspects of language use which may have useful implications concerning communicative goals at the interpersonal level of communication. There is need for a study of the types of metapragmatic expressions referred to above.

Ntahokaja (1978) presented metapragmatic utterances describing the polite verbal and nonverbal behavior for children in family. These meta-utterances are about:

(i) both a boy child and a girl child:

- “*Umwâna w’índero y’ábantu...ntavugána indyá mu kanwa*”
‘A well-brought up child...*does not speak while having food in his/her mouth*’ (p. 22);
- “*Kirazira kwibaraguza n’úkwîreshāngwîsha*”
‘*It is forbidden to say everything one has seen or heard and to reveal secrets*’ (p. 23);
- “*Umwâna yarézwe ntávugá mēnshi imbere y’ábó bitānganá.*”
‘A well-brought up child *does not talk much in front of his/her superiors.*’ (p. 23);

(ii) a girl child specifically, whose education is of much more concern in the family and in the society in accordance with the Kirundi tradition:

- “*Umwâna w-úmwîgeme yarézwe mu bāntu...mu kuvúga yarániga ijwí, akîrînda kwîturagarîsha*”
‘A well-brought up girl child ...*would speak shyly and with a low pitch, and would avoid to speak very loudly and in a threatening manner*’ (p. 24).

In these examples, the meta-utterances from Ntahokaja’s (1978) work on Kirundi culture are highlighted in italics. However, the author did not give any pragmatic interpretation of such metapragmatic utterances in Kirundi. His study simply mentioned these MPCs about good behavior for well-brought up children in accordance with Kirundi tradition and culture. The MPCs are about the social expectations concerning

appropriate behavior for children, who are furthermore expected to have proper behavior once they grow up and become adult people, for the benefit of the society in general and the family in particular. In other words, expectations about appropriate behavior are not limited to the childhood period as far as an individual is concerned. There are also norms of good conduct for adult people as regards notably interpersonal relationships among them, the aim of which is social harmony. Everything begins in the family, the space where an individual is molded into a well-behaved person from early childhood, as the Kirundi speakers put it in their saying “*Indero iva hasi*” ‘Appropriate behavior is acquired from early childhood’.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature related to my study, covering three main aspects: impoliteness, metapragmatics, and metapragmatics and impoliteness. Most researchers agree that impoliteness is used in interaction to exercise power. Concerning metapragmatics, MPCs are of two main kinds as regards their functions: there are those which are used to manage the ongoing discourse, and there are others which are used to manage interpersonal relationships, or MPCs can be used to do both.

The chapter has shown that many of the available studies have mentioned in passing MPCs which are impolite but have not analyzed them as impolite MPCs with an intention to examine their communicative functions. Moreover, it has been noticed in the chapter that little has been done to empirically study the interpersonal functions of impolite MPCs. This constitutes a research gap to be filled by the present study.

The chapter has indicated that scholarship on impoliteness indicates that impoliteness is done in interaction despite the fact that it is against expectations. Speakers perform a face-threatening metapragmatic act, that is, an impolite MPC such as a criticism, and

target their addressees, although this can be “precarious and risky” (Hübler & Bublitz, 2007, p. 16). Moreover, as Gross (2006, p. 510) observed, “unmarked choices...are usually the safest choices to make”. In this chapter, the researcher has questioned himself why speakers would take such risk of behaving impolitely while making MPCs? Why would they not choose politeness which is conforming to social norms (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005, p. 128) as in Kirundi culture? Therefore, there must be a communicative goal pursued by speakers performing impolite MPCs. This is an important aspect dealt with by the present study.

Moreover, in the chapter, it has been pointed out that many studies on MPCs have focused on the metapragmatic function of discourse management, dealing with MPCs having the function of controlling and monitoring the ongoing interaction. It has been indicated that very little research has been done on the interpersonal function of MPCs (e.g. Overstreet & Yule, 2002). Studies have shown, without elaboration, that performing MPCs is associated with exercising power (Ciliberti & Anderson, 2007; Penz, 2007; Stude, 2007). Moreover, research has shown that there is a close link between impoliteness and exercise of power (Culpeper, 1996, 2008; Locher & Bousfield, 2008; Limberg, 2009). Finally, studies have mentioned that relationships are maintained, contested and transformed in interaction. However, how such transformation of relationships take place in actual interaction or how it is verbally enacted by participants has received little attention. In short, the chapter has given the research gaps for this study.

In the next chapter, I deal with the theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is about the theoretical framework which supports the study as regards data analysis. It deals with how the concept ‘impoliteness’ is defined from a theoretical standpoint and how impoliteness is understood by participants in interaction and its implications concerning interpersonal relations particularly power relations. First, the notion of ‘relational work’ in interaction is discussed. Then the theoretical notions of ‘first-order impoliteness’ and ‘second-order impoliteness’ are discussed. This is followed by a presentation and a brief discussion of Culpeper’s (2011) Sociocognitive model for understanding impoliteness as the theory informing this study as far as interpretation of impoliteness in talk is concerned.

3.1 ‘Relational Work’ in Interaction

In the present study, we are concerned with how participants in Kirundi fictional conversations deal with interpersonal relationships as they interact with one another – what is referred to as ‘relational work’ (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 11) – and particularly at moments of performance of impolite meta-utterances. The types of verbal behavior constituting ‘relational work’ in interaction vary from ‘*impolite*’ behavior (a negatively marked and inappropriate behavior), through ‘*non-polite*’ behavior (an unmarked and appropriate behavior) and ‘*polite*’ behavior (a positively marked and appropriate behavior), to ‘*over-polite*’ behavior (a negatively marked and inappropriate behavior) (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 12).

Watts (2003) claims that ‘non-polite’ behavior, also referred to as ‘*politic*’ behavior, is distinguished from ‘polite’ behavior and ‘impolite’ behavior. In fact, *politic behavior*

in interaction is neutral behavior, not noticeable, and taken as proper for the current social context of interaction, whereas *polite* and *impolite* behaviors are linguistic behaviors outside what one can expect and are remarkable respectively in the positive and negative sense (Watts, 2003, p. 19). ‘Non-polite’ and ‘polite’ behaviors are appropriate in the suitable context, whereas ‘impolite’ and ‘over-polite’ are inappropriate. In symmetrical relations, for example in an exchange between friends in everyday conversations, ‘non-polite’ behavior is appropriate. On the other hand, in asymmetrical relationships, for instance a student talking to a teacher, ‘polite’ behavior is appropriate. This study is concerned with ‘impolite’ behavior in interaction. Moreover, as regards terms such as ‘impoliteness’ and ‘rudeness’, which have been conceptualized in the literature on impoliteness, in this study we shall consider them as conceptually referring to the same phenomenon. Indeed, talking of the two terms, Locher & Bousfield (2008, p. 4) contended that despite the fact that some authors distinguish between impoliteness and rudeness, the two terms seem to be conceptualized in a similar way.

Kienpointner (1997) used the term rudeness to mean impoliteness and defined it as consisting in an inappropriate verbal behavior in context (p. 255). The degree to which a given behavior is deemed inappropriate varies depending on situations. In connection with this, there is *a continuum of rudeness or impoliteness* in the sense that this behavior is *experienced in interactions in varying degrees* (Kienpointner, 1997, p. 257). In other words, impoliteness is perceived in terms of a “degree of face threat” (Culpeper, 1996).

Impoliteness theory developed as a reaction to politeness theory, particularly Brown & Levinson’s (1987) work, which inspired many other works on politeness. Although Brown & Levinson ([1978] 1987) is one of the most influential classical theories on

politeness, the post-Brown and Levinson scholarship criticized it for providing an individual-based account of politeness and, instead, viewed politeness as one of the several ways in which interactants work on their interpersonal relations (e.g. Holmes & Schnurr, 2005; Locher & Watts 2005; Mills, 2017; Spencer-Oatey 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2005). Scholars conceptualized linguistic impoliteness in two perspectives, namely, the first-order impoliteness and the second-order impoliteness.

Thinkers in the first-order (im)politeness believe that (im)politeness consists in what the users of language themselves feel and understand to be (im)polite but not what the analysts claim it to be, whereas the second-order (im)politeness approach involves a quest to explain (im)politeness scientifically, a work which the analysts need to do in order to come up with some explanatory theory of the phenomenon. According to Watts, Ide & Ehlich (2005) first-order politeness is about “commonsense notions of politeness” and consists of the perceptions of polite behavior by language users within a given social and cultural setting as well as the terms which they use to describe such behavior; whereas second-order politeness is “a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behavior and language usage.” (p. 3).

3.2 First-order (im)politeness

Watts (2008, p. xviii) advocated for a first-order politeness saying that politeness is lived and practiced among language users and it is pertaining to an activity between people instead of being a concept. The author stressed that scholars, in order to design a model of politeness, need to focus on the first-order politeness, that is, the perceptions of politeness by participants in social interaction and the terms they use in their own languages when referring to polite behavior (Watts, 2005, p. xxii). Locher & Watts (2008, p. 77) emphasized the point by indicating that we should conceive of

‘(im)politeness’ as a first-order concept, which is used by participants in interaction to evaluate a behavior as appropriate or inappropriate, and not as a second-order concept used in the theory of (im)politeness.

3.3 Second-order (im)politeness

The second-order (im)politeness approach comprises theoretical works on politeness such as Leech (1983) and Brown & Levinson (1987) as well as impoliteness works which were inspired by Brown & Levinson’s politeness theory. Thus, for example, building on Brown & Levinson’s (1987) politeness strategies, Culpeper (1996, pp. 356-7) suggested the following *impoliteness strategies* used by speakers while being impolite in interaction:

- (1) *Bald on record impoliteness* - the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized...
- (2) *Positive impoliteness* - the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants.
- (3) *Negative impoliteness* - the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.
- (4) *Sarcasm or mock politeness* - the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations...
- (5) *Withhold politeness* - the absence of politeness work where it would be expected.

To this taxonomy of impoliteness strategies, Culpeper (2016, p. 425) added the following strategy: the *Off-record impoliteness*, in which the speaker performs the FTA using an implicature well made so that the relevant intention is clear.

Culpeper (1996) elaborated on the Positive impoliteness and the Negative impoliteness strategies by suggesting a number of output strategies. *Output strategies* in the *Positive impoliteness*, include the following: ignoring someone, disassociating with them and

displaying lack of interest in them, using inappropriate expression when talking to them; using a coded language in such a way to make them feel not desired in the ongoing talk, and causing them discomfort in interaction (Culpeper, 1996, pp. 357-358). In this regard, positive impoliteness strategy causes threat to the positive face wants of one's co-communicator such as their wish to be liked, accepted, valued, etc. (Zhong, 2018, p. 6). At the center of this type of impoliteness is the theoretical construct *Positive face*, which was borrowed from the Politeness Principle (PP) theory and which means "the positive, consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (Brown & Levinson 1987, p. 61). With respect to *Negative impoliteness*, Culpeper (1996, p. 358) designed relevant *output strategies* including: frightening someone, scorning or ridiculing them or being contemptuous, belittling them for example through the use of diminutives, associating them with a negative aspect in an explicit way, and violating the structure of conversation.

After the above brief presentation of the two main trends in (im)politeness research theory, we now look at a model which integrates views of the first-order impoliteness and those of second-order impoliteness; this is Culpeper's (2011) sociocognitive model which explains how participants in interaction get to understand impoliteness.

3.4 Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness

Culpeper (2011) designed a Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness, which I abbreviate as SMUI in this work. This model, made of a number of components and processes, explains how native speakers of a language judge certain behaviors as impolite while they are engaged in actual verbal interaction. Various concepts are included, which language users draw on in order to evaluate some language use as

impolite, such as: face, self/selves and other/others, social norms, morality, attitudes/ideologies, contexts, discourses/behaviors, the metadiscourse about impoliteness, intention, emotions and aural elements like intonation, etc. The following figure represents Culpeper's (2011) model.

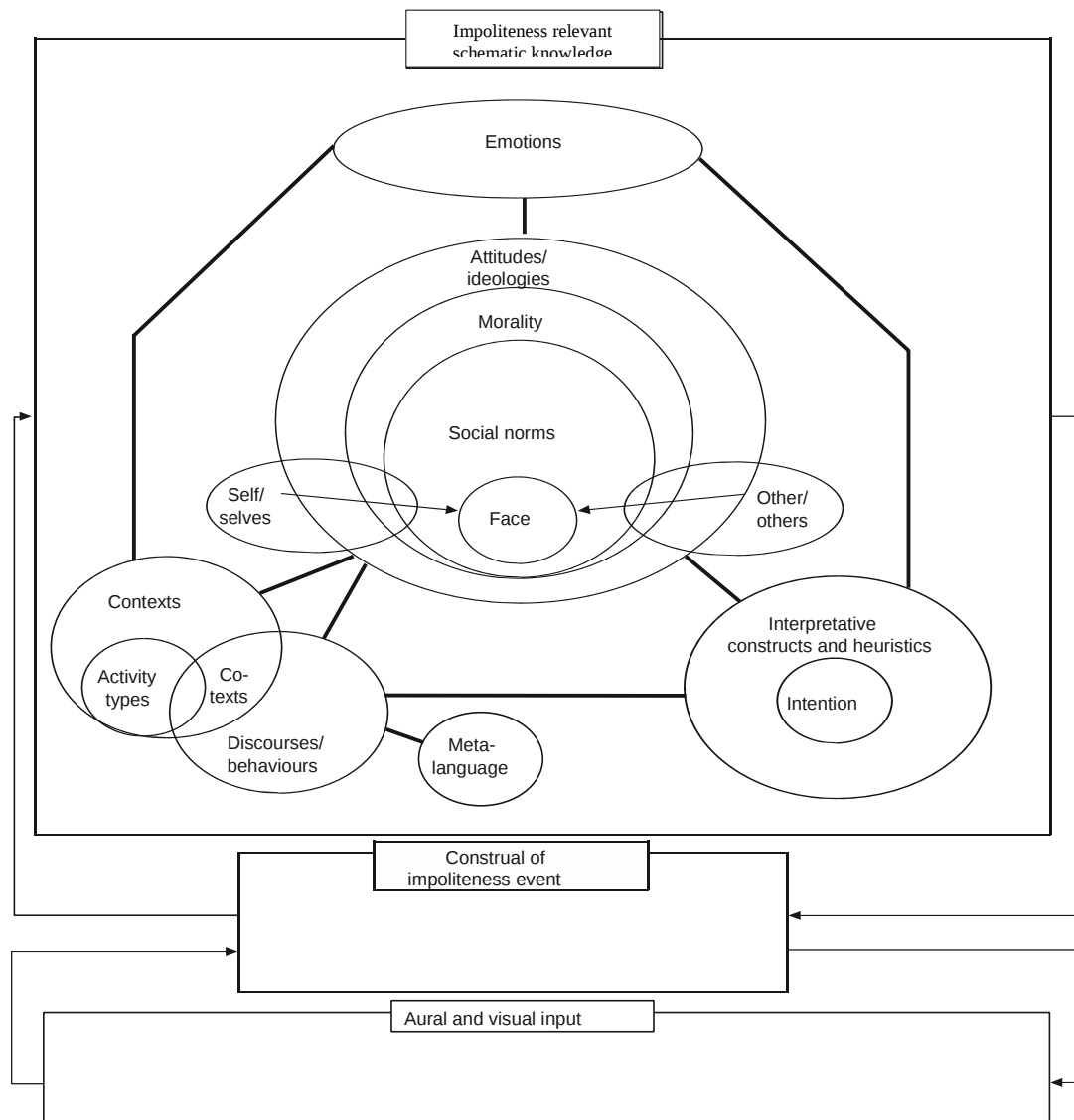


Figure 1: Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness

The above different components of the model are explained in the subsections below:

3.4.1 Schemas

A *schema* is a term which social psychologists use to mean a mental picture of things and people around us (DeLamater & Myers, 2011). In other words, “A schema is a cognitive representation of a concept, its associated characteristics, and how those characteristics are interrelated” (Ruscher & Santuzzi, 2007, p. 780). A sub-category of schemas called “social schemas” include schemas for social roles, schemas for social groups, self-schemas, etc. (Ruscher & Santuzzi, 2007). Considering the individual participants in interaction with their ‘self’, it is interesting to say something about this notion of ‘self-schemas’; it is defined as follows:

A self-schema is an integrated collection of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and memories about the self. Self-schemas may develop around personality traits, roles in relationships, occupations, activities, opinions, and other characteristics that are part of an individual’s definition of self.

(Ruscher & Santuzzi, 2007 p. 781).

The cognitive theory inspired Culpeper’s (2011) model of understanding impoliteness. In the cognitive theory, ideas and beliefs are said to be organized into schemas (DeLamater and Myers, 2011). Schemas facilitate information processing (Ruscher & Santuzzi, 2007 p. 781). In fact, impoliteness is a form of social behavior, which is significantly determined by perception, memory, and judgment (DeLamater & Myers, 2011, p. 21).

Thus, for example, while judging a linguistic behavior as (im)polite, a person’s evaluative beliefs within the attitude schemata intervene and s/he assesses the behavior as (in)appropriate thanks to their schematic knowledge containing information about behavioral appropriacy, which is determined by the individual experiences acquired in their life and their cultural experiences (Culpeper, 2011, pp. 14-15). People sharing one culture share, to some extent, an understanding of what (im)politeness means in

interaction with others, although such understanding varies contextually and discursively and from person to person because of their individual experiences and expectations in their schemas concerning (in)appropriate behavior (Culpeper, 2011, pp. 14-15). In other words, members of a sociocultural group share to a great extent the perceptions they have about impoliteness (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 8).

As discussed above, schemas exist in individuals' cognitions as representations of concepts. Social schemas are representations of social concepts, which, within Culpeper's (2011) model of understanding impoliteness, include the following: 'face' and the related notions of 'self' and 'other', social norms, morality, attitudes and ideologies.

3.4.2 'Face' and the 'Self'-'Other' distinction

Impoliteness, like politeness, has been assigned different definitions by different authors. In linguistic pragmatics, many definitions have included the concept 'face', as it is in the following definition: "*Impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context.*" (Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 3, emphasis is original). The notion of 'face' has often been discussed in relation to two other notions in (im)politeness literature, namely 'self' and 'other' (e.g. Leech, 1983; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Haugh, 2013). How a linguist conceptualizes 'face' is important because it has an impact on how they interpret (im)politeness in discourse (Arundale, 2013, p. 10).

Goffman (1967) used the concept *face* in the study of language use in interaction and defined it as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" or "an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes..." (p. 5). Goffman (1967) acknowledged that he borrowed the concept of 'face' from the Chinese notion of 'face';

indeed, it is a common belief in the scholarly literature on ‘face’ and ‘face-work’ that this concept originated from China (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003; Chen, 1990). It is important to note that Goffman’s understanding of ‘face’ is socially oriented (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003, p. 1455).

Brown & Levinson (1987) built on Goffman’s conceptualization of ‘face’ but redefined it as “the public self-image that every member [of society] wants to claim for himself” (p. 61). Moreover, they distinguished between two types of face, the ‘negative face’ and the ‘positive face’ as previously defined in this study. Culpeper (1998, p. 84) reformulated the definitions of the two aspects of face in simpler terms saying that “Positive face is the want to be approved of” whereas “Negative face is the want to be unimpeded”.

Brown & Levinson (1987) are criticized for taking an individualistic interpretation of ‘face’, leaving out its social orientation, which was implied in Goffman (1967). In fact, Goffman’s understanding of face is that it is constituted in social interaction and within a social order. Building on Goffman’s definition above, Pizziconi (2007, p. 51) put an emphasis on the ‘social’ dimension of ‘face’, saying that ‘face’ is granted to an individual by those around him/her in the social setting and on the condition that he/she behaves in approved manners. Finally, Watts (2005) evaluated the interpretation of “face” by Goffman as far richer than that by Brown and Levinson. We agree with Watts since any conceptualization of ‘face’ should take into account the interactional nature of ‘face constitution’ (Arundale, 2006). Thus, a number of scholars in postmodernist (im)politeness theory have looked into the notion of face from an interpersonal perspective, rejecting the ‘individualistic’ orientation previously taken by Brown and

Levinson (1987). Terkourafi (2008, p. 52), for instance, argued that face is ‘relational’ and ‘intentional’ and therefore is not solely individual.

In her rapport management theory, Spencer-Oatey (2000b, 2002) particularly suggested a framework of face with a social scope. According to her, in managing rapport, participants in interaction manage both ‘face’ and ‘sociality rights’:

face is associated with personal/social value, and is concerned with people’s sense of worth, credibility, dignity, honour, reputation, competence and so on. *Sociality rights*, on the other hand, are concerned with personal/social entitlements, and reflect people’s concerns over fairness, consideration, social inclusion/exclusion and so on.

(Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9, emphasis is mine).

Face, on the one hand, has two components which are interrelated: ‘quality face’ and ‘social identity face’ (Spencer-Oatey, 2002). An individual’s quality face is about him/her desiring to be evaluated positively by *others*, as regards his/her personal qualities; it has to do with personal self-esteem (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9). An individual’s social identity face is associated with his/her strong desire that his/her social roles and identity be recognized by others; thus, the term ‘role identity face’ refers to what such a person believes to be of value concerning his/her roles in the society or in the group he/she belongs to and it is linked with his/her public worth (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9). In relation to everyday verbal interaction, the social role which a speaker is playing at a given time in a verbal encounter with others determines what he/she says and how he/she says it, besides other relevant contextual considerations (Ding, 2011, p. 44).

Sociality rights, on the other hand, consist in two aspects, that is, ‘equity rights’ and ‘association rights’ (Spencer-Oatey, 2002). Equity rights concern an individual’s belief in a personal entitlement to being considered from others and to being fairly treated by

them, without imposition or exploitation and, finally, to being granted the benefits he/she has right to (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9). Association rights consist in an individual's belief in his/her right to associate with others, through interaction and relationships with them, without being constrained what to do in this regard, but in keeping with the social norms (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 10).

Whereas Goffman conceptualized face as “a socially attributed aspect of self” (Watts, 2003, p. 105), Brown & Levinson (1987) defined ‘face’ in association with the ‘self’ reduced to the personal level or the individuated self. This individuation of ‘self’ was challenged in the relevant literature. Thus, for instance, long before Brown and Levinson, James had adopted the notion of “social self” and had suggested that the notion of ‘self’ goes beyond an individual, claiming that “a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind” (James, 1890/1950, p. 294, cited in Swann Jr. & Bosson, 2010, p. 589). The term ‘social self’ continued to be used in the scholarship, by either explicit or implicit mention. In line with this, Haugh (2013, p. 47) highlighted that, in our interaction with other people, there is what they think of us, which is the “socially constituted self” or the “face” in Goffmanian sense and which normally makes us behave in certain ways while interacting with them in specific social contexts. In short, unlike Brown and Levinson's view that an individual represents their ‘self’ and engages into an interaction having their own face wants concerning values which they claim for themselves, Goffman argued that self is “constantly renegotiable” through interaction with others (Watts, 2003, p. 105).

‘Self’ and ‘other’, the key notions to understanding ‘face’, are also relevant to understanding ‘identity’, inasmuch as “*Identity is the social positioning of self and*

other” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 586, emphasis is original). In this regard, our own self-concept is dependent, among other things, on our relationships with others (Baron & Branscombe, 2012). Put another way, an adequate account of ‘self’ must take into account the fact that an individual acquires identity based on his/her relationships with others, for example in terms of social roles (parent-child, husband-wife, company manager- company employee, etc.), and depending on the social group of which he/she is a member. Therefore, ‘self’ is represented at three levels, namely *personal*, *relational* or interpersonal, and *collective* (Brewer and Gardner, 1996, pp. 83-84; Spencer-Oatey, 2007, pp. 641-642).

The first level of the ‘self’, described above as the ‘personal’ self, Baumeister & Bushman (2011, p. 60) called it the ‘self-knowledge’ or the ‘self-concept’ and said that it is about “self-awareness” which human beings possess, that is, how each person believes about themselves concerning the person they are. It is concerned with “Who I am” as an individual person or “unique or idiosyncratic self-understandings” (Thoits & Virshup, 1997, pp. 106-107).

Related to the personal self, and somehow connected with the second level of the interpersonal self, is the concept of ‘role identity’, which McCall & Simmons (1978) introduced and defined as “*the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position*” (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 65, cited in Thoits & Virshup, 1997, p. 109). According to McCall & Simmons (1978), among the many role identities which people have, they will choose situationally to perform the role identity which is more prominent and more valued because it will be more rewarded through getting more positive support from others (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 65, cited in Thoits & Virshup, 1997, p. 110). A simple example for illustration

is that of a professor who prefers to enact his professor identity in classroom and not his other role identities such as theatergoer identity (Thoits & Virshup (1997, p. 110).

The second level of the ‘self’, that is, the ‘relational self’ derives from the ways in which people relate among themselves and how they depend on each other (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83). Baumeister & Bushman (2011, pp. 59-60) present an elaborate view of the ‘interpersonal’, also referred to earlier as ‘relational’, part of the ‘self’. In fact, they give a number of practical examples for illustration of the ‘interpersonal self’ or the ‘public self’, the part of the ‘self’ which “helps the person connect socially to other people” (Baumeister & Bushman, 2011, p. 60). According to them, the actions we do or avoid to do and the behaviors we choose to adopt in situations are oftentimes aimed at presenting a positive image of ourselves or our public self in the way we wish it to appear to others and which is acceptable to them. And when we are personally convinced that something has gone wrong since our self which has been shown to some other person(s) is not the one we would desire to have appeared to them, we may have negative emotions, for example regret or remorse, embarrassment, or we may have a positive emotion of delight upon being complimented by a boss for a work well done at our workplace (Baumeister & Bushman, 2011, p. 60).

The third level of the ‘self’, the ‘collective self’ is about one being a member of a social category or a social collective (Brewer & Gardner, 1996), whereby self-identity, or ‘who I am’, is defined in reference to the group we belong to, ‘who we are’ (Thoits & Virshup, 1997, p. 106). The collective self is about the collectivist (*we*) perspective, rather than the individualist (*I*), when it comes to self-conception and social behavior (Hogg & Williams, 2000, p. 81). Moreover, such a conception of self is associated with culture as, in fact, more emphasis on the collective self is found in collectivistic cultures

than it is in individualistic cultures (Trafimow, Triandis & Goto, 1991, p. 649). Moreover, the link between the ‘self’ conceived as collective and culture lies in the fact that the ‘collective self’ is associated with one being a member of a group and having relationships with others and social roles such as being a brother of someone or a son or having a given citizenship (Wagar & Cohen, 2003, pp. 468-469).

In this study, we adopted the three levels of the ‘self’ and used Spencer-Oatey’s (2007) conceptualization of ‘face’ as personal, relational/interpersonal and collective. Speech acts which speakers perform and which can damage the positive face or the negative face of their addressee are known as face-threatening acts (FTAs) (Brown & Levinson, 1987). According to Brown and Levinson, when people do FTAs in interaction, instead of avoiding or mitigating them, they fail to be polite. However, it has been argued by other scholars that speakers who perform such acts do not do so by failure to be polite, but they deliberately behave impolitely in order to achieve interpersonal goals in interaction, mainly exercising power (Beebe, 1995; Eelen, 2001; Kienpointner, 1997, 2008; Lachenicht, 1980; Watts, 2003). A speaker’s FTA can be threatening the *negative face* of their addressee by hindering their freedom of action, such as “threats, warnings, dares...”, or his/her *positive face*, via “expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, accusations, insults ...” (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 66). Besides ‘face’, the social norms are also important for judging a behavior as impolite or not. In fact, in defining impoliteness, scholars have centered their definitions around either the concept ‘face’ or the concept ‘social norm’ (Culpeper, 2011, p. 47). Below is a discussion of the notion of ‘social norm’.

3.4.3 Social norm

People engage in interaction having norms of appropriateness about how to communicate to one another in context; in other words, interactants have expectations which form the basis for judging each other's linguistic behavior as (in)appropriate (Locher & Watts, 2008). A norm in a general sense is a constant shared understanding of what counts as (in)appropriate behavior in a specific social context, which defines one's expectations of behavior of others and tells oneself how one should behave (McKirnan, 1980, p. 76). Put another way, norms are rules, or what is expected, about appropriate behaviors in specific contexts and which are shared in a community (Stolley, 2005, p. 46). Such appropriateness is informed by the "cultural norms" (Johnson, 1997; Puurtinen, 2006) or the "sociocultural norms" (Kuiper, 2006) associated with language use.

In matters of language use, cultural norms are rules laid down in a culture, which influence oral communication, for example how long one should talk, loudness in talking, how to take turns in conversations, and pauses between interactants (Johnson, 1997, p. 47). In other words, cultural norms are standards of proper use of language among community members, which are often tacit and defined by the community itself, through its culture, and are thus referred to as "community norms" (Mahootian, 2006; Zuraw, 2006). Indeed, like beliefs, values and ideologies, norms of appropriate language use are shared by the members of a community (Gumperz, 2006; Joseph, 2006). *Breaches of social norms and conventions in interaction constitute impoliteness*, in the same way face-attack means impolite behavior by the offender (Culpeper, 2011, p. 31).

Social norms about speech behavior in Kirundi culture are reflected in metapragmatic comments about when and how to use language. Thus, for example, in Kirundi culture, the Kirundi normative meta-utterance “*Nta kuvugana indya mu kanwa*” ‘You shouldn’t talk with food in your mouth’ advises people not to talk while they are chewing their food because this is against table manners in Kirundi culture. In fact, one should first finish chewing their food and swallow it before talking to others while eating at table. Sometimes, the metapragmatic utterance conveying the norm is expressed as a forbidden behavior, as in “*Kirazira gusubira mu kanwa uwundi*” ‘It is forbidden to imitate the speech behavior of one’s interlocutor [as in parodistic mimicking]’. Such formulaic meta-utterances are often said by parents or adult people addressing children or younger people in order to educate them concerning appropriate speech behavior in context. Among the Kirundi metapragmatic comments expressing norms of appropriate speech behavior there are those which are considered as general truths conveying wisdom in the form of proverbs or sayings, such as “*Kuvuga menshi si ko kuyamara*” ‘To hold a longish speech cannot exhaust what one has to say’. This meta-utterance reflects a norm against talking too much while one is giving speech or is interacting with others. *Transgressing such norms in a context where they are expected to be respected* is interpreted as *an impolite verbal behavior*.

As Stolley (2005, p. 46) observes, norms are derived from values held by the society. *Values* are about what is good (Maltseva, 2018, p. 3) and are provided by the *moral order*, by which members of the society distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2006, p. 7, cited in Culpeper, 2011, p. 38). This leads us to the following brief discussion of morality in relation to understanding impoliteness.

3.4.4 Morality

Morality is connected with *beliefs* and *ideologies*, for example concerning one's identity and what is socially appropriate to do or to respect because it is sacred (Haidt, 2008, p. 65). In relation to this, we have values and norms as nonmaterial aspects of culture, which include ideas, beliefs and behaviors defining the members of that culture (Stolley, 2005, p. 41-43). As Culpeper (2011, p. 37) contended, *immorality* is attributed to whoever violates the social norms regarding how to behave.

As stated above, ideologies are connected with the notion of morality and, together with attitudes, they are involved in our judgment of behaviors as immoral and thus inappropriate. The two concepts, that is, attitudes and ideologies, also pertain to an individual's schemas which are called upon when one is judging a certain behavior as impolite. Below we briefly talk about the two notions.

3.4.5 Attitudes and ideologies

In social psychology, a person's attitude is their evaluation of and response to the social world (Baron & Branscombe, 2012) which plays a significant role in guiding one while thinking, behaving and feeling as well as for judgement (Loersch, Kopp & Petty, 2007; Ranganath & Nosek, 2007). Therefore, our attitudes are involved in our judgment of behaviors as impolite in social encounters. Applying the term *attitude* in his impoliteness model, Culpeper (2011, p. 22) argued that in interaction a certain behavior by a participant A is judged impolite by a participant B based on B's mental attitude, that is, his/her *evaluative beliefs concerning such behavior in the present interactional context*, and once B's attitude is activated by A's behavior. In relation to this, it is important to note that our reaction to people's behaviors in social contexts is often informed by our memories of their past behaviors in similar contexts.

Like attitudes, ideologies are part of an individual's cognition and inform one's judgment of behaviors as (in)appropriate. Ideology is cognitive, cultural and relational and we experience it in our everyday life. Gal (1992, pp. 445-446) expressed this clearly saying that ideology implies ideas, cultural constructions and representations, everyday practices and social relations, among other things. Ideology, viewed in terms of beliefs and values of an individual or a group, does not only pertain to culture, but also to other kinds of social system including economy, politics, religion, or science (Jost, 2007, p. 456). In connection with impoliteness, ideologies, shaped by cultural beliefs, norms and values about what is (in)appropriate behavior, play an important role in the judgment of behaviors as impolite. Indeed, the norms of (dis)approved group behavior and associated attitudes are found in cultures; such attitudes which are ideologies about behavioral (in)appropriateness contribute to judging a given behavior as (im)polite (Culpeper, 2011, p. 16).

Fairclough (1989) expresses a close relationship between ideology, language, and power relations, as experienced in everyday language use between language users. Ideologies are common-sense assumptions found in linguistic expressions and often associated with power relations (Fairclough, 1989, p. 4). In the case of our study, we note that impoliteness metapragmatic comments also reflect ideologies concerning social behavior and are closely linked to relations of power. The following example from our data is about a family gathering between siblings to debate family issues. In their discussion, a young man reacts to his sister's speech in which she dares challenge and oppose her brothers on an issue and her brother therefore judges her speech as inappropriate and impolite simply because she is a female among male siblings: "*Nta kuvuga nk'uwataye isoni uri umwana w'umukobwa*" 'As a girl, you should not talk as if you were not well brought up'(from the written Kirundi play "*Abuzukuru ba*

Kimotabugabo”). This meta-utterance is a metapragmatic comment on what the brother believes to be impolite behavior by his sister. His belief is ideologically oriented in accordance with Kirundi culture concerning what is acceptable behavior for female members of the society compared with their male counterparts and the generally defined male-female power relations as well.

In addition to the aspects so far discussed such as the social norms regarding what is acceptable and morally correct and the attitudes and ideologies surrounding them, context is as well important in judging a given behavior in interaction as (im)polite.

3.4.6 Contexts

In his elaboration on the social-norm view of politeness, Fraser (1990, p. 220) contended that context contributes significantly to the appraisal of a given behavior as (im)polite. Similarly, Kienpointner (1997, p. 255) stressed the fact that a verbal behavior is understood as rude or impolite depending on the context. Such context is the *social context*; and it is crucial to determining a behavior as impolite (Culpeper, 2011, p. 22). In addition to being social, context also has cultural and cognitive dimensions (Van Dijk, 2009).

The social context comprises several aspects such as the social setting in its wide sense, the participants in communication, their interactional roles, their intentions and goals as well as the power relations existing between them (Goffman, 1979, cited in Moser & Panaretou, 2011, p. 16). The social context of a verbal interaction and the social norms of appropriateness of behavior are key elements in the production and understanding of (im)politeness according to the Post-Brown and Levinson research on (im)politeness (e.g. Locher, 2005; Mills, 2017; Watts, 2003).

The construct ‘context’ in language use has ‘co-text’ as one of its components and which contributes a lot in the interpretation process of discourse. What is said/written before and after a specific utterance/sentence plays an important role to the listener’s/reader’s understanding of the meaning(s) encoded in a linguistic form. Context, besides interpretative cues such as intention, is significant in the interpretation of an utterance as (im)polite; no linguistic expression is inherently (im)polite (Kienpointner, 1997; Pleyer, 2018; Watts, 2003), contrary to what was claimed in the early research on politeness (Leech, 1983; Brown & Levinson, 1987). As mentioned above, besides context, intention is one of the other components which contribute to the interpretation of behaviors or utterances as impolite.

3.4.7 Discourses or behaviors

The term discourse has been defined differently by different scholars from different disciplines. In this study discourse is defined from a linguistic perspective as language being used in social situations where the context of language use is very important (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 44). In other words, discourse is about what people say or write down as they use language to communicate in everyday life. Communication involves behaviors of participants among themselves, such as verbal behavior. The behavior towards one’s interlocutor can be contextually judged as (im)polite. Linguistic forms or expressions are used by interactants to convey meanings like those pertaining to interpersonal relations.

3.4.8 Intentionality and impoliteness

Intentionality is one of the interpretative heuristics for understanding impoliteness. The concept “*heuristic*”, of Greek origin meaning “*serving to find out or discover*” (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 454, emphasis is mine), has been used in multiple

disciplines including psychology and has been given different definitions. In this study, we use the term ‘heuristic’ to mean the cognitive shortcuts enabling people to make judgments and decisions by relying on just few cues instead of all pertinent information (Peer & Gamliel, 2013, p. 114). Heuristics help us to do a fast selection of schemas in our brain. For example, the ‘availability’ heuristic means the information that easily and readily comes to the mind in relation to what one is assessing, that is, we find it easy to use the recently used schema in the present situation; whereas the ‘representativeness’ heuristic is when we select a schema which has some characteristics of the thing we are judging, the judgment being made by resemblance because one thing looks like another one to a great extent (DeLamater & Myers, 2011; Kahneman & Frederick, 2002).

These two heuristics can be applied in the perception of a communicative act as impolite. In fact, a hearer (H) will judge a verbal behavior by the speaker (S) as impolite based on some information that readily comes to his mind (the ‘availability’ heuristic) about the nature and characteristics of impolite talk. In a similar fashion, when H realizes that S’s behavior is similar to another impolite behavior previously known to him/her and in a similar context (the ‘representativeness’ heuristic), s/he may conclude that the present behavior is impolite. Moreover, if H perceives S’s intention to be impolite towards him/her, this will support his/her inference, and given the context, that indeed S is behaving impolitely towards him/her. In other words, the speaker’s intention to be impolite, whether real or wrongly perceived by the addressee, is an important clue in understanding their behavior as impolite.

The importance of intention in assessing a behavior as impolite is well captured in Culpeper’s (2005, p. 38) definition of impoliteness as a result of the speaker conveying

face-attack in an intentional manner as he speaks or as a result of the hearer's perception of the speaker's behavior as being intentionally face-attacking, or as a result of both. Moreover, there is impoliteness even when the hearer (H) does not attribute any face-threatening intention to the speaker (S) (Terkourafi, 2008), provided that, as the target of a potentially hurtful or embarrassing speech behavior, H feels hurt or embarrassed (Culpeper, 2011). In this regard, there is a link between affect and impoliteness.

3.4.9 Emotions and impoliteness

People's behavior in social contexts, including impolite behavior, is associated with their *emotions*, their thoughts about others, and their attitudes and beliefs (Baron & Branscombe, 2012, p. 13). In fact, emotions and moods play an important role in the ways people behave vis-à-vis others (Baron & Branscombe, 2012, p. 13). In his sociocognitive model, Culpeper (2011) makes it clear that emotion is one of the aspects to take into account in a theory explaining how we understand impoliteness in interaction (p. 57).

Impoliteness is associated with one's emotions aroused by a given situation such as an unapproved behavior by one's interlocutor. Although affective impoliteness can be the result of the emotional speaker's sudden impulse, it is to some extent instrumental (Culpeper, 2011). This comes to saying that affective impoliteness is aimed at achieving a communicative goal and is made with some level of consciousness by the speaker notably concerning which expression to use in the impolite response, given the context and the norms prescribing what emotional display is contextually appropriate or not (Culpeper, 2011, pp. 221-222).

Dunning (2007, p. 786) relates the notions of 'emotion' and 'self' by observing that the way we think, react emotionally or behave in situations is much related to our sense of

‘self’ and our desire to maintain it. This indicates that emotions are involved in people’s behavior and points to the interconnectedness between impoliteness and emotion (Langlotz & Locher, 2017); indeed, ‘emotion’ is associated with ‘self’ and thus with ‘face’, a central concept in impoliteness theory.

In this study of impolite evaluative metapragmatic comments, the kind of emotions focused on during analysis is what Haidt (2003) referred to as ‘othercondemning’ emotions (i.e. anger, disgust and contempt), as opposed to ‘self-conscious’ emotions (i.e. embarrassment, shame and guilt) (p. 855). We now discuss briefly impoliteness metadiscourse as another factor intervening in our understanding of impoliteness phenomenon.

3.4.10 Impoliteness metadiscourse

Impoliteness metadiscourse is the linguistic expressions used by the language users and which convey their opinions about impoliteness (Culpeper, 2011, p. 15). It includes the various terms describing impolite (linguistic) behavior. It helps the analyst to do a better interpretation of impoliteness in interaction. Scholarship points to the fact that during verbal interaction a process of evaluation of certain behavior as (im)polite takes place in each participant’s cognition, and that evaluation appears in speech as MPCs or in non-verbal form (Haugh, 2010, p. 155). Metadiscourse about impoliteness therefore becomes a useful cue to the analyst seeking to understand the participants’ perspectives on (im)politeness as far as actions or utterances in interaction are concerned (Haugh, 2010, p. 154). Such perspectives of the participants can as well be inferred from the discourse itself and how it unfolds (Spencer-Oatey, 2011, p. 3569).

Aside from the factors discussed above which are taken into account in analyzing impoliteness, as proposed in Culpeper’s (2011) SMUI, there are cues, aural and visual,

which also help in understanding verbal behaviors as impolite. Below we discussed aural cues, namely intonation, the cue which we used in our analysis because it was much associated with the meanings of utterances. Below we briefly looked at intonation and how it shapes sarcasm, a verbal behavior which is understood to be impolite.

3.4.11 Intonation, sarcasm and impoliteness

Aural cues, such as intonation, are important in understanding impoliteness. Beebe (1995, p. 159) stressed the close link between intonation and impoliteness in her definition of this linguistic phenomenon. Intonation is important not only in the speaker's encoding of their message but also in the hearer's decoding of that message, for example by indicating the speaker's attitude, whether s/he is interested, angry etc. (Suciu, 2016, p. 181).

The terms 'intonation' and 'prosody' are often used in literature without much distinction (Grice, 2006, p. 778). However, prosody is more general and includes word stress and rhythm in addition to intonation, as speech suprasegmental features (Carr, 2008, p. 138). While we are speaking, intonation refers to the rising or falling of our voice sounds (Suciu, 2016, p. 180). In actual interaction, intonation can convey meanings which are not encoded in the words themselves, for instance the speaker's attitude such as being ironical, sarcastic, angry, enthusiast, bored, etc. as they speak (Crystal, 2008; Navarro & Nebot, 2014; Suciu, 2016). In connection with our study, *sarcasm* has been shown to convey the meaning of an *impolite behavior* towards the target who is the addressee (e.g. Leech, 1983; Culpeper, 1986).

In short, intonation is of much significance in pragmatics and in the analysis of discourse (Kowtko, 1996). In fact, prosody makes the words we utter in conversations get the intended meanings and thus makes our talk meaningful and allows us to achieve

communicative goals (Gumperz, 1996). Such goals are achieved also via various verbal behaviors including linguistic impoliteness, which mainly acts at the interpersonal level of communication.

3.4.12 Impoliteness and exercise of power in interaction

Impoliteness takes place when a speaker damages the social identity of their addressee notably by insulting, criticizing, or being sarcastic to them and other ways of behaving impolitely towards them; and the impact of such impolite behavior is that the target person's power is lowered (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994, p. 171, cited in Culpeper, 2011, p. 4). Participants in interaction use impoliteness to exercise power by either reinforcing the existing power relations between them or contesting them (Locher, 2004; Schnurr, Marra & Holmes, 2008; Terkourafi, 2008; Watts, 2003). In connection with this, Beebe (1995) in her study concluded that there are two main functions of impoliteness in conversation: (1) to exercise/get power and (2) to let negative feelings out (Beebe, 1995, cited in Culpeper, 2011, p. 220). Locher and Bousfield defined impoliteness by relating it with power exercise:

impoliteness is an exercise of power as it has arguably always in some way an effect on one's addressees in that it alters the future action-environment of one's interlocutors...an interlocutor whose face is damaged by an utterance suddenly finds his or her response options to be sharply restricted.

(Locher & Bousfield, 2008, pp. 8-9)

In a social encounter, the more powerful participant feels more ease in behaving impolitely towards the less powerful co-communicator whose ability to retaliate with impoliteness becomes reduced in this context (Culpeper, 1996, 2011). This takes place essentially in asymmetrical relations as those between an employer and an employee, a teacher and a student, a parent and a child, etc. Put another way, if the difference of power between interactants is remarkable, the likelihood of the less powerful

participant to challenge the more powerful one is minimal (Grimshaw, 1990, cited in Leung, 2005, p. 12). In other kinds of relations, it is commonplace that impoliteness is met with impoliteness in daily interactions. The participant who retaliates with impoliteness does so with the same purpose of restricting the action-environment of their interlocutor. Therefore, participants in interaction use impoliteness not only to exercise power in asymmetrical relationships but also to challenge power relations by responding to a face attack with another face attack (Culpeper, 2008, p. 37). Impoliteness helps to exercise power irrespective of one's institutional or social status (Harris, 1984, Watts, 2003).

In short, besides the expression of one's negative feelings depending on the contexts, impolite behavior in interaction is aimed at attacking the face of one's addressee in order to *express* and *manipulate power* (Culpeper, 2008, p. 129). Manipulating power relations involves challenging them as well, which often takes place in interaction simply because power is dynamic, *negotiated* and *renegotiated* even when participants have differences in social status (Limberg, 2009, p. 1380; Locher & Bousfield, 2008, p. 9).

A participant contesting power makes linguistic choices to convey this renegotiation of relationships. From a perspective of norms of interaction, we have already said in this work that there are choices which conform to norms and others which do not, respectively referred to as unmarked choices and marked choices. We have also said that impoliteness is a negatively marked behavior; and markedness exists on a continuum the less marked to the more marked. In connection with marked choices in language use and their implications concerning relationships, it has been argued that:

Marked choices are typically used to *redefine the relationship* between the speaker and the addressee, often as *an expression of the speaker's authority or power*, to indicate anger...

(Gross, 2006, p. 510, emphasis is mine)

We note in Gross's assertion the important point that marked choices are used for a redefinition of relationships, among which are power relations between interactants.

Finally, the intensity of linguistic impoliteness can be increased, for instance, by means of intensifiers such as intensifying modifiers in English insulting expressions (e.g. 'you're so stupid' is intensified compared with 'you're stupid') (Culpeper, 2011, p. 141). This intensification has effects at the communicative level, including the interpersonal level. Thus, we considered intensification of impoliteness where it was encountered in our data and interpreted it in terms of the impact it had regarding the interpersonal relations between interactants. The concept "message intensity", as used in communication studies, means "the strength or degree of emphasis with which a source states his attitudinal position toward a topic" (McEwen & Greenberg, 1970, p. 340). In connection with the impoliteness phenomenon in MPCs, message intensity means the extent to which the speaker performing an impolite MPC emphasizes specific aspects of that MPC, thus showing his/her attitude regarding what he/she is saying.

What we have just discussed about the functions of impoliteness in interaction are incorporated within Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness, though not explicitly mentioned in the figure representing this model. In fact, power relations are enacted between participants in interaction represented in the Model by "self" and "other", whereby one is doing 'face-attack' against the other or, to use a more common expression, is using impolite language while talking to the other. In such case of face-attack, therefore, the following relational meanings of impoliteness are implicated based on the context:

- (1) impoliteness is *closely/strongly associated with* exercise of power;
- (2) while behaving impolitely and thus exercising power, an interactant may ‘intensify’ impoliteness, notably through the linguistic expressions used, and therefore ‘increase the markedness’ of their impolite behavior; such intensification of impoliteness *has effects* on the ‘(re)definition of power relations’ between interactants;
- (3) in specific contexts, impoliteness conveys a further meaning that the speaker is expressing his/her emotions, negative feelings such as anger, disgust, etc.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the theoretical framework underpinning this study: Culpeper’s (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness (SMUI). At the center of Culpeper’s (2011) SMUI is the construct ‘*face*’. Linguistic impoliteness results from a speaker aggravating their addressee’s ‘face’ through a verbal ‘*behavior*’ or a given ‘*discourse*’. The concept ‘face’ is closely related to two other constructs called ‘*self*’ and ‘*other*’. In fact, the notion of ‘face’ is associated with an individual’s identity and value as he/she participates in interaction with others. Moreover, part of ‘face’ is a person’s want to feel accepted and liked by others as a worthwhile social member (Goffman, 1967; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Spencer-Oatey’s (2002) concept of ‘quality face’ concerns an individual’s desire to be valued by others with regard to their perceived personal qualities, whereas her concept of ‘social identity face’ is about the individual’s desire to have their social roles and identities appreciated by others. This is in agreement with the idea of ‘interpersonal self’ or ‘public self’ which concerns a person’s relationship with others in the society, and which makes him/her desire to be given a positive image by others. An interactant’s behaviors, verbal and non-verbal, should support their addressee’s individual’s ‘public self’ and protect their ‘face’.

Another aspect discussed in the chapter is that the model by Culpeper (2011) contains ‘*social norms*’ which guide people’s behaviors. These norms are derived from the societal values shared by members of the society. These values are often of a moral nature and ‘*morality*’ is associated with ‘*beliefs*’ and ‘*ideologies*’ in the society regarding for example appropriateness when it comes to verbal behaviors between members. Impoliteness is regarded as an inappropriate behavior. Speakers’ impolite utterances are also sometimes triggered by their ‘*emotions*’, a construct which also contributes to our understanding of the use of impoliteness.

The chapter has also shown that within Culpeper’s model, there are interpretative constructs such as ‘*intention*’ which help users to perceive and interpret a given use of language as impolite. When an utterance is performed by a speaker and it results in the addressee’s face being damaged, with the speaker’s intention to attack their addressee’s face – or even in the absence of such intention but it is ‘perceived’ by the addressee – that utterance is interpreted as impolite. The stronger the speaker’s intention to be impolite is, the more offence is taken by the hearer.

A further important point made in this chapter is that the perception and interpretation of an impoliteness event can only be done within a ‘*context*’, the *social context*. Furthermore, *impoliteness metalanguage or metadiscourse*, which is about what people have as representations of impolite behaviors, also plays a role in people’s interpretation of a given verbal act as impolite.

Finally, in the chapter, it has been mentioned that Culpeper’s model, like other theoretical assumptions on the communicative function of impoliteness, indicates the existence of a close association between impoliteness and exercise of power in interaction.

The following chapter is about the methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

Chapter 4 is about the methodology of this study. Research methodology concerns what researchers assume to be guidelines and approaches for conducting a study right from the beginning of the process till its end, a plan which they use to analyze a phenomenon under study and reach conclusions or findings (Schensul, 2008). The chapter revolves around the methodological decisions for carrying out the study. Such decisions include: choosing the guiding paradigm as well as the appropriate research approach and research design, defining the study sampling technique and the study sample, specifying the data collection methods and the data analysis and interpretation procedures, and finally addressing the issues of validity and ethics concerning this research.

4.1 Research Paradigm: Social Constructivism

In the present study, we used the term ‘paradigm’ in its general sense as “a basic set of beliefs that guides action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17), or the ‘worldview’ (Annells, 1996; Creswell, 2014) informing our research. In other words, the philosophical paradigm which we choose serve us as the basis for planning and designing research (Haverkamp & Young, 2007) based on the objectives of the study.

The research paradigm of this work is Social Constructivism. As a reminder, our study focuses on the meanings of interpersonal relationships as conveyed by impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations. Within this paradigm, it is claimed that languages maintain and reproduce relations among members of the society (Bazerman, 1990, p. 77). Our focus is much more on the aspect of reproduction of social relations, specifically how social relations of power between interactants are (re)defined through

the use of impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional exchanges. In fact, apart from creating and maintaining social relations between themselves, communicators also use language in ways to transform such relations. Social constructivists are interested in such goals of language use as identifying the ways in which social relations are actually enacted in interaction (Hosking & McNamee, 2006, cited in Geldenhuys, 2015, p. 4).

In the social constructivist view of reality, the way in which the society is structured, including social relationships between members, is built during – and finds expression in – the interaction between people (Mehan, 1981, p. 71). Using the social constructivist paradigm, therefore, our study sought to uncover the interpersonal meanings of power relations and role relations which interactants construct and negotiate during interactions. To achieve this goal, I used a qualitative approach in the study

4.2 Qualitative Research Approach to the Study

In this study, I used a qualitative approach to investigate verbal strategies and interpersonal meanings of impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations. Qualitative research is relevant to studying the meanings of a social phenomenon (Sumner, 2006), which is impoliteness in meta-utterances in the present study. Using this approach, I attempted to answer qualitative research questions about ‘what’ verbal strategies speakers use while performing impolite MPCs in the studied fictional interactions, ‘how’ these strategies are packaged at the lexical, grammatical and rhetorical levels, and ‘why’ the speakers do so, specifically, what interpersonal meanings they intend to achieve.

4.3 Research Design

A *research design* is about strategizing and planning one’s research (Gray, Williamson, Karp & Dalphin, 2007). In line with this, Creswell (2007) defined a research design as

the *whole process of research* including the statement of the problem, writing the research questions, designing the methods for data collection and analysis, interpreting the data and formulating findings. In short, the research design is “the *conceptual structure* within which research is conducted...the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data” (Kothari, 2004, p. 31, emphasis is mine) or, in other words, “the actual *structure* of how we go about our study” (Rasinger, 2010, p. 56, emphasis in original). For this study, therefore, the research design was *a step-by-step process* which I utilized in order to carry it out.

In this process of the study, I used the Discourse analysis method. It is one of the qualitative methods used to study human beings (Tshabangu, 2015) as when they interact with each other verbally. This method is, indeed, one of the several methods used in sociopragmatic studies (Clift & Haugh, 2021, pp. 616-617). It is used to identify and analyze, within the larger discursive context, the strategies employed by speakers to achieve their communicative goals including the management of face, behaving (im)politely to express things like power relations between interactants, and others.

Frameworks for approaching discourse analysis are of different kinds; however, there are common elements regarding the procedure. In doing discourse analysis in this work, I followed the stages as distinguished by Tonkiss (2012, p. 409), who suggests *four key stages of the research process* using discourse analysis method: “*defining the research problem; selecting and approaching data; sorting, coding and analysing data; and presenting the analysis*” (emphasis is mine) (Tonkiss, 2012, p. 409). Steps within the study process are described below, the main steps which I followed in studying the impoliteness phenomenon and associated interpersonal meanings.

First, I got interest in this research after observing, while listening to Kirundi *Ninde* plays which were broadcast on Burundi national radio, that characters employed linguistic and rhetorical strategies in making utterances that seemed to involve impolite behavior towards their addressees. The actors performing these plays would manipulate language in different ways. Some would deviate from the normal or usual ways of saying things and in a manner that would not only cause offense but also intensify it.

Second, I read about impoliteness research. And as I continued to listen to more plays, I realized that many of the utterances which were conveying impoliteness were reactions to previous speech, in the form of talk about talk. So, I read about this area of metacommunication and realized that, in the literature reviewed, such utterances referred to as metapragmatic comments (MPCs), are mainly aimed at (i) evaluating (in)appropriateness of speech behavior and (ii) communicating about relationships being perceived at the moment of interaction.

Third, I prepared to collect data, while continuing reviewing the relevant literature. I first decided the type of data to collect, that is, texts containing impolite MPCs. Given the time constraint, I also decided to collect data which were available as audio-recorded conversations (which could give me such interpretive clue like intonation marking impolite meta-utterances) and as printed texts (e.g. transcripts of plays and other written texts involving conversations). After noticing that cases of deviations from the norms in fictional conversations were many, I decided to collect such types of conversations.

I sought permissions from institutions that keep records of Kirundi texts (audio-taped or written conversations). One of those institutions is Burundi national radio and television where archives of *Ninde* plays are kept. Once permission was granted to me,

I went through the archives of Kirundi texts (audio-taped and written conversations). I had prepared the tools for data collection. Then, I proceeded by selecting textual material that was relevant to my research objectives.

Fifth, I analyzed the collected data, adapting Tonkiss's (2012, pp. 412-413) suggested indicators that are useful to the analytical process: "(1) identifying key themes and arguments; (2) looking for association and variation; (3) examining characterization and agency; and (4) paying attention to emphasis and silences." As Tonkiss claims, these elements do not make up an exhaustive list, they only serve as a reference in the analysis. Moreover, I think that such indicators need to be adjusted to the type of data one has and one's research objectives. Thus, for instance, in the indicator number (4) by Tonkiss as mentioned above, '*emphasis*' was very meaningful in my analysis of impolite MPCs together with the notion of "*intensification*" of impoliteness, as they were applied by speakers in the sampled data. Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness was used for the analysis of the interpersonal meanings of impolite MPCs.

4.4 The Type of Data for this Study

Kirundi impolite MPCs drawn from fictional conversations constitute the data for this study. The Kirundi fictional conversations which we used are dramatic performances and other fictional conversations from written plays and other texts with conversations such as narrative stories. The data were drawn from three sources. First, the researcher collected audio-recordings of dramatic conversations from Kirundi *Ninde* plays, which have been performed by *Ninde* drama team working for Burundi national radio and television (RTNB) from the 1980s. The performed, recorded and archived *Ninde* plays have been aired at RTNB to date. Second, the researcher collected texts of Kirundi

written plays that are in the archives of Burundi national library “Bibliothèque Nationale du Livre” under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth. Third and last, the researcher collected Kirundi written texts involving conversations between characters as contained in published books with stories, which were written for entertainment and education.

We chose fiction as the data for this study because fictional conversations were suitable for the present metapragmatic analysis. In fact, more insights can be obtained by analyzing spoken language which is fictional than the one which is naturally occurring (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 762). In fact, as mentioned before, conversations between fictional characters are well thought about not only by the characters themselves acting out what is written but also by the writer of the fictional texts himself/herself (Culpeper, 1998). Moreover, some stylistic elements may be more present in fictional texts than in everyday conversations for the main reason that the writer of a fictional text revises it severally before it is published (Black, 2006, p. 3). On the other hand, the same pragmatic theories and models used to study naturally occurring speech can be used to analyze the interaction taking place between characters, say in plays or any other fictional texts (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, p. 763).

The researcher had to select the fictional conversations to be analyzed in the study. The sampling strategy which was used and the data sample which was used in the study are discussed in the following section.

4.5 The Sampling Strategy and the Sample Data

The researcher used purposive sampling to get the sample data for analysis and interpretation. This sampling technique was chosen because it helps to obtain data which are rich in information useful for attaining the research objectives and which, in

other words, present features allowing a detailed analysis and understanding of the main themes targeted in the study (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003). Therefore, using this sampling strategy, the researcher was able to collect conversations containing a high number of impolite MPCs and presenting various aspects of interest for the different research objectives.

To determine the sample, the researcher used the criterion known as *thematic saturation*, which is commonly used during the sampling stage in qualitative research (Schreier, 2018). In fact, there is ‘saturation’ when the researcher has already looked at some amount of data and no new data is giving him/her any new information concerning what he/she is investigating, his/her research questions or the categories in his/her analysis (Creswell, 2007; Heigham & Croker, 2009; Schreier, 2018). The sampling process in this study was done at two main levels, after the researcher had gotten access to archived audio-recordings of *Ninde* plays at Burundi national radio and written texts containing conversations between fictional characters at Burundi national library (that is, written texts of stories and transcripts of written plays).

First, the researcher selected the fictional texts among which the data for analysis was going to be drawn. Through purposive sampling, only the texts containing instances of impolite MPCs were selected for further review. The researcher had to listen to the different accessible audio-recordings of *Ninde* plays and to read the various written plays and narrative texts involving dialogues between characters. The researcher listened to the audio-recordings and read the written texts one after another, marking in his notebook the various occurrences of impolite MPCs in each of them. By so doing, the researcher was able to sample the *Ninde* plays to copy in his laptop or the written texts to photocopy, as permission to do so had been granted to him by the institutions

where those materials were kept. All in all, the researcher collected 52 audio-recordings of *Ninde* plays of about 50 minutes of length each, giving a total of audio material of about 2500 minutes of length, 5 transcripts of written plays and 10 short narrative stories, each involving at least one example of use of an impolite MPC.

Second, the researcher proceeded by several repetitions of the listening or reading activity for each of the audio-recorded or written texts which he had selected because they contained one impolite MPC or several. At this stage of data collection, the researcher observed recurring patterns between the various impolite MPCs noted in the different selected texts, that is, audio-recordings of *Ninde* plays and written plays and short narrative stories engaging characters in dialogues. Then, the researcher organized the different impolite MPCs into categories or themes: (i) impolite MPCs whose expression is lexical, (ii) MPCs which are impolitely expressed through a grammatical strategy, and (iii) impolite MPCs made by speakers using a rhetorical device of some kind. On the other hand, inside each of the above-mentioned categories, the researcher defined sub-categories based on the recurring ideas concerning the interpersonal function achieved by the use of the impolite MPCs within each category.

The sampling procedure continued with the researcher targeting the sample units for the study, that is, the excerpts of conversations involving the use of impolite MPCs categorized in the defined themes of analysis. Before writing down each of these excerpts, the researcher specified the relevant context within the ongoing conversation.

Excerpts that constituted the sample were those which were rich of information, theme by theme. For any of the categories defined above, the researcher stopped sampling once thematic saturation was reached, that is, when no new pattern of data was emerging as far as each theme was concerned.

Therefore, the number of Excerpts constituting the sample was determined by the criterion '*thematic saturation*'. The sample was: 41 Kirundi fictional texts in which impolite MPCs were used, comprising 30 Excerpts of audio-recorded *Ninde* plays conversations, 10 Excerpts of written conversations from '*written plays*' and 1 Excerpt of a written conversation from the category '*other written texts*'.

4.6 Data Collection Methods

I used fictional conversations as my linguistic data. Studying fictional texts in linguistics presents advantages; for instance, aspects of interaction manipulated by narrators and characters may give us new insights as regards pragmatic concepts and analytical frameworks (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, pp. 759-760). Therefore, using data from literature while studying language in use is useful and efficient (Sinclair, 2004, p. 51), a good complement to relying on data from everyday conversations in natural settings. Sifianou (2000, p. 5) emphasizes this point saying that literature today reflects society and people in it from various spheres of life, how they use language meaningfully and in situations.

On the practical side of research, collecting data from fictional texts than speech is less demanding, in terms of economic means and time (McIntyre & Bousfield, 2017, pp. 759-760). Fictional dialogues constitute one of the many procedures for pragmatic studies of interaction (Toolan, 1985, p. 193).

Specifically for the study, I collected data from *Ninde* plays and a few written plays as well as written texts displaying dialogues between characters. *Ninde* plays display a significant level of spontaneity as far as their production by the actors is concerned and thanks to the improvisation of the conversations between actors in the various scenes (Nibafasha, 2017).

Ninde drama is a series of Kirundi plays which are performed orally and which are audio-taped and video-taped before being aired at the Burundi national radio and television. The drama is intended for an audience comprising all Kirundi speakers who can have access to a radio and/or a television and who can listen to/watch the *Ninde* program. The actors of *Ninde* plays are Kirundi native speakers from a rural locality in the central part of Burundi, where Kirundi speakers have less influence from languages spoken in neighboring countries. Kirundi is spoken on the whole territory of Burundi. Speakers who may experience interference from other non-native languages while using Kirundi are normally those living at the borders with neighboring countries who may have regular contact with speakers of other vernacular languages from those countries or Kirundi speakers dwelling in big cities where contact with other languages is highly likely. Therefore, getting Kirundi data from speakers performing *Ninde* plays in the central region of Burundi could help obtain data in this language with less interference from other languages. In other words, the particular interest in *Ninde* plays for this study is twofold: the rural area in which the actors come from and the ‘oral’ dimension of the plays.

To begin with, the rural background of actors in the play is interesting as regards the Kirundi language and tradition. In connection with this, talking about aspects of pronunciation of English according to its geographical dialects in the United Kingdom, Crystal (1997, p. 28) contends that rural people are characterized by a “relatively conservative speech”. This tendency is somehow observed in Kirundi concerning speech and speech behavior which, in rural areas, are likely to undergo change at a slower pace compared with the change they may undergo in urban areas. Urban people tend to have more exposure to linguistic influences from other languages spoken by people from other countries staying in the cities.

Second, the ‘oral’ status of *Ninde* plays is interesting as well. Indeed, the *Ninde* drama as a project of the National Radio and Television since the early 1980s was mainly conceived to be broadcast on radio for the major audience of Kirundi speakers who can listen to the programs of the national radio. In relation to our study, the interpersonal meanings conveyed through impoliteness, achieved contextually in interaction and through linguistic choices in metapragmatic comments and non-verbal cues such as intonation can all be understood while listening to *Ninde* plays being aired on radio. Therefore, for this study, we will collect data from audio-taped *Ninde* plays in order to experience the *Ninde* conversations in the same way the majority of Kirundi speakers experience them through radio-broadcast. In other words, by listening to the audio-recordings we wanted to get an understanding of impoliteness behavior and the underlying meanings which is close to that of the consumers of the *Ninde* drama, the majority of which listen to the *Ninde* plays aired on the national radio because people have more access to radio than television in Burundi and particularly in the village. In short, in our analysis of audio data, attention was given to impolite meta-utterances together with the relevant prosody. In other words, the focus of the study was on the verbal and oral aspects of the impolite behavior in these fictional interactions.

Ninde drama performances offer conversations which not only are used to reflect real things happening in the social arena among Kirundi speakers but also are acted out in a manner similar to the unfolding of real-life conversations. Thus, for instance, in *Ninde* play “*Intatahura mu rugo niyo irusambura*” ‘A spouse without understanding destroys their household’, one of the actors, while commenting on the dispute which she has just found among members in a given family, says: “*Jewe mbere nagira ngo ni Ninde*” ‘I was thinking this was *Ninde* being performed here’, “*twagira ngo ni Ninde neza*” ‘We were thinking it was exactly a performance of *Ninde* play taking place here’. Then, a

woman who has been taking part in the dispute replies to her: “*Reka gufyinata ngo ni Ninde; aho intambara yabereye mukabura no kuza kuntabara*” ‘Stop joking saying that it is *Ninde* being performed here; war has been raging against me and yet you have not come to defend me’. And finally, another participant adds this: “*Twebwe ababanyi twarushe, twama twumva induru ya minsi yose*” ‘As your neighbors, we are fed up with your daily disputes’. All these utterances by the actors, as extracted from an episode of this *Ninde* play, clearly point to the fact that interactions in *Ninde* plays are close to everyday routine conversations, specifically when it comes to conflict talk, as it is in the present context.

In short, the researcher used document analysis method of data collection and collected audio materials and written texts, such as transcripts of plays written to be performed and other texts involving an exchange or conversation between characters. In studying language in use, the sources of data are spoken as well as written communication since both conversations and written texts involve linguistic aspects of communication. Data in the form of spoken language is obtained from either interviews or audio/video materials (recordings); the latter kind of spoken data is the one we collected in our study. Written language data is found in documents notably written texts of different kinds including reports, textbooks, transcripts of interviews, written narrative stories, and written plays.

In both spoken and written language that were gathered, the researcher referred to actors/characters interacting in fictional conversations as ‘speakers’ in order to carry out a linguistic pragmatic analysis and interpretation of what they said. Conversations constitute a very reliable source of data on how social action is achieved in interaction,

and particularly at the level of interpersonal communication. In fact, social interaction lies in conversations between members of the society (Greco, 2006, p. 42).

4.6.1 Audio materials

Regarding audio-taped data, I collected data from audio-recordings of Kirundi *Ninde* plays archived at Burundi National Radio and Television (RTNB), in the radio department. Such type of data is part of the larger set of qualitative audio materials (Creswell, 2009). Audio recordings are useful resources to carry out research on how language is used to achieve social actions (Silverman, 2004, p. 272). Indeed, an action is performed as a result of using language in a particular social setting (Holtgraves, 2002, p. 5).

Given that metapragmatic acts are unpredictable among people engaged in interaction (Hübler a& Bublitz, 2007, p. 13) and given the fact that marked choices, such as impolite MPCs, occur less frequently in communication compared with their unmarked equivalents (e.g. neutral, non-polite MPCs), the researcher diversified the sources of data in order to maximize the chances of encountering the target MPCs. Thus, in addition to collecting archived audio-recordings that provide linguistic data in form of spoken language, written texts involving conversations were collected as well.

4.6.2 Written texts

Written data complement spoken one on stylistic aspects like the use of metaphor. Research has proven that there is more use of metaphor in written discourse than in the spoken one (Kövecses, 2010). When we are writing, we are more alert and conscious about the linguistic choices we make than when we are speaking in a spontaneous interaction (Verschueren, 2000, p. 444). In other words, in written communication more

than in the spoken one, we can expect more occurrences of non-conventional or creative metaphors, which are more marked than their conventional counterparts.

The researcher collected written fictional texts of different kinds in which characters engaged into conversations. After reading a number of available Kirundi written texts archived in different institutions in Burundi, we collected written Kirundi plays, which had been selected as the best during playwrighting contests organized in 1967. In fact, those which were available in the national library, and which had been labelled ‘the best’, were plays selected in that year. The choice of such texts is that they will likely display a higher level of accuracy concerning the ways native speakers use Kirundi in daily interactions, because this is part of the criteria for awarding marks to written plays during playwrighting competitions.

4.7 Data Collection Instruments

I collected the data using a number of instruments. First, a laptop helped me to copy and store audio-taped conversations of *Ninde* plays collected from the archives of Burundi national radio. The laptop was further used to listen to the fictional conversations in *Ninde* plays once collected and to transcribe and analyze them. Second, a photocopy machine served to make copies of the collected written texts containing conversations; the researcher paid the services at a cyber. Third, I used a notebook and a pen to write down ideas concerning impolite MPCs and patterns of use which they displayed in common while listening to them. I also listened to useful information and wrote it down from the time of selecting the *Ninde* plays for study and the excerpts containing impolite MPCs and at any stage of data analysis and interpretation.

4.8 Data Analysis Procedures

The data were analyzed to understand the meaning of impolite MPCs within the contexts of their use. In this analysis, we understand meaning within the linguistic pragmatic perspective as being “meaning in interaction” (Thomas, 2013). In this context, meaning is not the one given by the word alone; moreover, it is not defined by the speaker nor the hearer in isolation, but is a result of meaning negotiation between both participants in interaction. Participants negotiate meaning on the basis of the meaning of what is said in a well-defined context, which is physical, social and linguistic (Thomas, 2013, p. 22).

Thus, different factors surrounding the actual production of an utterance were considered in the data analysis. Particular attention was paid to (i) the conversational setting, (ii) the participants, their identity, social status and roles, as well as their relationship, (iii) the linguistic choices which they are making, specifically the linguistic and structural elements (the words, phrases and sentences), as well as the stylistic aspects of their impolite MPCs, (iv) the cultural information about each of them, (v) what is happening at the particular moment of their interaction, and (vi) any other contextual clue, in agreement with what scholars suggest as elements to consider while analyzing meaning in verbal interaction (e.g. Akmajian, Demers, Farmer & Harnish, 2001, p. 361; González-Lloret, 2013, p. 4588; Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 135). Moreover, the context includes the co-text; the speech acts preceding and following the meta-utterance under analysis helps to judge a verbal behavior in interaction as (im)polite (Kienpointner, 1997, p. 253). All the above-mentioned contextual elements fit well within Culpeper’s (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness.

The first step towards data analysis was to play the collected audio-recordings of *Ninde* plays on my laptop and listen to them, having in mind my research objectives and focus on impolite MPCs. While listening, I noted down in my research notebook any instance of occurrence of an impolite MPC in the ongoing conversation and the level at which they appear in the concerned audio-recording. As a native-speaker of Kirundi, with my pragmatic competence of the language use in social settings, I used my knowledge to understand the various occurrences of impolite talk, considering the entire conversational context. For the sake of the data analysis, I took note of the whole context of the impolite MPC performed by a character.

After playing and listening to the audio-taped plays, the next step was to transcribe the *Ninde* conversations containing instances of use of impolite MPCs. The full scene of the play was transcribed in my research notebook.

4.8.1 Transcription of the selected audio-recorded *Ninde* conversations

Another step in the data analysis process was to transcribe the conversations containing impolite MPCs, paying particular attention to what and how those meta-utterances do occur within the ongoing talk and the reactions which the addressees give to them. This is in line with Gee's (2011, p. 125) opinion that when we have speech as data, we need to transcribe it and watch out the features in which we are interested in our study.

The transcription system which I used is the one suggested by Jefferson (1984), with some adaption to fit my research objectives/questions and the theoretical framework underlying my study, in accordance with scholarly suggestions concerning linguistic analysis of audio and video recordings (e.g. Golato & Golato, 2013, p. 4604). In regard to this, I reduced the transcription symbols in accordance with the needs for the data analysis. The list of the transcription symbols was provided in the study. The advantage

of Jefferson's (1984) transcription system is that it allows the researcher to write the data from tape-recordings down on a paper with a preservation of a maximum of interactional features relevant for data analysis and interpretation (Lerner, 2004, p. 3).

4.8.2 Translation of the selected texts

I translated the selected texts from Kirundi to English using Nida's (1964) notion of dynamic equivalence and the principle of equivalent effect. Dynamic equivalence, also referred to as functional equivalence, is founded on the principle of equivalent effect. Nida (1964, p. 159) upholds that such effect is achieved when the receptor of the target text (TT) relates with the TT message in the same way the receptor of the source text (ST) relates with the ST message, whereby the TT message and the ST message are in essence the same. It is true that such goal in translation is not easy to reach, however, one must do their best to achieve it to the extent that the TT conveys a message which is naturally equivalent with the original message (of the ST) as much as possible.

According to Eugène Nida, the translator should transfer the message from ST to TT in such a way that the expression used sounds completely natural in the TT and therefore the linguistic requirements and cultural expectations of the recipient must be taken into account. One of the strong arguments in Nida's theory is that a good translation must reflect "naturalness", finding "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" being the credo of dynamic equivalence (Nida, 1964, p. 166; Nida & Taber, 1969, p. 12). According to this receptor-oriented method, for a translator to achieve naturalness, they need to make necessary changes in the TT as far as vocabulary, syntax, and cultural references are concerned.

4.8.3 Identifying categories, themes

The researcher coded the data into themes; this involved giving key words or phrases to the raw data and giving it meaning (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 101). In actuality, the coding process has to do with organizing data into digestible chunks (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 159). As a result, the data must be rethought and reformulated (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 101).

The process of data coding involved comparing and contrasting the data to identify themes and patterns within and across domains, whereby I extracted new domains and analyzed the data in accordance with the theoretical model underpinning the study (Schensul, 2008, p. 521). In carrying out this qualitative analysis, I determined what elements fit together to create a pattern and what to call the identified theme (Patton, 2002, p. 442). In other words, the ideas which come back again and again in the data I categorized them into themes. A theme is a topic that puts repeating ideas into one group or category and this topic is deduced by the researcher implicitly from the data (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 38). Moreover, for themes which relate to a higher degree, I assembled them into larger and more abstract ideas; this abstract arrangement of themes is known as theoretical constructs (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 39). Thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 4), is a fundamental technique for qualitative analysis.

After identifying significant categories in the data, I utilized brief analytical labels including, as proposed by Charmaz & Bryant (2008, p. 375), those in the form of gerunds to identify the linguistic and stylistic strategies used by speakers while producing impolite MPCs. Such codes included those describing speakers' strategies

like ‘manipulating the language used in impolite MPC’, ‘playing with words and expressions making up impolite MPCs’, ‘evidential constructions’, etc.

4.9 Discourse Analysis Method for Data Analysis and Interpretation

Using the Discourse analysis method, I analyze speakers’ use of impolite MPCs in various interactions. The impolite MPC, as an utterance, is analyzed taking into account the co-text and all relevant contextual elements. Therefore, *the unit of analysis* for this study is ‘*discourse*’ represented, as text, by the selected *Excerpt*, which contains the impolite MPC under investigation and which is interpreted within the sociocognitive context (cf. Culpeper’s 2011 Sociocognitive model) necessary for construing an event as impolite and for understanding the meanings of power relations being enacted in the conversation.

The Discourse analysis method helps in understanding and interpreting meanings conveyed by interactants within the *social* context, given such things as the roles of the participants, their social status, etc. (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 54). As this method involves the various factors about speech production and interpretation, i.e. social, cultural, psychological, etc., it was relevant for the investigation of the meanings of impolite MPCs, of how such expressions are used to enact power relations between speaker and addressee.

A discourse analytical approach to the study of a sociopragmatic phenomenon like impoliteness helps to capture the larger discursive contexts by including social factors such as the identities of the participants and their social roles, and the cultural and social norms regarding the use of language in the specific situational context. Moreover, within the discourse analytical framework, the researcher can examine intertextual references and their pragmatic implications, notably how speakers draw on prior

discourse as well as other available relevant linguistic resources, cultural references, or shared knowledge to convey meaning and make pragmatic inferences. This leads to a better understanding of the specific use of language not only at a micro-level pragmatic investigation but also within a broader discursive and sociocultural context.

Discourse analysis is an approach to the study of language in context, whose emphasis is on how discourse in everyday life, spoken or written, produces realities of the social world, for example, exercising power and more generally working on social relations in an ongoing interaction (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Discourse analysis method fits within the Social constructivism philosophical paradigm, inasmuch as discourse analysis is “concerned with *how participants construct themselves and others* through their discourse and how these selves may be undermined.” (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 53, emphasis is mine).

The Discourse Analysis method was useful in our study as it gave us an understanding of how meaning and social reality were constructed through impolite language use. Indeed, the method allows the researcher to get an understanding of which *situated meanings* are expressed by the participants in interaction, what *social languages* they use and how such socially-motivated choices in language use convey meanings concerning *their identities* and their *social relationships* (Gee, 2011). Within the discourse analytical framework, finally, the researcher is able to analyze the details of the language used (linguistic and paralinguistic aspects) which are considered as contextually relevant and which support the arguments they make in their analysis (Gee, 2011, p. 117).

To analyze data, the following steps in discourse analysis were followed. First, I acquainted myself with the data through repeated listening to the audio-recorded

conversations and repeated reading of the written texts. My focus was on the occurrences of impolite MPCs and the context in which they were used. I relied on my knowledge of Kirundi socio-cultural norms regarding (im)polite language behavior. The researcher's knowledge of the social norms of appropriateness of language use in the language and culture concerned and the moral order in that society are key to his/her evaluation of utterances in that language as (im)polite (Mills, 2017). Indeed, this is in agreement with Culpeper's (2011) consideration that the knowledge of the social norms and the moral order is an important part of the cognitive knowledge required for understanding impoliteness in discourse. First, to explain and understand the use of impolite MPCs and its communicative function in the fictional conversations under analysis, I used Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive Model for Understanding Impoliteness.

Second, I identified patterns or recurring themes. I used the themes to categorize the data into manageable units of analysis. I paid due attention to the linguistic features of impolite MPCs, the discursive strategies employed in the data which contribute to the construction of meaning and the achievement of communicative goals.

Third, I interpreted the data and observed patterns or recurrences considering my research questions and based on the theoretical framework. To interpret data, my quest was to answer why those patterns occur the way they do (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, I attempted to explain the metapragmatic phenomenon under study, using the categories or themes established during the coding phase (Bosit, 2003) and based on the research questions in the study that require answers. In other words, I analyzed the data by examining, interpreting, and considering the significance of patterns discovered in the data (Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005).

In the same way participants in the fictional interactions would interpret utterances and their underlying intentions and meanings, I reconstructed, during the analysis of the data in the relevant context, the plausible intention which the speakers had while producing their impolite MPCs. I also analyzed the speaker meaning as regards the interpersonal functions of such meta-utterances. In fact, as this study is situated in sociopragmatics within linguistic pragmatics, I was keen on considering the meaning intended and achieved by the speaker during interaction. The speaker develops the linguistic message whereby he/she intends a given meaning to be understood by the hearer and the latter interprets the message and deduces the meaning based on the linguistic (and the paralinguistic) input and the shared knowledge, taking into account the contextual clues (Cutting, 2002, p. 2). In other words, the pragmatic meaning or the speaker's meaning as intended by the speaker and understood by the hearer during the very moment of their interaction (Köksal, 2000, p. 631) was crucial during analysis.

4.10 Validity

To begin with, as the present study was qualitative, we were more concerned with validity than reliability and generalizability, as it is for qualitative research methods which focus on meaning in social context (Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 141). Validity in qualitative research is about trustworthiness in research; it is about one's study being credible (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Put another way, validity is about how the researcher's analysis and interpretation of data is credible. The first step towards doing a quality study was therefore to collect data which are "real, rich, deep" (Lazaraton, 2002, cited in Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 141); that is, linguistic data which are not invented but taken from fictional conversations which are archived as documents, either audio-taped or written, and which are rich in information concerning the phenomenon of impoliteness in MPCs. Moreover, the research process had to be systematic

concerning data collection and data analysis; and the researcher had to manage subjectivity as much as possible (Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 141).

Our study is about the verbal strategies which speakers in Kirundi fictional conversations make while performing impolite metapragmatic comments and the associated interpersonal meanings. Its validity means the extent to which the analysis and interpretation of data represent what actually takes place among the characters in these fictional conversations as regards the phenomenon of impoliteness in MPCs and its interpersonal meanings and how that representation is credible (Creswell & Miller, 2000, pp. 124-125). Within the Social Constructivism paradigm, concerns of validity are about how trustworthy and authentic the study is, how subjectivity is acknowledged through discussing and taking into account biases, and how the research brings enhanced and deepened understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002, p. 544).

To improve the level of validity of the study, the audio-recorded *Ninde* plays, which I selected for the fictional conversations they contain, reflect to a great extent the ways in which Kirundi speakers handle everyday matters in their social settings through communication. Furthermore, those which I sampled for analysis are those which contained more examples of impolite MPCs of different kinds. Variability of the types of MPCs to collect was also key to selecting some plays instead of others, in accordance with the criterion of thematic saturation which must characterize sampling in qualitative studies. After selecting the audio-recorded *Ninde* plays I aimed at obtaining an accurate transcription of them so as to capture well the context of interaction between actors, in agreement with what is recommended concerning the selection of recordings and their transcription for the sake of validity (Silverman, 2004, p. 288). Concerning the

transcripts, they should be a reflection of what is said in the recordings and how it is said, including the speakers' intonation or aspects such as simultaneous talk by the participants in the recorded interaction (Silverman, 2004).

Moreover, validity regarding data interpretation was achieved by having this interpretation and every argument about it supported by the data itself. This is in line with the claim that validity of data interpretation in qualitative studies is a function of the extent to which the researcher supports their interpretation with data (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 32). Still for validity, I aimed at linguistic details in the data analysis; in fact, it has been argued in discourse analysis that the more the analysis involves details of the language being used and its structure, the more valid it is (Gee, 2011, p. 123).

The issue of validity is not the only one which the researcher has to think about, there is also the question of ethics in the study they are conducting. This aspect was taken into account as discussed below.

4.11 Ethical Considerations

The present research used existing data from archived audio-taped *Ninde* plays and written texts in the form of conversations, notably plays which have been written to be performed and narrative stories involving dialogues between characters. To observe ethics in the study, I first sought permission to have access to these archives and to use the (audio and written) texts in order to carry out the present study. In fact, these documents are the property of the institutions keeping them in their archives, respectively Burundi national radio and television (RTNB) for *Ninde* plays and Burundi national library for written plays and other texts in Kirundi, even if they are accessible to the public that requests to consult them.

On the other hand, this study had a social dimension in it since it dealt with meanings expressed by human beings while using their language. Like any other research project, this study had to take into account the ethics of research concerning the participants. Therefore, I ensured the protection of the privacy (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012) of the identity of the people performing in the audio-recorded *Ninde* plays, specifically in the process of transcription, analysis and interpretation of data from those plays. I did so by using the initials of the names given to the characters where necessary or by simply referring to the participants (characters) using the social roles they performed in the plays, such as ‘husband (H)’ and ‘wife (W)’. In this way, I avoided referring to a specific character, especially the famous names or nicknames which they have been given in the *Ninde* plays and which are known by the public consumer of their entertainment.

Finally, ethics was consolidated by the fact that the fictional conversations that were analyzed and interpreted (i.e. dramatic audio-recorded performances and written texts of plays and stories) have been produced for public consumption. In other words, the conversations under analysis have already been made available to the public, through the broadcasting of the *Ninde* plays and the accessibility of the written plays and texts for public reading at Burundi national library.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter has given the methodology of the study. The latter is informed by the social constructivist paradigm according to which interpersonal relations are constructed during interaction between social actors through language use. The approach to the study is qualitative, using a discourse analysis method for data collection and interpretation. The chapter has also outlined the research design for the study.

In the chapter, I have indicated that I collected data relying on documents made of audio-recorded *Ninde* plays, written plays and other written texts containing conversations between fictional characters. Purposive sampling was used to select extracts of conversations containing the impolite meta-utterances under study. To analyze data, I categorized data into patterns as per linguistic and stylistic strategies used by speakers making impolite MPCs. Then I inferred relational meanings which were conveyed through the speakers' choices. Culpeper's (2011) Sociocognitive model for understanding impoliteness offered theoretical constructs which helped to explain the impoliteness taking place between the characters and its use for interpersonal meanings of power relations. Finally, this chapter has discussed the issues of validity and ethics in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

LEXICAL EXPRESSION OF IMPOLITE METAPRAGMATIC COMMENTS AND (RE)DEFINITION OF POWER RELATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the first objective of the study, which is about the lexical choices made by speakers in their impolite MPCs in the sampled Kirundi fictional conversations and the meanings of power relations conveyed. Data analysis shows that Kirundi speakers perform metapragmatic utterances which evaluate their interlocutors' speech behavior as (in)appropriate by using a range of lexical choices. Such choices include: (i) manipulating the referent of a term of address; (ii) using the verb "*kuvuga*" 'to talk' with the extended meaning 'to talk (in)appropriately'; (iii) using verbs expressing various ways of talking which are socially disapproved; and (iv) using words in an impolite MPC which express a contrast concerning the things/situations talked about. For each example of impoliteness performed using a lexical strategy, we discussed the associated meanings of power relations.

5.1 Manipulating the Referent of a Term of Address to Encode an Impolite MPC and to Exercise Power

The data in the study show speakers manipulating the referent of the term of address they use and, in the process, achieving a metacommunicative goal. The first example to illustrate this was taken from *Ninde* play "*Akamukoze karamuranze*" 'He reaped the fruit of his misconduct'. In this play, two married men (M1 and M2) are friends. Both of them do business and they help each other in their profession. M2 has planned to travel to Dubai to buy merchandise for sale. M1 has sent his wife (M1W) to the house of M2 in order to give the latter money to purchase for them merchandises from Dubai.

EXCERPT 1:

- 1 M1W: Aha ni ukuri umutama wanje yari antumye ngo wewe ngw'ejo ngo
- 2 uzogenda i Buganda kurangura.
- 3 M2: Hmmh, i Dubai
- 4 M1W: Ego sha i Dubai
- 5 M2: Eee.
- 6 M1W: Ngo uzogenda ejo. Urumva yari andungikanye amafaranga n'urutonde
- 7 rw'ivyo nyene uzomurangurira.
- ...
- 8 M2: None wewe mugabo *turagenda dusezeranye*, urazi ko ntazogaruka vuba
- 9 vraiment.
- 10 M1W: Dusezerane?
- 11 M2: Hmmh.
- 12 M1W: Na jewe?
- 13 M2: Ee. Wewe ndagukunda ni ukuri.
- 14 M1W: Ariko ga mutama, wewe ntubona yuko wewe undengeye? Erega wewe
- 15 uri "mutama", uri...mu bisanzwe, jewe uri nka sokuru wanje.
- ...
- 16 M2: =Vyumve neza madamu
- 17 M1W: *Madamu* (said with a rising tone)
- 18 M2: Ee. Vyumve neza, kabisa.
- 19 M1W: None ndi madamu wawe?

TT:

- 1 M1W: My husband has sent me to you because you will travel tomorrow to
- 2 Uganda to buy merchandise.
- 3 M2: Hmmh, Dubai
- 4 M1W: Yes, indeed, Dubai
- 5 M2: Yeah.
- 6 M1W: You will go tomorrow, he said. He has sent me to give you money so that
- 7 you will buy merchandise for him. I also have the list of items to buy.
- ...
- 8 M2: But, you and me are going to bid farewell; you know very well that I will
- 9 take long before coming back.
- 10 M1W: You and me bid farewell?
- 11 M2: Hmmh.
- 12 M1W: You and me?
- 13 M2: Yeah. I really love you.
- 14 M1W: But, Sir, you know that you are much older than me. You are an old man
- 15 whom I respect; I normally consider you as my grandfather.
- ...
- 16 M2: =Please understand my request, madam.
- 17 M1W: *Madam* (said with a rising tone)
- 18 M2: Yes. Please, understand me.
- 19 M1W: So, am I your wife?

In this Excerpt, the business man M2 receives the woman M1W at his home. M1W is the wife of M1 who is a friend of M2. She has come to give M2 money to buy merchandise from Dubai for M1. After a short conversation, M2 starts flirting M1W, stating such things as: "*None wewe mugabo turagenda dusezeranye, urazi ko ntazogaruka vuba vraiment*" 'But, you and me shall bid farewell; you know very well

that I will take long before I come back’, in line 8, and “*Wewe ndagukunda ni ukuri*” ‘I really love you’, in line 13. M2’s statement in line 13 is clearly flirtatious, seducing and provoking, as the man declares his love to a woman who is not his wife but a friend’s wife. This can also be said of his other statement in line 13, which is implicitly invoking ‘having an affair with the woman’. In effect, “*gusezerana*” ‘to bid farewell with someone’, in this Kirundi context when it is used in an intimate romantic relationship as when a man is dating a woman and he wants to travel far away and specifically, while one of them is engaging a seductive conversation, means ‘to have sex before they part ways’. In line 8 of Excerpt 1, M2 argues that their “bidding farewell’ is motivated by the fact that he will take long before coming back; therefore, he implicates the meaning that ‘bidding farewell’ in this context means ‘having sexual intercourse with M1W’.

Indeed, the woman has well understood the implicature, she reacts with astonishment and disapproval of the man’s proposal. She says “*Dusezerane?*” ‘You and me bid farewell?’, in line 8, and adds “*Na jewe?*” ‘You and me?’, in line 10, before concluding “*Ariko ga mutama, wewe ntubona yuko wewe undengeye? Erega wewe uri “mutama”, uri...mu bisanzwe, jewe uri nka sokuru wanje*” ‘But, Sir, you know that you are much older than me. You are an old man whom I respect; I normally consider you as my grandfather’ in lines 12 and 13.

In line 16 of Excerpt 1, the man M2, in his utterance “*Vyumve neza madamu*” ‘Please understand my request, madam’, seems to have used the correct term of address “*Madamu*” ‘Madam’ while speaking to the woman M1W, who is the wife of his friend M1. However, in line 17, M1W disapproves of M2’s use of this term of address and questions it for the following reason: whereas M2 is referring to her as “*madamu*”

‘madam’, which is a respectful term of address, his speech behavior towards her is completely lacking respect to her because he is requesting to sleep with her, and yet she is a woman who is married to M2’s friend, that is M1. She deserves to be respected by M2 in his behavior towards her, in accordance with Kirundi culture. In other words, through her echoic mention of the term of address “*Madamu*”, M1W judges M2 as being hypocritical when he uses this term of address.

The woman’s (M1W) utterance “*Madamu*” ‘Madam’ (said with a rising tone), in line 17, is an implicit MPC. The rising tone which she uses suggests that she is questioning and criticizing the man’s (M2) verbal behavior. Indeed, intonation helps us to understand the attitude of the speaker vis-à-vis their interlocutor and the meaning they convey through what they say (Suciu, 2016, p. 181). The criticism with which M1W’s meta-utterance is loaded implies that her MPC is impolite because it is face-attacking against M2.

At the interpersonal level of communication, M1W exercises power via impoliteness in her MPC. She takes distance from M2 who pretends to respect her but is requesting to sleep with her. She lets him know that, unlike him, she is a faithful spouse and therefore she only sleeps with her husband. M1W challenges M2 by showing him that his mention of this term of address for respect is contrary to what he is trying to tell her in order to seduce her. She implies that, being someone’s wife, she deserves to be genuinely respected particularly concerning the issue of ‘sex’ (cf. her further reaction, in line 18, “*None ndi madamu wawe?*” ‘So, am I your wife?’).

In a similar way, a character in another *Ninde* play “*Urondera agahambaye ukaronka akarambaraye*” ‘Seeking too much profit leads to a total loss’ manipulates a term of address in order to communicate about his interlocutor’s preceding utterance. In the

following Excerpt 2, two men (M1 and M2) are talking about the payment of the money which M2 owes to M1 for bunches of (cooking) banana that M1 sold to M2 on credit.

EXCERPT 2:

- 1 M1: Mbega wewe, ukaja ngaho ukicara ugatekereza
- 2 n'umuryango wawe, ibitoki vyanje watwaye
- 3 ntiwibuke kumpa amahera?
- 4 M2: None sinzokuriha?
- ...
- 5 M1: Ubu rero, nimba wahora uri umugenzi
- 6 M2: Ee.
- 7 M1 (with a high tone): Ubu rero uri umugenzi tugenza tugenzanya.
- 8 M2: Tugenzanya mu biki?
- 9 M1: Tugenda tugenzanya.
- 10 M2: None ga sha ko amafaranga [ata yo mfise.
- 11 M1: [Ivy'ubugenzi ubu birahava kuva uno muni.
- ...
- 12 M2: Reka rero *sha* je ndakubwire.
- 13 M1 (on a serious and patronizing tone): “*Sha*” *jewe*?
- 14 M2 (pleading, humble): Umviriza, eego Mushingantahe
- 15 M1: Ndumviriza amatwi ndayafise. Mbarira.
- 16 M1: Reka rero Mushingantahe ndakubwire
- 17 M1: Eego

TT:

- 1 M1: How come that you've been settled here with your family while you owe
- 2 me the money for the (cooking) banana bunches which I sold to you on
- 3 credit? Why don't you pay me that money?
- 4 M2: There is no problem, I will pay you.
- ...
- 5 M1: Although you've been my friend
- 6 M2: Yes.
- 7 M1 (with a high tone): You're a friend whom I no longer trust from today.
- 8 M2: Why?
- 9 M1: I won't trust you.
- 10 M2: But, you know, I have [no money.
- 11 M1: [Our friendship has stopped from today.
- ...
- 12 M2: Let me tell you, buddy.
- 13 M1 (on a serious and patronizing tone): *Are you calling me buddy?*
- 14 M2 (pleading, humble): Sir, listen well, please.
- 15 M1: I'm listening; I'm not deaf. Tell me.
- 16 M1: Sir, let me tell you.
- 17 M1: Yeah.

In line 13 of this Excerpt, M1 echoes the term of address “*sha*” ‘buddy’ previously used in line 11 by M2 to refer to him in “*Reka rero sha je ndakubwire*” ‘Let me tell you, *my buddy*’, by saying “*Sha jewe*” (lit. ‘buddy, me?’) ‘Are you calling *me buddy*?’ in a serious and patronizing tone. The echoic expression by M1 is an implicit MPC; he uses

it to express the fact that it is contextually unsuitable for M2 to address him using a term of familiarity and endearment “*sha*” ‘buddy’. In fact, M2 seems to be joking whereas M1 is serious about the purpose of his visit to M2’s house: M1 wants M2 to pay him the money which he has been owing him for a long time. Through his implicit MPC in line 13, M1 demeans his friend M2 as he denies familiarity between them, although they are friends, thus endangering M2’s face. Thus, the MPC is impolite.

Through such an echoic utterance, M1 communicates a strong message concerning his relationship with M2 at the moment of speaking. M1 redefines his interpersonal relation with M2 as being respectively “Creditor” (M1) and “Debtor” (M2), a relation which replaces the hitherto existing ‘friend-friend’ relationship at least temporarily for as long as M2 will not have cleared his debt to M1. This is made evident by M1’s refusal to be considered, at the present moment of their interaction, as a close and familiar friend (see the use of the term “*sha*” ‘buddy’) by M2. M1 wants to constrain the latter to pay him the money which he owes him. Therefore, he has to readjust his relationship with M2 by refusing to be addressed using the above-mentioned endearment term.

This relationship readjustment is indeed made clear by the consecutive exchange between M1 and M2. Thus, in line 14 following the MPC above, M2 rectifies his way of addressing M1 and uses a term of address which, indeed, shows that he is recognizing the newly defined relation between the two: “*Umviriza, eego Mushingantahe*” ‘Sir, please, listen well’, says M2 pleading and humble. As a result of M2’s use of this term of address, which gives M1 the respect he deserves, the latter participant implicitly expresses satisfaction by accepting to listen to M2’s plea: “*Ndumviriza amatwi ndayafise; mbarira*” ‘*I’m listening; I’m not deaf; tell me*’, in line 15.

Besides the manipulation of a referring expression and its referent, other lexical choices which speakers use to produce evaluative MPCs include the manipulation of the meaning of a lexical item. Thus, for instance, in our data, speakers convey a metacommunicative message by using the extended meaning of the verb of saying “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’.

5.2 Extensions of the Meaning of the Verb “*Kuvuga*” ‘To Talk’ in Impolite MPCs and Exercise of Power

This section deals with different instances of manipulation of the verb of saying “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ by speakers in impolite MPCs. Specifically, the data shows that speakers use the verb with extended meanings that include a metapragmatic evaluation: (i) ‘to talk appropriately’, (ii) ‘to talk inappropriately’, and (iii) ‘to talk boastfully’ or ‘to brag’.

5.2.1 Using the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ with its meaning extended as ‘to talk appropriately’ in an impolite MPC

Speakers use semantic extensions of the verb of saying “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ in order to ‘metacommunicate’ about some language use in actual interaction. In the following examples, in Excerpts 3 and 4, the meaning of this verb is extended to become a metapragmatic evaluation ‘to talk appropriately’.

The data in Excerpt 3 were taken from *Ninde* play “*Ibihunda n’ibishurushuru bihuye vyose bicika ibihunda gusa*” ‘The company of two immoral persons increases their immorality’. After two days of absence from home, a young man (YM) comes back home in the company of a girlfriend (GF). YM tells his mother (Mo) that the girl is his wife, as he tries to negotiate for her an accommodation in the Mo’s house, where he himself has been staying so far.

EXCERPT 3:

- 1 YM: Ndakuzaniye umushitsi mama.
 2 Mo: Nagutumye?
 ...
 3 Mo: He! Nimba uyo akumazeko iminsi
 4 YM: Eee
 5 Mo: Ndiko ndakwiyumvira nabi; mwe na we ndiko ndabiyumvira nabi, nanke kubabesha.
 6 YM: Utwiyumvira nabi gute?
 7 Mo: Ha!
 8 YM: Ee ma...Kuva aho wantukiye ngo ndi ikirumbagane, ngo ndi mu nzu iwawe,
 9 ngo...ngo ntaco maze. Ubu rero wamaze kubona ko ndakimaze. Erega...erega uwu ni
 10 umugeni, ni umu...ni umu...He!He!He!Hi! Ni umugore w'iwanye.
 11 Mo: Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo.
 12 YM: He!He!He!
 13 Mo: Jewe burya wibaza ko ndiko ndanezerwa n'ayo majambo uriko urandavutako?
 14 YM: Oyaa, jewe mugabo [ndaryohewe, none ko naronse umugeni.
 → 15 Mo: [Aho nturiko uravuga.
 16 YM: Ee?
 17 Mo: Aho nturiko uravuga.
 18 YM: Eee.
 19 Mo: Uriko uraravuta.

TT:

- 1 YM: I've brought you a visitor, mum.
 2 Mo: Did I ask you to bring such a visitor?
 ...
 3 Mo: Hey! If this girl has been staying with you for the last few days
 4 YM: Yeah
 5 Mo: I have a bad image of you, both of you, to tell you the truth.
 6 YM: Which bad image?
 7 Mo: Ugh!
 8 YM: Mum...For a long time you've been telling me I'm a useless grown up
 9 young man staying in your house. You've realized I'm worth something...
 10 this girl is a bride...she is a...my wife. He!He!He!Hi! She is my wife.
 11 Mo: It's disgusting how you expose your ugly big teeth.
 12 YM: He!He!He!
 13 Mo: Do you think I'm pleased with these words which you're babbling to me?
 14 YM: For me, [I am happy because I have got a bride.
 → 15 Mo: [(Lit. 'Actually, you're not talking') You're not talking appropriately.
 16 YM: Yes?
 17 Mo: You're not talking appropriately.
 18 YM: Yeah.
 19 Mo: You're babbling.

In line 15 of Excerpt 3, the mother tells her son “Aho nturiko uravuga” (Lit. ‘Actually, you are not *talking*’) ‘You’re not *talking appropriately*’, as a reaction to his previous talk. By saying this, she evaluates her son’s verbal behavior as inappropriate. In fact, the words which the young man is saying to his mother about a sensitive and taboo topic on sexuality violate Kirundi customs and his speech behavior is therefore against

cultural expectations. In the mother's utterance mentioned above, we have a semantic extension of the verb “*kuvuga*” /kuNP15 - vug_{talk} - aFV/³ in the expression “*nturiko uravuga*” /nti_{NEG} - u_{SC1} - riko_{BE.PRES. CONT.} u_{SC1} - ra_{PRES.DISJ} - vug_{talk} - aFV/ ‘You’re not talking appropriately’. Here, the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ acquires an extra metapragmatic meaning ‘to talk appropriately’.

The son's improper talk is notably illustrated by his utterance within the same Excerpt 3: “*Ubu rero wamaze kubona ko ndakimaze...erega uwu ni umugeni, ni umu...umugore w'iwanye*” ‘You’ve realized that I’m worth something... this girl is a bride...she is a...my wife’. Such utterance is very inappropriate, given the context of its production. In fact, the son says these words to his mother as he comes back home after spending two nights away from home, which makes the mother suspect that the young man has been sleeping with the girl whom he has brought home. Thus, within this context, the mother says: “*Nimba uyo akumazeko iminsi... mwe na we ndiko ndabiyumvira nabi*” ‘If this girl has been staying with you for the last few days...I have a bad image of both of you.’ The inappropriateness of the son's statements is increased by the fact that the girl in his company is a stranger to the mother. In other words, it is against cultural norms for a son to bring home a woman who is a stranger to his parents and declare that she is one's wife. In fact, this is an alleged union, which is not a result of any known wedlock and which transgresses social norms. Things in matters of marriage should therefore follow the customs of the community to which one belongs and in which one is living.

In the last turn of the same Excerpt 3 above, as a way of concluding her remarks concerning the deviant speech behavior of her son, the mother characterizes the latter

³ “[I]nfinitives in Bantu are part of the noun class system, typically of class 15” (Visser, 1989, cited in Marten & van der Wal., 2014, p. 343).

as “*kuravuta*” /ku_{NP15}-ravut_{babble}- aFV/ ‘to babble’. She says “*Uriko uraravuta*” ‘You are babbling’, that is, ‘you are speaking meaninglessly as if you were a baby who does not know yet how to speak’. This characterization adds substance to the metacommunicative dimension of the utterance under study “*Aho nturiko uravuga*” ‘You’re not *talking appropriately*’.

The same sense ‘to talk appropriately’, as a metapragmatic extension of the meaning of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’, appears in the following Excerpt 4 from our data. This is an extract of a conversation in the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*” ‘The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo’, a conversation which is taking place between the siblings Kameya (KAME), Biyago (BIYA) and Somambike (SOMA):

EXCERPT 4:

- 1 SOMA: Urupapuro ntirukibonetse iyo rwajanye sindahamenya.
- 2 KAME: Sinumvise!
- 3 BIYA: Sinategereye!
- 4 KAME: Subira turi iwe twumve.
- 5 BIYA: Nakurugutuye.
- 6 SOMA: Iragi rero
- 7 KAME: *Ni ho ukivuga*.
- 8 BIYA: Ntuba wumva.
- 9 SOMA: Nti iragi ryanyu ntiriyari kure muri rya Banki Sogokuru ni yo yaribitse, mugabo...
- 10 KAME: Igereze aho, ico twapfa cari ico.

TT:

- 1 SOMA: The bank statement for our father’s account was lost; I no longer know where it is.
- 2 KAME: Sorry, I have not gotten you well.
- 3 BIYA: Sorry, I have not well understood.
- 4 KAME: Repeat what you’ve said.
- 5 BIYA: My ears are ready to listen to that again.
- 6 SOMA: Well, I’m saying that the inheritance
- 7 KAME: *Now you’re talking*.
- 8 BIYA: Finally, that’s what we expect you to talk about.
- 9 SOMA: Your inheritance isn’t far, it’s in the bank where grandfather kept it; however...
- 10 KAME: You may just stop there, dear; that was the object of our dispute.

The utterance “*Ni ho ukivuga*” ‘Now you’re talking’ is used by the young man Kameya to implicate ‘*Now you’re talking appropriately*’. The Kirundi expression roughly means

‘At last you’re saying what is pleasant (to me)’. It conveys a positive metapragmatic evaluation of what the interlocutor is saying at the present moment as appropriate, compared to some previous utterance(s) which is(are) indirectly judged as inappropriate through the same expression. It is used as an MPC. It is Kameya’s response to his sister’s mention of the crucial point which he and his brother Biyago want their sister to talk about, that is, where the inheritance (here money) left by their late father is. Kameya manipulates the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ in order to convey meaning which goes beyond the mere act of ‘talking’ and which embraces the positive connotation as it means ‘to talk pleasantly and, thus, appropriately, in accordance with the expectations of one’s interlocutor(s)’.

Somambike’s speech is now appreciated by her two brothers Kameya and Biyago because what she says is pleasant to them and meets their expectations. This appreciation is further expressed in Biyago’s metacommunicative response “*ntuba wumva*” /nti_{NEG} –u_{SC1}-ba_{be} u_{SC1}-umv_{hear}-a_{FV}/ ‘(Lit. ‘Aren’t you hearing [such pleasing words]?’) ‘You said it!/Well said!’’. The sister’s mention of the topic of inheritance of their late father’s fortune, as introduced in her utterance “*Iragi rero*” ‘Concerning the inheritance’, is what makes the two brothers express their approval of her speech at this point of their interaction. Moreover, the two young men want their sister to agree that only her two male siblings have the right to inherit, following the Kirundi traditional custom which entitles only male children to inherit from their parents after their death. Indeed, when Somambike says “*iragi ryanyu*” ‘your inheritance’, referring to the two young men as the ones with the right to inherit from their late parents, one of them, Kameya, reacts satisfactorily by saying “*Igereze aho*” ‘Good enough; you may just stop there’.

The two MPCs, namely “*Aho nturiko uravuga*” (Lit. ‘Actually, what you’re doing is not *talking*’) ‘You’re not *talking appropriately*’ by the mother and “*Ni ho ukivuga*” (‘Now you’re talking’) ‘*Now you’re talking appropriately*’ by Kameya, are face-aggravating in that they are confrontational: as evaluative assertives, they are loaded with negative criticism of some past speech of the addressee. Thus, the MPCs are impolite.

In the MPC “*Aho nturiko uravuga*” ‘You’re not *talking appropriately*’, the mother uses impoliteness to exercise power vis-à-vis her son, distancing herself from the young man who has been talking to her in inappropriate ways about a taboo topic on sexuality. The young man’s inappropriate verbal behavior is likened to that of a child who does not know what is right or not to say and to whom. This is shown by further words which the mother tells her son “*Uriko uraravuta*” ‘You’re babbling’. Similarly, impoliteness in Kameya’s impolite MPC above conveys an exercise of power by Kameya in relation to his sister Somambike. The gender inequality is the source of this power imbalance.

Apart from the extended meaning ‘*to talk appropriately*’ of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’, as discussed above, the meaning of the same verb can be extended to include another metapragmatic dimension of the opposite sense to the former, that is, ‘*to talk inappropriately*’.

5.2.2 Extending the meaning of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ as ‘to talk inappropriately’ in an impolite MPC

In the above Excerpts 3 and 4, the meaning of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ has been extended to mean ‘*to talk appropriately*’. The same process of meaning extension is done by speakers to obtain the opposite meaning ‘*to talk inappropriately*’. This is the case in Excerpt 5 below from *Ninde* play “*Ndaryimare ni we ndaryitere*” ‘Exaggeration

in bad behavior ruins one's life'. This is a conversation between a husband (H) and his wife (W) at home, as the wife is setting off to go to work in the fields.

EXCERPT 5:

- 1 W: Nari nibagiye.
- 2 H: Wewe wama wibagiye. Wibagiye iki?
- 3 W: Erega nashaka. Ni ukuri ntari ndavyibagiye. Nagomba ngo umpe
- 4 amafaranga nje kugura akunyu. Ndazi yuko maze kugenda ntubikubariye nza
- 5 kugaruka ntagusanga ngaha.
- 6 H: Ariko ga ntuze. Wewe urantangaza. Wama witoraguuje mu bintu vyose,
- 7 unsaba amahera y'umunyu. (Mimicking W) "*EREGA NARI NJE NGO UMPE*
- 8 *AMAHERA YO GUSABA AKUNYU*" Genda usorome, ntubirya uko.
- 9 W: Mbega ndakubarire
- 10 H: Nivyakunanira bitetse urotsa.
- 11 W: Ee. Ubwo nditoraguje ga ntuze, ubwo sindakubwiye ibintu bikenewe?
- 12 Ninakugaburira imboga zitarimw'umunyu, urantuka ngo ndi umusazi. Ngo
- 13 iyo ndabivuga uba wawuguze. None wagomba ngende ntubivuze?
- 14 H: Abataronka n'ivyo ntibabaho?
- 15 W: Ee. Ndabisoroma nyene. Mbuzwa na nde?
- 16 H: *Erega iyo ugiye utavuze ntuba umuntu.*
- 17 W: (with a low, sarcastic tone) Egome urakoze.
- 18 H: Enda bireke sha urare ubusa.
- 19 W: Mbega ndabi=
- 20 H: =Ko ata munyu uronse.
- 21 W: Ndabireka kuri angahe? Jewe ndabizana. Uko mbona binshobokeye ni ko
- 22 ndabizana.
- 23 H: Genda ndazi ko wakameze, akarimi kawe ni ingongo.

TT:

- 1 W: Sorry, I've forgotten something.
- 2 H: You always forget something. What have you forgotten this time?
- 3 W: In fact, I want... Really, I had forgotten this. I would like you to give me
- 4 money for buying salt. I know that if I leave without telling you this, I will
- 5 come back when you have left home.
- 6 H: But you make me wonder. You always raise issues, asking me money to
- 7 buy salt. (Mimicking W) "*YOU KNOW WHAT, I'M COMING TO ASK YOU*
- 8 *MONEY FOR SALT*" Go and harvest your tubers, then eat them without salt.
- 9 W: Let me tell you
- 10 H: If you fail to eat them boiled, you will roast them.
- 11 W: Oh! Am I raising unnecessary issues? Am I not saying what we need? If I
- 12 serve you vegetables without salt, you'll say I'm crazy, that you could have
- 13 bought it had I told you. Haven't I done a good thing to say it before I leave?
- 14 H: Those who can't afford having such food, aren't they living?
- 15 W: Of course, I will harvest the tubers. Who can forbid me to do so?
- 16 H: I know you cannot leave *without talking inappropriately.*
- 17 W: (with a low, sarcastic tone) Alright, thank you.
- 18 H: Give up harvesting the tubers and then spend your night without supper.
- 19 W: Why would I=
- 20 H: =Just because you do not have salt.
- 21 W: Why on earth would I give it up? I'll surely gather them. I'll do it the easy
- 22 way for me.
- 23 H: Leave me alone! I know that you're too much talkative.

In line 16 of Excerpt 5, H responds to his wife's statement (cf. line 15) saying: "*Erega iyo ugiye **utavuze** ntuba umuntu*" (Lit. 'Indeed, when you leave **without talking**, you don't feel human enough') 'I know you cannot leave **without talking inappropriately**'. H manipulates the meaning of the verb "*kuvuga*" 'to talk' and extends its sense to mean the same thing as the Kirundi collocation "*kuvuga nabi*" 'to be rude in speech'.

In addition to the extension of the meaning of the verb "*kuvuga*" as 'to talk (in)appropriately', Kirundi speakers still play with extending the meaning of the same verb. Thus, for example, speakers may use that verb to mean '*to talk boastfully*' or '*to brag*', as discussed in the subsection below.

5.2.3 The meaning of the verb "*kuvuga*" 'to talk' extended as 'to talk boastfully' or 'to brag' in an MPC

In our data, speakers extended the meaning of the verb "*kuvuga*" 'to talk' as '*to talk boastfully*' or '*to brag*' and, therefore, a metacommunicative dimension was added to the primary meaning of this verb. Its extended meaning suggests a verbal behavior which is generally judged to be socially inappropriate. However, hearers will even judge this behavior more negatively if a speaker is boastfully talking about achievements, success, property, etc which they do not have in reality. In connection with this, the judgment done to someone's bragging will somehow depend on his/her social status or social roles which people recognize that the person actually has.

The data in Excerpt 6 below presents a case of such semantic extension. It is an extract of a fictional conversation whereby two characters "*Amazi*" 'Water' and "*Amata*" 'Milk' are 'personified' in the collection of stories "*Igitu kokura kokweza*" 'A grown up tree is remarkable by its fruits' (Ngenzebuhoro, 1990). Personification is a metaphor where things or objects are given human qualities; an object is additionally considered

as a person (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The two personified entities are arguing about which one of them is more useful in life.

EXCERPT 6:

1 **Amazi:** Ndi ubuzima nzimana abantu bose... Natanguranye n'isi
2 nsivya ibintu kwuma...Sindi ikirimbiro Nimburwamwo vyinshi...
3 Ikinyababa mu ciza kuko nagiciriye neza ni amata atanga ineza
4 mu bantu ariko nayo nyene ndayaha ku minwe
5 kuko adafiswe na bose. Ni umwana ntaramera ubwanwa
6 niyagomba nzoyakuza akunze.

7 **Amata** (aho yari mu cikirizo yariko arumviriza, ararandamuka ati): Emwe
8 akarimi kumwe gakamwa imfyufyu! Aho mu bagira neza wishiramwo?
9 Mbe ubwiza urusha abandi buhagaze he?
10 Ugusomye arara arasama isazi, ntumuhembura...
11 Uwukunyoye ararana ikirungurira...

→ 12 **Ba ureka abavuga bavuge,**
13 iyaba udakura umwanda uba warandagaye.
14 Erega n'abakunywa ni ukubura uko bagira...
15 Nibagukarabe birakwiye, ukwiye isi ntawe usiga ngo ase neza,
16 atari uguseruka... Akaruta akandi karakamira,
→ 17 **ba ureka mvuge**
18 sindakuvuguswemwo, naremwe n'Imana
19 nama rimwe n'abantu none ndashigikiye aho banshinguye.
20 Sindi mu musingo ndikingurutse, ndi ku ruhimbi
21 mpimbaye bene inzu. Banziga nta nzigo nta nzara.
22 Bashira intuntu nkabatanganiriza bakangana ingoma
23 kuko ndabagwa neza sindabarwaze nkawe ubatera imisonga kenshi ...
24 Wewe utora uwutwaye induhuro ukamururira mw'ibenga,
25 ukamwambura...Ngo ugukomeye amashi nawe nashirwe mw'ivu
26 kandi yakuvuvudikiye. Ba ureka kwitwenga hariho abagutwenga.
→ 27 **Sinzovuge ngo uvugirize**
28 bokuvuza ubuhiri abahiriwe kubera jewe.

29 **Amazi:** Sinari namenye muhanyu uhanganye ko uri ngaho. Ko unyihakanye,
30 ngo turamukanye. Hohu ngira wohora ayo matakanwa utataguye nk'uwataye
31 umutima.

TT:

1 **Water:** I am life; with me, all people quench their thirst...I was there when the
2 world began and I protect the living things from drying...I'm not just a
3 useless thing, people get so many useful things derived from me...What is
4 close to me in goodness is 'milk' who does good to people, but I also defeat
5 her in this regard since not all people have access to her. 'Milk' is a child to
6 me. She can't live independently of me; I am the one who sustains her.

7 **Milk** (out of the calabash container where it had been listening, suddenly
8 started speaking): Actions speak louder than words. Do you see yourself as
9 generous? Tell me, how more precious than others are you? S/he who drinks
10 you will spend a night without sleep because he will remain hungry... S/he
11 who drinks you will feel heartburn the whole night...
→ 12 **Leave bragging to those who deserve it.**
13 You would be quite useless if you were not used to wash dirt. People drink
14 you for lack of alternative... You really deserve to be used for washing
15 hands. You are everywhere in the world, but you can never make people's
16 skin smooth... The powerless must respect the powerful.

- 17 *Leave bragging to me.*
 18 God created me separate from you; and people are my friends, they take
 19 care of me. I am not kept in a hidden place in people's houses,
 20 but on a special table prepared for me by those who love me
 21 because I feed them to their satisfaction. Those who drink me have a good
 22 health, unlike you who often make them feel pain in their stomach... You
 23 do not spare people carrying livelihoods; you cause them to sink in the
 24 depths of rivers... And whoever claps hands begging you to spare them from
 25 sinking, you end up burying them. You should stop making yourself the
 26 laughing stock of people.
 →27 *Shut up whenever I'm bragging.*
 28 Or else, people whom I make enjoy good life will beat you seriously.
- 29 **Water:** I didn't know you were there, Sir. I see you're denying me, but can you
 30 come closer so that we hug each other? After the hug, I'm sure you will stop
 31 saying your silly words.

In Excerpt 6, we have three meta-utterances containing each the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ in various forms and in different expressions. They are: (1) “*Ba ureka abavuga bavuge*” ‘Leave bragging to those who deserve it’; (2) “*Ba ureka mvuge*” ‘Leave bragging to me’; and (3) “*Sinzovuge ngo uvugirize*” ‘Shut up whenever I’m bragging’. In these three MPCs, and in their respective contexts, the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ (see “*bavuge*” /ba_{SC1}-**vug**_{talk-eFV}/ in (1), “*mvuge*” /n_{SC1}-**vug**_{talk-eFV}/ in (2) and “*sinzovuge*” /si_{NEG}-n_{SC1}-zoo_{FUT}-**vug**_{talk-eFV}/ in (3)) undergoes semantic extension and acquires the extended meaning ‘to talk boastfully’. In (1), (2) and (3), the fictional speaker “*Amata*” ‘Milk’ implies that, in accordance with Kirundi norms about speech in social settings, it is inappropriate for her interlocutor “*Amazi*” ‘Water’ to brag or talk boastfully. It is even more inappropriate as she does not qualify for bragging about the things for which she is praising herself.

Another form of semantic extension of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ is when the speaker uses this verb to mean ‘to talk opposing the opinion of someone’, as in Excerpt 7 below, which was taken from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*”, Act II, Scene VIII.

5.2.4 Using the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ with its meaning extended as ‘to talk opposing the opinion of someone’ in an impolite MPC

In the following Excerpt 7 between three siblings, Somambike (SOMA), Kameya (KAME) and Biyago (BIYA), we have the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ used with the extended meaning ‘to talk opposing the opinion of someone’.

EXCERPT 7:

- 1 SOMA: ...iryo rari riragabuye, umwe wese akagira
- 2 igisa yega...menya yuko naho mworihirika
- 3 ntazogenda mpevywe intoranza ya Mucurantimba
- 4 na mukuru we...
- 5 KAME: Ziba sindakumene umutwe wa munyazi we.
- 6 SOMA: Gira uko ushaka, ariko iryo mvuze ntakaharenga.
- 7 KAME: Banza wikumire, na none ni ko kagayo.
- 8 SOMA: Ivyo mumbarira vyose ndavyemera, icyo ntemera nakivuze.
- 9 KAME: Urasubiraye ga wa ntabarirwa we?
- 10 BIYA: Warezwe he?
- 11 KAME: *Turavuga ukavuga?*
- 12 BIYA: *Turahagarara ugahagarara?*

TT:

- 1 SOMA: ...that money for inheritance is to be shared, each one of us
- 2 siblings have their portion...so, you should know that even though you
- 3 attempt to change this, I'll never give up the part of inheritance which is due
- 4 to Mucurantimba and me her elder sister...
- 5 KAME: Shut up, you the thief; if not, I'll crash your head.
- 6 SOMA: You may do whatever you like, but I won't change my opinion.
- 7 KAME: Get away from male people here present; indeed, this is contempt.
- 8 SOMA: I'll do whatever you tell me to do except one thing which I've told you.
- 9 KAME: Do not insist, you stiff-necked girl!
- 10 BIYA: What a girl with bad behavior!
- 11 KAME: (lit. 'We talk and then you talk?') *How come that you talk opposing us?*
- 12 BIYA: (lit. 'We stand up and then you stand up?') *How come that you take a position which is against ours?*

In line 11 of Excerpt 7 above, Kameya reacts to his sister's speech saying: “*Turavuga ukavuga?*” /tuSC2-raPRES.DISJ -vug_{talk}-aFV USC1-kaSUBSEC-vug_{talk}-aFV/ (lit. ‘We talk and then you talk?’) ‘How come that you talk opposing us?’. This meaning is also encoded in the consecutive utterance by Biyago when he says “*Turahagarara ugahagarara?*” /tuSC1-raPRES.DISJ -hagarar_{stand}-aFV USC1-kaSUBSEC -hagarar_{stand} -aFV/ (lit. ‘We stand up and then you stand up?’) ‘How come that you take a position which is against ours?’.

The two brothers Kameya and Biyago express their belief that their sister Somambike does not have at all the right to take a stand on the issue of inheritance from their late parents, even though she is the first-born in their family. This is because she is a female child.

In the MPC under study, the speaker strategically chooses to use the “*tu-*” ‘We’ versus “*u-*” ‘You’ polarization (in “*turavuga*” /*tu*-ra-vug-a/ ‘we talk’ versus “*ukavuga*” /*u*-ka-vug-a/ ‘then, you talk’). This ‘We’/‘You’ opposition was hinted by Fairclough (1989, p. 111) as one of the significant textual features which the analyst should consider while analyzing discourse in order to find out the relational values of grammatical features in a text. That division, which is encoded in the *first* versus the *second pronouns* and which invokes the group where the speaker belongs, on one side, and the group where the addressee belongs, on the other side, is somehow similar to that observed in the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ polarization often used in political speeches and which presents one’s group as positive, good etc. and others’ group as negative, bad etc. (Van Dijk, 1993, 1998).

In the MPC “*Turavuga ukavuga?*” (lit. ‘We talk and then you talk?’) ‘How come that you talk opposing us?’, Kameya reacts to his sister’s opinion based on the Kirundi tradition whereby only males (represented by “*tu-*” ‘We’) have the right to decide on family issues and that females (represented here in the singular form by “*u-*” ‘You’, whose plural form is “*mu-*” ‘You’) should not raise their voice against whatever is decided by their male counterparts. In this particular context, it is about the male siblings, Kameya and Biyago, and their sisters, Somambike and Mucurantimba. As Kameya means it, the two girls must keep quiet and leave him and his brother Biyago decide alone anything concerning the inheritance from their late parents, in agreement

with Kirundi traditional practices. whereby only male children in a family used to be entitled to the inheritance of property such as land and domestic animals after the death of their parents. Indeed, to (re)situate the source of this data, that is, the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*”, it goes back to the year 1967.

In short, in each of the four MPCs presented and discussed in Excerpts 6 and 7 above, the MPCs (1), (2) and (3) in Excerpt 6 and the MPC (4) in Excerpt 7, we have the core of the metacommunicative message encoded in the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’. Each of these MPCs is face-threatening and thus impolite.

At the interactional level, the marked impolite MPCs from (1) to (4) achieve the function of redefining the relationship between the speaker and the addressee. Through the utterances (1), (2) and (3), the fictional character *Amata* ‘Milk’ sends a message that the verbal act of bragging by her friend *Amazi* ‘Water’ is inappropriate since the former believes that she has far more importance in the life of human beings than the latter. Therefore, in this fictional conversation, *Amata* ‘Milk’ redefines the status of *Amazi* ‘Water’ as lower compared to her own status, a way of re-adjusting the relationship between them.

In a similar fashion, the marked meta-utterance (4) is used to readjust the relationship between the interactants, that is, the two brothers Kameya and Biyago, on the one hand, and their sister Somambike, on the other hand. The two brothers consider themselves as having more right to speech and to decision making than their sister Somambike, as far as the inheritance left by their late parents is concerned. The reason is that they are male whereas their addressee is female. Indeed, the age factor plays no role here, since the sister is the first-born child in their family. The attitude of the two young men is

informed by the gender ideology in Kirundi culture which grants more rights to males than females when it comes to inheritance and speech.

In their lexical choices in metacommunication, as noted in our Kirundi data so far, speakers may opt to manipulate a term of address concerning its reference in echoic meta-utterances or the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ to give it extended meanings which convey metapragmatic evaluations. In other examples noted in our data, speakers also choose a verb expressing an ‘inappropriate’ way of talking or an ‘inappropriate’ speech behavior, as discussed in the following section.

5.3 Choice of a Verb Encoding an ‘Inappropriate’ Way of Talking in an Impolite MPC and Exercise of Power

As already said, this section is about speakers’ lexical choices of verbs which read like verbs of saying and which express an ‘inappropriate’ way of talking or an ‘inappropriate’ speech behavior. Such verbs include: “*guhoha*” ‘to babble’, “*kuravuta*” ‘to sleep talk’, “*kudebagura*” ‘to prattle’, “*kudedemba*” ‘to gibber/to talk gibberish’, “*kurabagiza*” ‘to chatter’, “*kwenyaguza*” ‘to talk too much and often with an offensive body language’, “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk too much and in a very noisy way as if praising one’s cattle’, “*gutantabuka*” ‘to bluster’, and “*kuragura*” used metaphorically in an MPC to mean ‘to talk as if practicing fortune-telling’.

5.3.1 The verb “*guhoha*” ‘to babble, to talk like a baby attempting to talk’

The Kirundi verb “*guhoha*” ‘to babble’, in which an adult’s speech is likened to a baby’s babbling, is used metaphorically to encode an MPC in the following extract of a conversation between three characters in the written play “*Semasunzu yasize araze*” ‘Semasunzu left a will before dying’, two butchers Gisumakiremuye (GIS) and Sahirasuma (SAH) and a man named Rutuneza (RUT), a brother of the late Semasunzu:

EXCERPT 8:

- (Buyange aca agenda agahwana na ba bayangayanga).
- 1 GIS: (Yayaya amaboko amutangira) (Buyange yiruka asubira inyuma.) Bangwe
 2 mama w'umukondo, genda neza ntuze ku gishema. ...
- 3 GIS: (abwira Rutuneza) Mbega ntiwari umutumye guhamagara urya mufyirimu,
 4 avuye hehe? Duhe ivyo wagira umuhe twirire, nta mukwe aruta
 5 uwagukuriyeho Semasunzu. (yerekana Buyange). Irukana uyo mwana agende
 6 iyo abandi bari, murabona ngo aza gusuma urusaku.
- 7 RUT: (Akankamira Buyange) Ehe ntu, imenye ugende iyo abandi bari, nta soni?
 8 (Buyange aca agenda haruguru).
- 9 GIS: (abwira Rutuneza) Aho rero, nti: nta mukwe aruta uwagukuriyeho
 10 Semasunzu. Uwundi we, numvise agenda arahira ngo muramututse
 11 ntakigaruka muri runo rugo.
- 12 SAH: Maze *Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha* yari umugabo akwiye
 13 gushikirizwa intahe.

TT:

- (Buyange leaves home, meets the two butchers on her way).
- 1 GIS: (extending his arms with the intention of hugging her) (Buyange runs away)
 2 Don't worry sister, go slowly so that you may not stumble on a tree root. ...
- 3 GIS: (To RUT) Isn't it that you had sent her to call that elite young man? Where
 4 is he from? Please, give us what you were going to serve him, we eat it; there
 5 is no son-in-law greater than the person who killed for you Semasunzu. (pointing
 6 at Buyange). Chase this girl, she must join other children and not spy on us!
- 7 RUT: (Shouting at Buyange) Young girl, do what is appropriate, go to join other
 8 children. Shame on you! (Buyange leaves and goes inside the house).
- 9 GIS: (To RUT) Ok. I was saying that there's no son-in-law greater than the
 10 person who killed for you Semasunzu. I heard that young man saying he won't
 11 come back to this house since you have insulted him.
- 12 SAH: *If Gisumakiremuye did not babble*, he would qualify for being inaugurated
 13 as 'a wise, trustworthy and respected man' "Umushingantahe".

In line 12 of this Excerpt, we have the MPC “*Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha*” ‘If Gisumakiremuye did not babble’ embedded in the entire utterance: “Maze *Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha* yari umugabo akwiye gushikirizwa intahe” ‘If *Gisumakiremuye did not babble*, he would qualify for being inaugurated as a wise, trustworthy and respected man “Umushingantahe” who is given powers to settle conflicts in his neighborhood according to Kirundi tradition’. This MPC is an expression of Sahirasuma’s metapragmatic evaluation of the speech behavior of his friend Gisumakiremuye. This evaluation is done by means of the lexical choice of the Kirundi verb “*guhoha*” /ku_{NP15} -hoh_{babble} -a_{FV}/ ‘to babble’, in the clause “*Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha*” /Gisumakiremuye_{proper.name} iyo_{if} a_{ASC1} -ta_{NEG} -ba_{be}

asc1 -hoh_{babble} -a_{FV}/ ‘If Gisumakiremuye did not *babble*’. That verb conveys the meaning ‘to talk inappropriately’.

In fact, Gisumakiremuye, who is the target of Sahirasuma’s criticism in the MPC above, is likened to a baby who babbles without knowing what he/she is talking about nor what is correct to say in different interactional contexts. The former fellow is criticized for saying that which he should not have said in the present context of interaction. In fact, in the presence of Buyange, the daughter of the late Semasunzu, Gisumakiremuye carelessly says: “*Duhe ivyo wagira umuhe twirire, nta mukwe aruta uwagukuriyeho Semasunzu*” ‘Please, give us what you were going to serve him, we eat it; there is no son-in-law greater than the person who killed Semasunzu for you’. Sahirasuma judges the performance of this utterance as contextually unsuitable because it reveals to the girl Buyange the secret that Gisumakiremuye and Sahirasuma are the ones who were used by Rutuneza to kill his brother Semasunzu, Buyange’s late dad. Otherwise, Sahirasuma appreciates the request made by Gisumakiremuye that both of them should be given what Rutuneza was going to give to the young man and visitor Nkundwa. In his request, Gisumakiremuye was plausibly hinting at being offered some beer, because in Kirundi tradition, visitors are normally given drinks and in particular the local beer; food can be given in addition.

Sahirasuma’s MPC above is face-aggravating, given his choice of the verb “*guhoha*” ‘to babble’ which has a very negative connotation and which makes the criticized participant, that is, Gisumakirekuye, feel humiliated in front of Rutuneza whom they have come to visit. In other words, the MPC is impolite and marked.

At the interpersonal level of communication, this impolite MPC “*Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha*” ‘If Gisumakiremuye did not babble’ encodes Sahirasuma’s judgment of

his friend Gisumakiremuye as someone who is not worthy of being told some secrets because he may reveal them to the wrong people. Sahirasuma's entire utterance in which the MPC is embedded is: "Maze *Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha* yari umugabo akwiye gushikirizwa intahe" '*If Gisumakiremuye did not babble*, he would qualify for being inaugurated as 'a wise, trustworthy and respected man' "umushingantahe". In Kirundi culture, "umushingantahe" is a trustworthy man in the neighborhood to whom people can tell their own problems especially social ones and can confide with him and reveal to him some personal secrets as they seek his contribution to finding a solution to the raised issues, for example family/social conflicts which need to be settled. According to Sahirasuma, therefore, given that Gisumakiremuye is careless about what he says in specific contexts, as if he were a child at the stage of babbling, it is not good to share secrets with him. Moreover, through his use of the term "*guhoha*" 'to babble' to describe his friend's speech behavior, Sahirasuma performs a face-threatening act (FTA) in his MPC and the ensuing impoliteness conveys to some extent an exercise of power, though power may not be felt in reality in this context because the speaker is a friend of the target of this criticism, which may be taken on a light note.

Close to the metapragmatic meaning encoded in the verb "*guhoha*" 'to babble', as used in the previous data, is that which is conveyed by the verb "*kuravuta*" 'sleep talking' or talking aloud during sleep without being aware of it. The subsection below provides an example for illustration and the interpretation of the use of the latter verb to evaluate speech.

5.3.2 The verb “*kuravuta*” ‘sleep talking’

The Kirundi verb “*kuravuta*” means the act of talking in one’s sleep, known as ‘sleep talking’ or ‘somniloquy’. It is used by the speaker in the following utterance taken from Excerpt 3 already presented above, which is an extract from *Ninde* play “*Ibihunda n’ibishurushuru bihuye vyose bicika ibihunda gusa*” ‘The companionship of two immoral persons increases immorality’:

The young man (YM): (to his mother) Ee ma...Kuva aho wantukiye ngo ndi ikirumbagane, ngo ndi mu nzu iwawe, ngo...ngo ntaco maze. Ubu rero wamaze kubona ko ndakimaze. Erega...erega uwu ni umugeni, ni umu...ni umu...He!He!He!Hi! Ni umugore w’iwanje.
The mother (Mo): (to her son) Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo.
YM: He!He!He!

→ Mo: *Jewe burya wibaza ko ndiko ndanezerwa n’ayo majambo uriko urandavutako?*

TT:

The young man (YM): (to his mother) Mum...For quite a long time you’ve been telling me I’m a useless grown-up son staying in your house. You have realized I’m worth something...this girl is a bride...she is a...my wife. He!He!He!Hi! She is my wife.
The mother (Mo): (to her son) How come that you laugh so much showing your ugly teeth!
YM: He!He!He!

→ Mo: *Do you think that I am pleased by your silly words as you sleep talk to me?*

What the son is telling his mother indicates that not only he has been staying with the girl, with whom he has come back home after two days and two nights of absence, but also that he may have been sleeping with her as he boldly declares that she is his wife, although it is the first time the mother is seeing that girl and her son has never had any wedding ceremony. The mother reacts to her son’s words and his laughter saying: “*Jewe burya wibaza ko ndiko ndanezerwa n’ayo majambo uriko urandavutako?*” ‘Do you think that I am pleased by your silly words as you sleep talk to me?’. The verb “*kuravuta*” /ku_{NP15}- ravut_{sleep.talk} -aFV / ‘to sleep talk’, in the Noun Phrase [_{NP} *ayo majambo uriko urandavutako*] /a_{AUG6}-O_{DEM} ma_{NP6} -jambo_{word} u_{SC1} -riko_{be.PRES.CONT.} u_{SC1} -ra_{PRES. DISJ} -no_{C1} -ravut_{sleep.talk} -aFV -ko_{LOC} / ‘your silly words as you sleep talk to me’, is used as a verb of saying. The mother’s lexical choice of that verb, instead of the

common and neutral verb of saying “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’, has metacommunicative implications: the mother expresses her strong disapproval of her son’s speech behavior, which she evaluates as very inappropriate.

‘Sleep talking’, which is expressed by the verb “*kuravuta*” in Kirundi, is a sleep disorder mostly present in people’s childhood (Reimao & Lefevre, 1980). The sleeptalker often mumbles or produces an incoherent speech (Clore & Hibel, 1993) and is not aware of his/her act of talking as he/she does it while asleep (Alfonsi, D’Atri, Scarpelli, Mangiaruga, & De Gennaro, 2018). As the mother characterizes the speech behavior of her son as ‘sleep-talking’, she compares what he is saying to the incoherent speech which a sleeptalker produces unconsciously. Put differently, the grown-up son, in the context of interaction in the above extract, is likened to a sleeptalker and more likely a child who is sleep talking. In this regard, the mother specifically expresses her disapproval of her son’s words to her, qualifying them as thoughtless speech and very unacceptable therefore.

At the interpersonal level, this marked MPC readjusts the interpersonal relation between the two interactants. As the mother evaluates the speech behavior of her son as inconsiderate and offensive to her, she denounces his lack of morals and his violation of cultural values which forbid him, as a grown-up son, to talk to his mother about taboo sex-related affairs, and particularly concerning himself. In short, the mother takes distance and reminds her deviant son that he should respect her and make sure he does not verbally behave as if he were ‘sleep talking’ to her. The interpersonal relation between them is redefined in the following terms: Mother ‘keeper of morals and cultural values, deserving unconditional respect from his son’ versus Son ‘a deviant and

delinquent transgressor of morals and cultural values, lacking the obligatory respect to his mother’.

Another verb of saying, which also conveys the meaning of inappropriate speech behavior like the verb “*kuravuta*” ‘sleep talking’, is the verb “*kudebagura*” ‘to prattle’. It is dealt with below, with an example from our data for illustration and discussion.

5.3.3 The verb “*kudebagura*” ‘to talk nonsense’

In this subsection, we have an example of the speaker using the verb “*kudebagura*” ‘to talk nonsense’ as the vehicle of the MPC which he produces to evaluate the speech behavior of his co-communicator. It was taken from Excerpt 9 from *Ninde* play “*Umubegito w’umugabo arwanya ivyomufashije*” ‘An irresponsible man stands against that which he would benefit from’. This excerpt is about a conversation between a husband (H) and his wife (W). The latter told her husband that she wanted to go to visit her sister in another village. So, she left home early in the morning, saying that she would not take long at her sister’s home and would therefore be back in the course of the day. Eventually, W comes back home at the sunset, contrary to her promise to come back home earlier. H is angry with her, as she attempts to give the reasons why she is coming back late.

EXCERPT 9:

- 1 W: nagize ndacagaruka nshitse hariya, harya hakurya, mbere si kure cane ni
- 2 kuri wa mutumba wa hariya hakurya w’i Bumenyi.
- 3 H: Ego.
- 4 W: Nca nsanga abantu bariko barafasha umuntu atishoboye. Nditagereze, nti
- 5 none jewe Imana yampaye amaguru n’amaboko bikomeye, nti uwu muntu
- 6 atishoboye jewe ndengane ata co ndamukoreye? Nca nja mu bandi nanje
- 7 ndakora. Turakooora, baariko bamwubakira inzu; nsize ehee, bayiranguye.
- 8 H: Wari wabutumwe na nde? Jewe ko wambwiye ko ugiye kuraba murumuna
- 9 wawe; ko utari wambwiye ko ugiye gufasha abatishoboye?
- 10 W: Emwe, jewe nta n’umwe yabintumye. Nabitumwe n’umutima wanje
- 11 w’ikigongwe. Kuko nabira[vye ndabona yuko uwo muntu vy’ukuri
- 12 H: (mimicking W): [“N’UMUT^hIMA WANJE W’IKIGONGWE”
- 13 W: yari akwiye gufashwa.
- 14 H: Ubaye Bikira Mariya rero ari mw’ijuru?
- 15 W: Emwe=

- 16 H: (mimicking W) =“*N’UMUT^(h)IMA WANJYE W’IKIGONGWE*”. Erega jewe
 17 numva uriko uransensema riho.
 ...
 18 H: Iyo uzoja ngo ugiye kuraba murumuna wawe, wiyiririrweeyo
 19 ririnde rirenga; hanyuma ngo wagiye gufasha ivyo ufasha,
 20 ivyo ufasha batagutumye...
 21 W: None ga nyakugira Imana, i...ikintu cabuze ngaha mu rugo
 22 kitabonetse ngo ni uko nari gufasha uwo muntu [ni igiki?
 23 H: [Oya. Umugore ategerezwa
 24 kuguma hafi y’urugo rwiwe, ategerezwa kuguma mu rugo. None nk’ubu
 25 iyo hagira ingorane mugani wawe wari kuzimenya gute?
 26 W: Oya mugabo, ku bisanzwe wari ukwiye kubita[hura
 27 H: [Mva imbere rero, mva mu matwi.
 → 28 Sinshaka na rimwe *udebagura* imbere yanje.
 29 W: Emwee.
 30 H: Urumva! (mimicking W) “*NAGIYE GUFASHA IVYO MFASHA*” Mbe watumwe
 31 na nde kuja gufasha?
 32 W: Ni uko abagore nyene twama dukengereka, na yo ahandi ho
 33 [ndazi ko ata ngorane nari
 34 H: [Ego ni ukuri!
 35 W: nagize neza
 36 H: Usigare wigenza nk’ihembe ryabuze uwo rirya ng’uragiye gutabara
 37 ivy’utabara, ng’uragiye gufasha ivyo ufasha? Ni nde yokwemerera.
 38 Urumva?
 39 W: Emwe, jewe burya [kubisanzwe
 40 H: [Ndagiye rero, namba wumva
 41 canke namba vyagenze gute, umve imbere
 42 W: Jewe ndumva, kuko iyo ntaba numva hoho n’uwo mutima w’ikigongwe
 43 ntawo nari kwubahuka kugira, kuko naba ndi intumva nyene. Mugabo rero
 44 ndumva, kandi urazi ko ndakwubaha nkakwubahiriza nkagusonera.
 45 Mugabo na wewe ubonye [uwo muntu
 46 H: [Uranyubaha?
 → 47 Iyaba wanyubaha uka...ukansonera *uba uriko urarabagiza imbere yanje?*
 48 W: Ndiko mvuga ivyumvikana.
 49 H: Ivyo wumva vyumvikana gute?
 50 W: Kuko na wewe ndazi neza yuko, ni uko nyene muri make novuga ko uri
 51 intagondwa, wari ukwiye kubitahura ko tuza turafashanya.
 52 H: Kandi rero aho uriko uguma unyongeramw’indwara. Erega iyo ni indwara
 53 uriko uranzanamwo. Iyo uriko urambwira amajambo yononekaye,
 54 amajambo yaboze, aho numva uriko urandwaza. Uravyumva? Aho uriko
 55 ura...Mva imbere ndagusavye!

TT:

- 1 W: On my way back, as I reached the hill Bumenyi,
 2 not far from here
 3 H: Yeah
 4 W: I met a group of people busy helping a needy person. I thought about it and
 5 finally decided to join the group and help this needy person as well, since God
 6 created me physically able to work. So, we did work for hours; they were
 7 building a house for that person, when I left, its construction was complete.
 8 H: Who had mandated you to do that? You told me you were going to visit your
 9 young sister; you never told me you were going to help needy people.
 10 W: I really must acknowledge that nobody sent me to do this work, but I did so
 11 because of my merciful heart. I loo[ked at that needy person
 12 H: (mimicking W): [“*BECAUSE OF MY MERCIFUL HEART*”
 13 W: and found that s/he needed to be assisted.
 14 H: Have you become the Virgin Mary who is in heaven?
 15 W: Well...=
 16 H: (mimicking W) = “*BECAUSE OF MY MERCIFUL HEART*”. I feel you’re

- 17 annoying me.
 ...
 18 H: Early morning, you said you were going to see your young sister, then you
 19 spent a whole day away. You say you've been helping the needy, yet nobody
 20 has sent you to do so...
 21 W: But, my dear husband, the blessed one of God, has anything gone wrong
 22 here because I delayed [helping that needy person on my way back home?
 23 H: [Oh, no! The wife must stay at home and take
 24 care of the household. As you're saying, if something had gone wrong, how
 25 would you have known about this?
 26 W: However, you should [understand me
 27 H: [Get away from me! Shut up!
 → 28 I'm fed up with *your nonsense talk* in front of me.
 29 W: Well...
 30 H: Did you hear me well? (mimicking W) "WHATEVER I WENT TO HELP". Who
 31 mandated you to help?
 32 W: I understand, we women are always looked down on, otherwise
 33 [I caused no problem
 34 H: [What are you saying?
 35 W: what I did was right.
 36 H: How come that you wander around, like an evil spirit sent out by a sorcerer
 37 and which has missed a victim, pretending you're helping needy persons? Who
 38 would accept this? Do you understand?
 39 W: Well, [I really
 40 H: [I'm leaving you alone, whether you understand or whatever has
 41 happened, get away from me!
 42 W: I really do understand you and I'm cooperative enough;
 43 that's why I even had this merciful heart to help the needy person. Moreover,
 44 I respect and obey you, you know. Otherwise, had yourself seen how needy
 45 [this person was
 46 H: [You respect me?
 → 47 If you respected and obeyed me, *would you be chattering* in front of me?
 48 W: I'm talking sense.
 49 H: How is that talking sense?
 50 W: Because I know very well that you yourself understand that we people need
 51 to help one another, except that you're stiff-necked.
 52 H: You're worsening things, causing me more annoyance and sickness. This is
 53 a kind of disease you're causing me as you continue talking rubbish to me;
 54 you're really making me sick. Do you understand?
 55 Get away from me, please!

In Excerpt 9 above, we have two MPCs as data: (i) in line 28 the MPC "*Sinshaka na rimwe udebagura imbere yanje*" 'I'm fed up with *your nonsense talk* in front of me' and (ii) in line 47 the MPC "Iyaba wanyubaha uka...ukansonera uba uriko urarabagiza imbere yanje?" 'If you respected and obeyed me, *would you be chattering in front of me?*' It is the MPC in line 28 which was covered under this subsection about the metapragmatic use of the verb '*kudebagura*' 'to talk nonsense'. The MPC in line 47 was dealt with later under the heading [5.3.5] about the verb "*kurabagiza*" 'to talk much moving one's tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite'.

In line 28 of this Excerpt, H's meta-utterance "*Sinshaka na rimwe udebagura imbere yanje*" 'I'm fed up with your *nonsense talk* in front of me' is an evaluative MPC, which the husband makes in response to his wife's (W) justification as to why she is coming back home late at the sunset. The metapragmatic dimension of this utterance lies in the lexical choice of the verb "*kudebagura*" 'to prattle, to talk nonsense'. The verb means 'to talk a great deal without saying anything important, with the connotation of talking nonsense'. It is used disapprovingly to characterize someone's talk as nonsense talk, especially when one's interlocutor is saying what one does not approve of. The lexical choice of that verb, instead of the neutral or unmarked verb "*kuvuga*" 'to talk', makes the MPC impolite and marked. Here, the husband boldly and intentionally attacks his wife's face by portraying what she is saying as rubbish.

The husband's intention is two-fold as he makes the impolite MPC in line 28. First, H wants to discourage his wife's tendency to feel so much freedom in their household, specifically wandering around, which is against Kirundi tradition and customs and is likely to cause more deviant habits. Second, H wants to remind his wife that she is under his authority. In fact, these facts are understood in H's words in lines 36, 37 and 38: "*Usigare wigenza nk'ihembe ryabuze uwo rirya ng'uragiye gutabara ivy'utabara, ng'uragiye gufasha ivyo ufasha? Ni nde yokwemerera. Urumva?*" 'How come that you wander around, like an evil spirit sent out by a sorcerer and which has missed a victim, pretending you're helping needy persons? Who would accept this? Do you understand?'

With respect to interpersonal meanings achieved through the use of the impolite MPC in line 28, the husband *readjusts his relationship with his wife*, at a time when she has been displaying "exaggerated" familiarity with him and much freedom in their relationship, to the extent of spending the whole day away from home without any prior

notice to him and, once she is back at home, talking to him on a friend-friend basis, contrary to the expectations concerning the wife-husband relationship in Kirundi culture and tradition. So, the husband redefines his relation with his wife by showing himself as the person invested with authority in their household and who therefore has power over her and any other member of the family. He does this through his lexical choices in his MPC “*Sinshaka na rimwe udebagura imbere yanje*” (lit. I don’t want again to hear you talking nonsense, not even one word in front of me’) ‘I’m fed up with your *nonsense talk* in front of me’. In fact, he strongly criticizes his wife’s speech which he describes using the verb “*kudebagura*” ‘to prattle, to talk nonsense’; moreover, he says he is fed up with her manner of talking and orders her to shut up, something which can only be said by someone in a position of authority.

This interpersonal meaning is further emphasized by the following face-aggravating orders which he gives to his wife in line 25, just before producing the impolite MPC: “*Mva imbere rero, mva mu matwi*” ‘Get away from me, then. Shut up!’. In addition, the husband uses his authority as he questions his wife concerning whether he gave her the permission to pass by the place where people were doing charitable work helping a needy person by building him a house. He repeatedly tells her: “*Wari wabitumwe na nde?... ko utari wambwiye ko ugiye gufasha abatishoboye?*” ‘Who had mandated you to do that? ...you never told me you were going to help needy people’ in lines 8-9; “*...ngo wagiye gufasha ivyo ufasha, ivyo ufasha batagutumye...*” ‘...you explain that you’ve been helping the poor, yet nobody has sent you to do so...’ in lines 18-19; “*Mbe watumwe na nde kuja gufasha?*” ‘Who mandated you to help?’ in line 28. Finally, the wife bows down to acknowledge her husband’s power which she attributes to the existing gender inequality in their community as she says in line 29: “*Ni uko abagore nyene twama dukengereka, na yo ahandi ho ndazi ko ata ngorane nari...nagize neza*”

‘I understand, we women are always looked down on, otherwise I know I caused no problem...what I did was right’.

The idea of nonsense talk which is present in the verb “*kudebagura*” ‘to prattle, to talk nonsense’ is also encoded in another metapragmatic verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk hesitatingly and unintelligibly because of fear’, which is also used by Kirundi speakers to evaluate some speech as improper, as it appears in our data and is discussed below.

5.3.4 The verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk gibberish, to talk hesitatingly and unintelligibly generally because of fear or confusion’

This subsection is about the verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk hesitatingly and unintelligibly generally because of fear’. The example for illustration is taken from the following Excerpt 10 from *Ninde* play “*Inzoga ni nkura mu mubindi ndagukure mu bantu*” ‘Addiction to beer causes disrespect to the addict in his/her community’. A certain young man called Rutahikamye (R) is a beer addict. In this example, he goes begging money from people whom he meets, lying to them that his mother is agonizing in hospital and that she has passed on.

EXCERPT 10:

- 1 Rutahikamye (R) (Crying and shouting as he meets a man on his way): Yuyuyu!
- 2 Mukama w’ikigongwe ndapfuyeee!
- 3 A Man (M) passing by: Ubaye iki none?
- 4 R: Karabaye! karabaye! ...
- 5 M: Ukure amarira, umbwire neza.
- 6 R: Ee.
- 7 M: Hama ndakwumve nanje.
- 8 R: None muranyemerera ivyo ndababwira ga yemwe?
- 9 M: Ari uko numvise ari ivy’ukuri,
- 10 R (Crying again) Yoo, oyaye muntu numva gicumita mu nda, Mukama
- 11 w’ikigongwe! Jewe ndagowe. Ee muta
- 12 M: Umbwiye ko ari igikoko co mu nda kikurya?
- 13 R: Yoo, oya reka kunkora mu nkovu. Jewe nagomba ndakubwire.
- 14 M: Umbwiye ko ari igicumita mu nda. None igicumita mu nda si igikoko?
- 15 R: Oya jewe ndapfishije umuntu, Mukama w’ikigongwe, jewe ndapfishije
- 16 umuntu. Urumva rero nyakubahwa, jewe nsize
- 17 M: U...ubu nyene?
- 18 R: Oya nsize umuntu ngaho mu bitaro vy’i Bubeshi...Nsize agomba ahwere,
- 19 agomba acikane, ni ukuri.

- ...
 20 M: None uwo muntu umurwaje iminsi ingana iki?
 ...
 21 R: Oya reka, reka reka ntavyo novuga...ndagusavye ube urampa na makeyi,
 22 emwe naho vyoba ibihumbi mirongo ibiri bizoba bibaye mushingantahe.
 ...
 23 R: (Crying, shouting again) ... Yoo! Yoo! Oya mawe arapfuye. Mukama, jewe
 24 ndagi...arapfuye.
 25 M: Tekereza.
 26 R: Oya wa muntu gira ningoga...
 27 M: None hamwe ho nogufasha, ushaka ko ndagufasha gute none?
 28 R: Ndagowe yemwe. Oya raba, raba, hariho ukuntu bavuze ngo hariho
 29 amafaranga y'intuzee, umuhe abe aratanga yo kwinjira ibitaro. Jewe ni
 30 ukuri...
 → 31 M: *Ntiwumva ko uriko uradedemba wewe?* ...Wewe kwinjira ibitaro
 32 kandi wavuze ko umuntu yapfuye?
 33 R: Oya ntiyapfuye. Ararwaye ntiyapfuye...
 34 M: Mugabo kare wari wambwiye ko yapfuye.
 35 R: Oya yemwe. Ni hamwe nyene h'umuntu, sinzi ni ukuri.

TT:

- 1 Rutahikamye (R): (Crying and shouting as he meets a man on his way): Alas!
 2 Alas! Oh my God! Too bad for me!
 3 A Man (M) passing by: What's wrong with you?
 4 R: No more hope left for me! No more hope left for me! ...
 5 M: Stop crying and tell me what's wrong.
 6 R: Um.
 7 M: So that I may understand your problem.
 8 R: Do you promise to help me if I tell you?
 9 M: In case I realize that what you're saying is true.
 10 R (Crying again) No, I'm feeling pain in my stomach. Oh my God!
 11 Too bad for me. Sir,
 12 M: Are you saying that your stomach is aching?
 13 R: No, please it's something serious. I would like to tell you.
 14 M: But you've just told me that you're feeling pain in your stomach.
 15 R: Oh no, I've just lost a person, a relative has just passed on.
 16 Sir,
 17 M: You mean now?
 18 R: No, I left a sick person in the hospital "Bubeshi" 'A place of lies'...The
 19 person was agonizing really...
 ...
 20 M: How long did you spend in the hospital?
 ...
 21 R: Oh no, I can't tell...I request your assistance, if you can give me twenty
 22 thousand only, it can help for now, Sir.
 ...
 23 R: ... (Crying, shouting again) Alas! My mother is dead. Oh my God! She is
 24 dead.
 25 M: Calm down.
 26 R: No, please, could you give me the money quickly?...
 27 M: What type of assistance from me do you need?
 28 R: I'm very unlucky. No, please, see how much money you can give me;
 29 they said there's money required for her to be admitted in the hospital; this is
 30 real...
 → 31 M: *Don't you see you're talking gibberish?* ...Saying your mother is going to
 32 be admitted in hospital whereas you had said that she had already died?
 33 R: No, she has not died. She is sick, she has not died....
 34 M: But previously you told me that she has died.
 35 R: Oh no, please. Maybe it's because I'm in this situation.

The man (M) who meets Rutahikamye (R) suspects that R is lying as he makes contradictory statements concerning his mother: first, that she has passed on, second, that she is very sick and is at hospital where she needs to be admitted. M suspects that R is attempting to deceive him and take advantage of his money by pretending to be in extreme need of assistance. In fact, such words comprise some contradiction, which makes M seem not to believe what R is saying. M expresses this fact in lines 31-32: “*Wewe kwinjira ibitaro kandi wavuze ko umuntu yapfuye?*” “Saying your mother is going to be admitted in hospital whereas you had said that she had already died?”. A person who has died cannot be admitted in hospital. The following co-text for M’s utterance, that is, words spoken by R in lines 15-16, 23-24 and 26-27 of Excerpt 10 confirm this contrast between two situations ‘being dead’ and ‘being admitted in hospital’:

- 15 R: Oya jewe ndapfishije umuntu, Mukama w’ikigongwe, jewe ndapfishije
 16 umuntu.
 22 R: ... Yoo! Yoo! Oya mawe arapfuye. Mukama, jewe ndagi...arapfuye.
 28 R: Oya raba, raba, hariho ukuntu bavuze ngo hariho amafaranga y’intuzee,
 29 umuhe abe aratanga yo kwinjira ibitaro.
- 15 R: Oh my God! I have just lost someone; someone has just
 16 died...
 22 R: Alas! Alas! My mum has just passed on...Oh my God! Too bad for me...she
 is dead
 28 R: They said that some money is needed, please, please, see what you can do
 29 and give me some money to pay so that she may be admitted in the hospital.

R performs two contradictory statements which make M suspect him to be a liar and a beggar. In fact, after saying that his mother has just died (see lines 15 and 22), R requests S to assist him with some amount of money which, he says, is needed to be paid so that his mother can be admitted in hospital (see lines 28-29). M reacts telling R that he is gibbering or talking gibberish, which means ‘talking nonsense, fast and with confusion’: “*Ntiwumva ko uriko uradedemba wewe?* ‘Don’t you see you are talking gibberish?’. M’s utterance is an MPC evaluating R’s statements as cunning and

deceitful, aimed at conning money. M's MPC is impolite: it attacks the face of R, depicting him as a dishonest person whose talk is confused and senseless.

M uses the impolite MPC "*Ntiwumva ko uriko uradedemba wewe?* 'Don't you see you are talking gibberish?'" for the purpose of redefining his newly constructed relationship with the stranger, the young man R. In fact, when M meets R on a pathway for the first time, M is sympathetic as he listens to a young man appearing desperate and who says that his mother has just died. M is ready to give to R the assistance he needs, as much as he can. As M feels sympathy for R, a relationship is just born between the two persons: a young person who has just lost his mother, on the one hand, and an attentive and generous mature man who wants to assist and comfort him, on the other hand. However, as their exchange unfolds, M realizes that R is rather a crook, telling him contradictory stories notably that R's mum is dead and subsequently that the same mum is in need of being admitted as a patient in a hospital.

By reacting with the above impolite MPC, M exercises power and redefines his relationship with R, which ceases to be that one between a young man in need of help (R) and a generous man (M) ready to help. Their relationship becomes readjusted to a new one between 'a young man who is a crook (R)' and 'a careful mature man who is keen on distinguishing between truth-telling and lying (M)'. M tells R that he cannot easily be fooled by him, challenging him concerning his two-faced story in which he pretends to have a problem needing urgent assistance.

The metapragmatic verbs "*kudebagura*" 'to prattle, to talk nonsense' and "*kudedemba*" 'to talk gibberish', as discussed above, both have the sense of causing annoyance to one's addressee because one is talking much and without meaning. The same sense is expressed by another metapragmatic verb "*kurabagiza*" 'to talk much moving one's

tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite’. This verb adds the negative aspect of the speaker’s aggressive and provocative talk to their addressee, as discussed below.

5.3.5 The verb “*kurabagiza*” ‘to talk much moving one’s tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite’

In line 47 of Excerpt 9 previously presented in this chapter in subsection [5.3.3], we highlighted an MPC in which the husband (H), reacting to his wife’s (W) talk, used the verb “*kurabagiza*” ‘to talk much moving one’s tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite’. H says: “*Iyaba wanyubaha uka...ukansonera uba uriko urarabagiza imbere yanje?*” ‘If you genuinely respected me, would you be *talking so much moving your tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite* in front of me?’. H’s choice of the verb “*kurabagiza*” – which literally means ‘to move one’s tongue so fast from the mouth outwards in a way similar to what a snake does when it wants to catch its prey’ – suggests that H judged his wife’s speech behavior towards him as ‘aggressive, disrespectful, long, endless, annoying, etc.’. Such manner of talking can only be ‘acceptable’ in some contexts in an asymmetrical relation whereby the speaker is more powerful than the addressee but is ‘unacceptable’ in an asymmetrical relation whereby the speaker is less powerful than the addressee. The MPC by the husband is impolite because it is face-attacking because of the strong criticism it conveys and the negative connotation of the verb “*kurabagiza*”.

By using the impolite MPC, the husband exercises power. He explicitly points to the fact that she, as his wife, has gone too far through her verbal behavior, because she normally must always show him due respect. He implicitly brings in the difference of social status between him as a husband and her as a wife, in Kirundi culture and

tradition. The socio-cultural norms do not allow a wife to be noisy or say many words in the presence of her husband, especially concerning a topic on which they do not agree, as in this case whereby the woman has overstayed away from home for the whole day and is coming back home at night whereas she had not duly notified her husband. To differentiate between ‘him, the husband’ and ‘her, the wife’, he refers to her via the prefix ‘u-’ ‘you’ in “*urarabagiza*” /u-ra-rabagiz-a/ and to himself in the expression “*imbere yanje*” ‘in front of me’.

The sense of exaggerated verbal behavior towards one’s addressee, as expressed by the verb “*kurabagiza*” discussed above, is also conveyed by the verb “*kwenyaguza*” which means ‘to talk too much and often with an offensive body language’. The following subsection is about this metapragmatic verb.

5.3.6 The verb “*kwenyaguza*” ‘to talk too much and often with an offensive body language’

An example for illustration of the metapragmatic use of the verb “*kwenyaguza*” ‘to talk too much and often with an offensive body language’ is from *Ninde* play “*Ni abacu*” ‘They are our relatives’. A wife (W) has been arguing with her husband (H) over the ill-treatment which he has been giving to his orphan nephews and nieces; these are the children of H’s late brother. These orphan children have been living in this family where they were brought to stay after the death of their parents. W stands firm against H’s lack of care and love for the kids.

EXCERPT 11:

- 1 W: Jewe gushika ubu ibi ntavyo nemera.
- 2 H: Uze ubagaburire ivyo ukuye iwanyu.
- 3 W: Isubireko aba bana tubafate nk’uko ari abana.
(Umushitsi aca aradodora)
- 4 Ee! Kiranazira! Ubu jewe nzohora ndabagaburira.
- 5 H: Itabe uwo muntu ureke *kwenyaguza*.

TT:

- 1 W: I cannot accept this.
- 2 H: If you want to feed them, do so with the food from your parents' farm.
- 3 W: Change, understand that we must appropriately take care of these children.
(A visitor is knocking at the gate)
- 4 Uh! Unacceptable! From now, I'm going to feed them to their satisfaction.
- 5 H: Go to see the visitor knocking! *Stop talking so much with your offensive body language!*

The husband responds to his wife's 'long and rude talk' with the MPC "*ureke kwenyaguza*" 'stop talking so much with your offensive body language' as embedded within the utterance "*Itabe uwo muntu ureke kwenyaguza*" 'Go and see the visitor knocking! Stop talking so much with your offensive body language!'. The MPC is encoded in the verb "*kwenyaguza*", a lexical choice which the husband makes in order to convey his negative evaluation of the way his wife has been behaving while talking to him. By so doing, the husband warns his wife that she has gone too far in verbal misbehavior, which is against the expectations of appropriate communicative behavior from a wife talking to her husband. H's MPC is impolite because it is face-attacking given the warning and the criticism or negative evaluation of W's verbal behavior which are encoded in it.

In terms of interpersonal relations between interactants, the impolite MPC above is used by the husband in order to exercise power and readjust power relations which he has with his wife. In fact, through his MPC he judges her verbal and nonverbal behavior towards him as rude, implying the fact that it is culturally improper to behave in such way in a wife-to-husband relationship. He therefore orders her to stop such behavior in front of him. His message is clear, reminding her status as 'his wife' who, therefore, must show him respect in accordance with Kirundi culture.

The verb "*kwenyaguza*" 'to talk too much and often with an offensive body language' conveys the meaning of talking in a manner showing disrespect to one's addressee in

interaction. The same meaning is expressed by the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk too much and in a very noisy way as if praising one’s cattle’. Two examples from our data illustrate the use and interpersonal meaning of this verb in what follows.

5.3.7 The verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk much with noise and pride as if one were praising their cattle’

The verb “*kwiyamiriza*” is used in cattle keeping in Kirundi culture when a shepherd praises their cattle by reciting some poems and singing cattle songs in a loud manner as when taking them to pastures (Ntahokaja, 1978, p. 60). By analogy, the same verb “*kwiyamiriza*” is used metaphorically in Kirundi metapragmatic utterances in routine conversations to mean ‘to talk much with noise and pride as if one were praising their cattle while taking them to pastures’. The first example for illustration is given in Excerpt 12 below, from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*” ‘The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo’, Part III, Scene V.

In this extract, Biyago (Biya) has brought home a man called Filipino (Fili) ‘Philip’ to judge the case of what is thought to be a murder of his grandfather Kimotabugabo. In this alleged murder case, Biyago’s elder brother Kameya (Kame) is the main suspect because he has long been a threat to his siblings and to the old man Kimotabugabo over the inheritance left by their late parents. A young man called Daniyeli (Dani) ‘Daniel’, who is a lawyer and a judge by training and by profession, is a boyfriend of Somambike, the elder sister of Kameya, Biyago and Mucurantimba. Daniel has come with police officers because of the suspected murder of the old man Kimotabugabo. In fact, the last time the old man was seen by his grandchildren, except Kameya who was absent at that time, he was covered with blood while lying on his bed and appeared to be dead. Then, his body was no longer seen there.

EXCERPT 12:

- 1 Fili (Abwira Daniyeli): Mushingantahe waruciyeko, urya muntu umwagiriza
 2 iki?
 3 Dani: Ni akaranda kishe umuntu. Amaraso y'umuntu ni yo amukurikirana.
 4 Biya: Ntiyishe umuntu yishe Sokuru, yishe umugabo w'abagabo
 5 Kimotabugabo, bugaba bw'abagabo.
 6 Kame (to Daniel and Biyago): Mwa bijuju mwemeza gute ko nishye
 7 Kimotabugabo, kuva umunsi nabasanga aha nyene, uyo mutama
 8 sindamubona. Ndetse mbere naho nari kumubona cari co kimwe: sinkeneye
 9 amaraso nkeneye isaho isiga data. N'ubu nyene sinza kubesha, naho
 10 mwomena rimwe mukamena n'irindi, Jeneroza atanyeretse iyo amafaranga
 11 data yasize ari, n'ukuri n'ukuri turagerana mu mutwe...
 12 Biya: Uvuga ubesha urashengezwa...
 13 Kame: Uracari muto reka kwimaza ubute. Abagabo nibaguhanyire canke
 14 baguhanire. Muruca nabi ndabace amatwi...
 15 Fili: Burana rugabo ntuturi abareganyiriza...
 ...
 16 Kame: Nasanze Biyago bamugungubiranije mpita ndamuhagararira nti
 17 Somambike navuye yerekanye isaho isiga data. Kimotabugabo yari
 18 yansanzemwo amakari yari yikumiriye, ndamuhiga ndamubura. None ubu
 19 nari ngarutse kubibaza neza, kuko Somambike aho Biyago na mwene wabo
 20 twamuteteza...
 21 Biya: Urakabura inka, izina rya Biyago rikure mu kanwa.
 22 Yu! Ubu wonyibutsa ivyabaye nkagu...
 → 23 Fili: Ni we wundi numu sinakubajije, *aho ndaguhere umwanya uriyamiriza.*

TT:

- 1 Fili (to Daniel): Sir, what is your accusation against this
 2 person?
 3 Dani: He is very wicked; he shed the blood of someone.
 4 Biya: He didn't just kill someone; he killed my grandfather and his own
 5 grandfather.
 6 He killed the strong man Kimotabugabo.
 7 Kame (to Daniel and Biyago): You, stupid people. What evidence do you have
 8 that I killed Kimotabugabo? From the day I found you here, I haven't seen
 9 the old man again. Even if I had seen him. I couldn't do him any harm, since
 10 I don't want to shed blood, all I need is the inheritance left by my father. I
 11 maintain this, whatever you may do to me: if Generose does not show me
 12 where the money left by my late father, truly she will get trouble...
 13 Biya: You're just the looser; you're going to be prosecuted right now...
 14 Kame: Keep quiet; you're still a young man. May the elders give you counsel
 15 or punish you. If you're biased in this case, I will chop your ears...
 16 Fili: Please, defend yourself in an honorable manner; we are not accusers...
 ...
 17 Kame: When I came home, I found the family had not been fair with
 18 Biyago; I stood with him, obliged Somambike to show the wealth left by
 19 our late dad. Kimotabugabo, who saw that I was furious, left us; I sought him
 20 and couldn't find him. I'm again inquiring about the same, because when we
 21 insisted that Somambike show us our inheritance, me and Biyago...
 22 Biya: May you never own cattle! Stop mentioning the name of Biyago!
 23 Oh my God! If you remind me what happened, I will...
 → 24 Fili: Shut up! I haven't asked you to talk; once I give you time, *you'll talk so
 much with noise and pride.*

The same verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk much with noise and pride’ is used in the written play “*Semasunzu yasize araze*” ‘Semasunzu left a will before dying’, Part I, Scene III, in Excerpt 13 below, in a conversation between Nyankurubike (NYA) and her brother-in-law Rutuneza (RUT), who is the brother of her late husband:

EXCERPT 13:

- 1 RUT: (avuga yegereza inzu, asemerera) Nyankurubike, Nyankurubike...
- 2 Mbe ko utitaba wanyikiye he? Wamaze gutekera utwawe?
- 3 Ndakurahiye uyu musi ntusubira kuyiraramwo. Ese eheeee!
- 4 Ko mvuga ntunyishure, ubwo unyahoza wumva? (Aricara mu rugo)
- 5 Ariko uragayana mwana w’abakobwa...
- 6 NYA: Mbeeee, nk’iyo mirarwe yose numvise ivuye kuki? Ubu naho nari
- 7 nkuvugishije?
- 8 RUT: Mva hejuru ndabona ko ataco mwibanga.
- 9 NYA: (yicara yiyambagura) Mbega yemwe uyo muntu tuzokiranya gute?
- 10 Ko agarutse akari inyuma karahinda, emwe aha hantu bahamushingiye
- 11 akarundi k’abasazi. Ubwo ntaho bagushuhuye ngo urama uagenda
- 12 kuyogoza karya gakecuru, ngo urabe ico kavuga.
- 13 Oya data nturi gusa, ngira bakundogeyeko, nangwa ni ivyo wanyoye
- 14 bikuzinda ubwenge
- 15 RUT: Nta bindi wongerako eheeee!
- 16 NYA: Emwe baravuze koko ko urubuze inkware ruvumbukana igihuna,
- 17 na we...
- 18 RUT: Ewe, *ntuvuge wiyamiriza* ngo ndakangwa n’imise amaseza akiri ku ruzi...

TT:

- 1 RUT: (getting closer to the house, talking, shouting) Nyankurubike,
- 2 Nyankurubike... Where did you disappear, why don’t you respond? Have
- 3 you already packed? I swear, today you won’t sleep in this house. What on
- 4 earth! Why don’t you respond while I’m talking to you? Are you keeping quiet
- 5 deliberately? (he sits down in the front yard) You’re really a proud woman...
- 6 NYA: Why are you saying all these bad words to me? Have I said anything to
- 7 you, this time?
- 8 RUT: Get away! Don’t stand up near where I’m sitting, impolite woman?
- 9 NYA: (sits down, disappointed) By the way, how will I get on good terms with
- 10 this person? Now that he’s back, something bad may happen; surely, he has been
- 11 bewitched to rise up against this home. Haven’t you been bewitched to always
- 12 come to this home to provoke this old woman so as to hear what she may say?
- 13 I really can’t believe this; you’ve been bewitched to be against me. Or, it’s the
- 14 beer you’ve drunk which is making you act so foolishly.
- 15 RUT: Nothing more to add?
- 16 NYA: As the saying goes, you miss your target and aim at whatever comes on
- 17 your way...
- 18 RUT: *Stop talking so much with noise and pride*; I can’t be intimidated by a
- small person like you.

In Excerpts 12 and 13 above, the speakers use the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk much with noise and pride’ in order to describe their co-communicators’ speech behavior in

their respective MPCs. First, in line 23 of Excerpt 12, the respected man Filippo tells the young man Biyago: “Ni we wundi numa sinakubajije, aho ndaguhera umwanya *uriyamiriza*” ‘Shut up! I haven’t asked you to talk; once I give you time, *you’ll talk so much with noise and pride*’. Second, in line 18 of Excerpt 13, Rutuneza tells his sister-in-law who is a widow: “Ewe, *ntuvuge wiyamiriza* ngo ndakangwa n’imise amaseza akiri ku ruzi...” ‘*Stop talking so much with noise and pride*; I can’t be intimidated by a small person like you’.

Both speakers in the two Excerpts perform impolite MPCs. In fact, the verb “*kwiyamiriza*”, around which the MPCs are built, encodes a strong criticism of one’s addressee regarding their way of speaking; therefore, the MPCs are face-aggravating (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

At the relational level, both speakers in the two Excerpts use the impolite MPCs in order to exercise power. The choice of the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” is meaningful as far as defining the power relations in those MPCs is concerned. “*Kwiyamiriza*” is normally done by shepherds who take cattle to pastures and thus do poetry and singing in relation to this activity. In the context in which it is used in both conversations in Excerpts 12 and 13, a participant whose speech behavior is described using that verb is considered as doing what is unacceptable in interaction.

In his meta-utterance “*aho ndaguhera umwanya uriyamiriza*” ‘*once I give you time to speak, you shall talk so much with noise and pride*’ (line 23 Excerpt 12), Filippo chooses to use the metapragmatic verb “*kwiyamiriza*”, which is loaded with much criticism targeting his addressee and which therefore conveys the fact that he is in a power position in this exchange with Biyago. In other words, as a wise man and an elder, Filippo comments on Biyago’s speech and his behavior, portraying it as “*kwiyamiriza*”,

whereby he implicitly conveys the fact that it is not appropriate for such a young man to utter insults and threats to his elder brother (cf. lines 21 and 22) in the presence of elders such as Filipo himself. Another implicit message to the young man Biyago is that his words amount to nothing but simply to ‘too much and noisy talk’ (cf. the meaning of the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk much with noise and pride’). The two characters Filipo and Biyago appear to be in an asymmetrical relation, given the social status which each of them has at the moment of interaction. Filipo is in a power position as a wise elder and a guest who has been called upon by the family to settle the dispute in the family, whereas Biyago, a young and unwise man, is in a position of need for the wisdom from the old man Filipo and, thus, in a powerless position.

In a similar fashion, in Excerpt 13, the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” is used with a metapragmatic evaluation of a co-participant’s speech in a conversation between Rutuneza and his sister-in-law Nyankurubike, the widow wife of the late Semasunzu who was the brother of Rutuneza. This man uses the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” in his evaluation of the verbal act of his sister-in-law. In fact, Nyankurubike has just heaped insults on her brother-in-law (cf. lines 10-14) as an emotional reaction to his provocation. In his turn, the brother-in-law reacts with the following utterance in which an MPC is embedded (highlighted in italics): “*ntuvuge wiyamiriza ngo ndakangwa n’imise amaseza akiri ku ruzi*” ‘*Stop talking so much with noise and pride. I can’t be intimidated by a small person like you*’. By saying this, Rutuneza communicates to his sister-in-law Nyankurubike the fact that whatever she has said with insults towards him are merely “much and noisy talk” (cf. the meaning of the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” as already provided) and that she can in no case frighten him. Rutuneza belittles Nyankurubike and looks at her words as just rubbish which has no effect upon him. By so doing, he performs an impolite MPC encoded in that verb.

Concerning the interpersonal relations, Rutuneza exercises power through his impolite MPC. In fact, the utterance which he performs, as mentioned above, and in which the MPC is embedded, shows him as a person who considers the widow Nyankurubike as ‘a small person’ whose complaints are criticized as just noise. By the way, Rutuneza uses the imperative mood in the MPC “*ntuvuge wiyamiriza*” ‘Stop talking so much with noise and pride’ to emphasize his power over her. Indeed, in accordance with the Kirundi traditional practices, the man, as her brother-in-law, has the power to protect her and ensure her safe stay on the land property left by her late husband Semasunzu. However, if she does not show him respect, this may turn against her.

Noise in interaction is something which is disapproved of. Indeed, we find in languages metapragmatic verbs which reflect this fact. Thus, in Kirundi, for instance, we have the verb “*kwiyamiriza*” ‘to talk too much and in a very noisy way’ whose metacommunicative use has been discussed above. We also have the verb of saying “*gutantabuka*” ‘to bluster’ or ‘to talk aggressively *with noise and* threat’, which is analyzed below.

5.3.8 The verb “*gutantabuka*” ‘to talk aggressively with noise’

The Kirundi verb “*gutantabuka*” is related to another Kirundi verb “*gutabuka*” which means ‘to get torn apart’ as when said of a piece of cloth. Indeed, it is not uncommon to hear Kirundi speakers use a semantically similar metapragmatic verb “*gutabagurika*” ‘to talk unreasonably and in a noisy and threatening way’, whose primary meaning is ‘getting torn apart repeatedly’. In this sense, the verb of saying “*gutantabuka*” suggests the idea of a speech taking place abruptly and noisily and this can happen as a repeated action as well. Thus, the verb is commonly used to describe a way of talking and simply

means talking ‘rudely’ and ‘aggressively’ (cf. the adverbs ‘abruptly’ and ‘noisily’ which are within its sense as a verb of saying). This metapragmatic verb “*gutantabuka*” ‘to talk aggressively with noise’ is illustrated in the following Excerpt 14.

It is a piece of conversation between an old man Kimotabugabo (KIMO) and his granddaughter Somambike (SOMA). She is the first born among Kimotabugabo’s grandchildren; they have come to live with their grandfather after the death of their parents. The old man is preparing to bless the girl Somambike as the one who will take care of her siblings and who will be responsible for the management of the family property left by their parents. The chunk of conversation was taken from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*” ‘The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo’, Part I, Scene VII.

EXCERPT 14:

- 1 KIMO: Ni we nahamagaye, ni we musa ngomba ko tunganira.
- 2 Nababwiye nti ntumutinye Kameya. Sogokuru ndababona,
- 3 mugabo ntuturi kumwe ndagiye.
- 4 SOMA: Hari aho woba ukija ga soku?
- 5 KIMO: Ntaho nkija mugabo urw’abagabo sindarumara.
- 6 Ni rwo rundaririye, ni rwo ngomba kwitaba! Ko undaba
- 7 cane! Egome ntegerezwa gushengera.
- ...
- 8 SOMA: Oya! Sokuru ntiwoduheba.
- 9 KIMO: Sindabahevyeye, imisi ni yo igeze.
- 10 SOMA: Soku?
- 11 KIMO: Ntusimbwe n’umutima, ni we mfise, ni we nizigiye.
- 12 SOMA: Gute ga soku?
- 13 KIMO: Pfukama ndaguhe umuhezagiro so yakuraze.
- 14 SOMA: Dawe!
- 15 KIMO: Nategetse ntugambarare, nanje ngomba kugamburukira uwantumye,
- 16 ndagushikirize ubugabo bwa so.
- 17 SOMA: Ufashwe n’ibiki ga soku?
- 18 KIMO: Tangara *ntutantabuke nka musazawe...*

TT:

- 1 KIMO: I’ve called you alone as I have something to tell you. I told you that you
- 2 should not be afraid of Kameya. As your grandfather, I take care of you;
- 3 though I’m bidding farewell.
- 4 SOMA: Grandfather, are you still able to take a trip?
- 5 KIMO: I’m no longer able to take a trip; however, death is there waiting for me.
- 6 So, I’m getting ready to respond to it. Why are you staring at me? Of course,

- 7 I must leave this world.
 ...
 8 SOMA: No, grandfather, you can't leave us alone.
 9 KIMO: I'm not forsaking you; it's just the time for my departure which has come.
 10 SOMA: Grandfather?
 11 KIMO: Do not be worried, you are the only one I have whom I trust.
 12 SOMA: How, grandfather?
 13 KIMO: Kneel down so that I may give you the blessing left by your father for you.
 14 SOMA: My father!
 15 KIMO: I've given you an order; so don't disobey. Myself I want to obey as a messenger and bestow upon you the authority of your late father.
 16 SOMA: What's wrong with you, grandfather?
 → 18 KIMO: You can be surprised; but *don't talk aggressively and with noise like you brother...*

In line 18 of this Excerpt, Kimotabugabo's utterance "*ntutantabuke nka musazawe*" 'do not talk aggressively and with noise like your brother' is an MPC. The verb "*gutantabuka*" 'to talk aggressively and with noise', with an intent to threaten one's addressee, describes a way of talking. The meta-utterance is impolite, because the grandfather refers to her granddaughter's speech as 'aggressive and noisy speech' even if she hasn't actually done so. He is simply warning her not to behave verbally like her brother Kameya, who had just proffered threats to the rest of the family when he was asking to be given the inheritance of their late parents. As a warning, in the form of an order or an imposition not to do something, the MPC is face-aggravating and therefore conveys impoliteness.

At the interpersonal level, the impolite MPC is used by the old man Kimotabugabo to exercise power in this conversation, restricting the granddaughter's choice of action, that is, she is constrained only to obey her grandfather irrespective of whether she agrees or not to be blessed as a heir among her siblings. The speaker, aside from being Somambike's grandfather, is also her tutor, an old and wise man respected by the people in his village.

To summarize the above section on lexical choices involving verbs which express an inappropriate speech behavior, we note that such verbs are the vehicles of the speaker's metacommunicative act within the utterances in which they are used. Through the marked impolite MPCs which are encoded in such verbs, speakers are able to exercise power and, in specific instances, to redefine or readjust the interpersonal relations with their addressees.

In the subsection below we look at another verb which suggests an even much higher negative evaluation of verbal behavior. This is the verb “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’, which is metaphorically used to convey a metapragmatic message, meaning ‘to talk as if practicing fortune-telling’.

5.3.9 The verb “*kuragura*” ‘to talk as if practicing fortune-telling’

An example of the verb “*kuragura*” (lit. ‘to practice fortune-telling’) used metaphorically and in a metapragmatic sense to mean ‘to talk as if practicing fortune-telling’ was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ni abacu*” ‘They are our relatives’. A man has been having an argument with his wife; he uses this verb to describe her verbal behavior in their interaction. The wife (W) is strongly pleading for better treatment, by her husband (H), of the orphan children who are his nephews and nieces. The children have been brought to stay in their uncle’s family after the death of their parents. Some of the children are present at the moment of their argument.

EXCERPT 15:

- 1 (H has just shouted at the orphan children, who are now crying)
- 2 W: Mbe muta, abo bana n’ibiki?
- ...
- 3 H: Nsanze ngo bariko barakina bakeregeza hampande y’umurima wanje,
- 4 batumurira imyumbati yanje
- ...
- 5 W (to H, pleading for the children): Iminsi yose abo bana wama ubakubagura
- 6 iminsi yose ukamenga si abawe. Abo bana si ab’iwacu ni ukuri?
- ...

- 7 H (to the children): Umve, guhera ino saha, sinkeneye n'umwe nsubira kubona
 8 hanze, bese mu kigo.
 9 W: Umviriza. Aba bana se na nyina barapfuye. Nitwe dukwiye kubarera. Aba
 10 bana si ab'iwawe ni ukuri?
 11 H: Ni aba mukuru wanjye si ab'iwanjye.
 12 W: None bokwitwa nde? Bosigarana na nde?
 ...
 13 H: Uranyumva? Nta n'umwe wavyaye arimwo.
 14 W: None abana ba mukurwawe ni iki?
 15 H: Si ab'iwanjye ni aba mukurwanjye.
 16 W: Mukurwawe amota nde?
 17 H: Amota jewe Kazinda?
 18 W: Amota so
 19 H: Ntamota jewe
 20 W: Ndakubarire ndakubwire. Aba bana ndazi ko bariko bazira ubusa kuko
 21 wewe ni ko ubamira.
 22 H: Iii!Iii! Iii!Iii!Iii!Iii!
 23 W: Ndabizi.
 → 24 H: *Uriko uraragura imbere yanjye?*
 25 W: Umviriza ndakubwire
 26 H: Mvugiyemo umurima w'iwanjye, hamwe woba ubashigikiye, wojana na bo
 27 nyene
 28 W: Guhonyora vyonyene!
 ...
 29 W: Erega aha nakwumvirije kera
 30 C (one of the children): Nta n'aho twacye
 31 H (to C and her siblings, his nephews and nieces): Navuze ko ntabakeneye
 32 hampande y'umurima wanjye
 ...
 33 (A woman visitor arrives at the gate of their compound and starts greeting. It
 34 is H's sister, HS)
 35 HS: [Emwe
 36 W: Eh! Kiranazira. [Ubu jewe nzohora ndabagaburira ndabe=
 37 H: =Itabe uwo...uwo [muntu, ureke kwenyaguza.
 38 *Tpfoo!* (as if he were spitting at her, a sign of his strong disapproval)
 ...
 39 W (to HS): Aba bana yama aba...yo! (with a tone suggesting her emotional
 40 reaction)=
 41 H: =Ingene gakanaguza ubuso

TT:

- 1 (H has just shouted at the orphan children, who are now crying)
 2 W: Sir, what's wrong with these children?
 ...
 3 H: I've found them playing near my field, scattering dust
 4 to my cassava plants.
 ...
 5 W (to H): You always mistreat them as if they are not your blood relatives.
 6 Aren't they our children really?
 ...
 7 H (to the children): Listen, I don't want to see you here in the front yard, go to
 8 the backyard.
 9 W: Listen. Their parents died; we should raise them. Aren't they
 10 your children really?
 11 H: They are the children of my elder brother, not mine.
 12 W: So, whom should they identify with? Who should take care of them?
 ...
 13 H: Do you understand? Among them, there's none whom you gave birth to.

- 14 W: So, the children of your elder brother, what are they?
 15 H: They are my elder brother's children, not mine.
 16 W: Whom does your elder brother identify with?
 17 H: Does he identify with me Kazinda?
 18 W: He identifies with your father.
 19 H: He doesn't identify with me.
 20 W: Let me tell you. I know that these children are innocent because you always
 21 mistreat them this way.
 22 H: Iii!Iii! Iii!Iii!Iii!Iii!
 23 W: I know it.
 → 24 H: *Are you practicing fortune-telling in front of me?*
 25 W: Listen, let me tell you
 26 H: I have pleaded for my own crop field. If you support them, you can go away
 27 with them
 28 W: How come that stepping into a field is an offence?
 ...
 29 W: I listened to you for quite some time
 30 C (one of the children): We didn't even step into his field
 31 H (to C and her siblings, his nephews and nieces): I told you that I don't want
 32 to see you near my crop field.
 ...
 33 (A woman visitor arrives at the gate of their compound and starts greeting. It
 34 is H's sister, HS)
 35 HS: [Hello
 36 W: Eh! Inacceptable! [Me, from now, I will feed them; come what may!=
 37 H: =See who...[who is coming in, stop talking so rudely and with noise.
 38 *Tpfoo!* (as if he were spitting at her, a sign of his strong disapproval)
 39 W: These children, he always mistreats them...Yo! (with a tone suggesting her
 40 emotional reaction)=
 41 H: =See how this small woman is repeatedly blinking her small and unpleasant
 eyes!

In this conversation, the wife asks her husband a lot of questions (see lines 2, 6, 9-10, 12, 14 and 16), in the presence of the orphan children, accusing him of mistreating his nephews and nieces (cf. lines 5, 9, 20-21). She pleads for better treatment and love of the orphans by her husband. The latter is an uncle of those orphans and therefore should raise them appropriately in the place of their late father who was his elder brother, argues his wife. The words which his wife uses while denouncing his mistreatment of the orphan children trigger his reaction. He makes a parodistic mimicking in line 22, before making the following rhetorical question in line 24: “*Uriko uraragura imbere yanje?*” /u_{SC1} -riko_{be.PRES.CONT.} u_{SC1} -ra_{PRES.DISJ} -ragur_{practice.fortune-telling} -a_{FV} imbere_{in.front} yanje_{of.me/} ‘Are you practicing fortune-telling in front of me?’. This utterance is an

MPC. It is used by the man to evaluate what his wife has been saying and doing during their interaction, qualifying it as “*kuragura*” ‘to talk as if practicing fortune-telling’.

The Kirundi ritual “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’ is performed by “*umupfumu*” ‘a sorcerer’. Sorcerers cast spells, that is, words or incantations which, in practice, go with a ritual aimed at changing the happening of events and they do so to the advantage and disadvantage of people, themselves included (Lewis, 1999, p. 274). In our data in Excerpt 15, the husband, by analogy to the ritual described above, disapprovingly considers his wife’s words as spells which she is casting with a malicious intention to breed, into his nephews and nieces, hatred against him. In fact, as Chuang (2015) claims, messages conveyed through the act of fortune-telling has strong connections with the mind and the subconscious; which means that people listening to the fortune-teller will be affected in their thinking in a significant way. In relation to the conversation under analysis, the husband communicates the fact that the words which his wife is saying in the presence of his young nephews and nieces (cf. lines 5-6, 20-21 and 23), together with his reactions which his wife’s questions and comments provoke (cf. lines 11, 13 and 19), may cause these children to start looking at him not as an uncle but as an enemy to them. Therefore, the husband finds his wife’s verbal behavior very inappropriate.

In other words, by making the MPC “*Uriko uraragura imbere yanje?*” ‘Are you practicing fortune-telling in front of me?’, in line 21, the husband likens the wife’s behavior to that of a sorcerer in action. We note that the expression “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’ is associated with ‘sorcery’. Indeed, there is a relation between sorcery and divination, which is an alternative term for fortune-telling (Guilley, 2008; Lewis, 1999). The husband makes the above meta-utterance based on a number of

reasons. First, his wife has been asking him so many questions, in the same way a sorcerer asks questions to a client. Second, in the same manner sorcerers behave oddly in terms of voice and bodily attitude, the woman has been using a strange tone (cf. her emotional attitude) and has been displaying an unusual facial expression while pleading for the orphan children. Such odd attitude by the wife is further stressed by her husband in his remark following his meta-utterance, when he says, in line 41, “*Ingene gakanaguza ubuso*” ‘See how this small woman is repeatedly blinking her small and unpleasant eyes!’ and “*ureke kwenyaguza*” ‘stop talking so rudely and with noise’ in line 37.

The husband’s use of the metaphorical verb “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’ in his MPC gives his wife’s interactional behavior a negative evaluation. In fact, the ritual of fortune-telling often has a negative connotation among people in general, particularly in a social context where the religious beliefs are against such practice. Thus, in the present context of Kirundi speakers, with Christianity and Islam as the two main religions in Burundi, “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’ generally has a negative image among people. In regard to this, Chuang (2015, p.4) contends that there is a close link between fortune-telling and the mysterious and witchcraft and is often socially given a negative connotation among people especially Christians and Muslims. Moreover, witchcraft has always been linked with wickedness (Guilley, 2008).

The husband’s MPC is impolite, thus marked. In fact, his language is abusive given his choice of the metaphorical verb “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’, which is offensive and insulting. His use of the impolite MPC under analysis allows him to exercise power. Therefore, whereas his wife has been overtly accusing him of mistreating his orphan nephews and nieces in their presence, the husband is now

reclaiming his position as the husband and head of family, who deserves to be respected at all times in accordance with Kirundi social tradition. To achieve this relational goal, therefore, the man strategically does two things in his MPC “*Uriko uraragura imbere yanje?*” /*u*_{SC1} -*riko*_{be.PRES.CONT.} *u*_{SC1} -*ra*_{DISJ} -*ragur*_{practise.fortune-telling -aFV} *imbere*_{in.front} *yanje*_{of.me}/ ‘Are you practicing fortune-telling in front of me?’. First, he metaphorically uses the verb “*kuragura*” ‘to practice fortune-telling’ which has a negative connotation to characterize his wife’s speech behavior. Second, he explicitly and intentionally makes personal reference to his wife (cf. the personal pronoun prefix “*u-*” ‘you’ in /*u*_{SC1} -*riko*_{be.PRES.CONT.}/ and /*u*_{SC1} -*ra*_{DISJ} -*ragur*_{practise.fortune-telling -aFV}/) and to himself (cf. the expression “*yanje*” ‘of me’ within the structure /*imbere*_{in.front} *yanje*_{of.me} /), therefore issuing a stern warning against his wife whose speech behavior, like a fortune-teller’s incantations, is likely to lead to hatred between the orphan children and himself as their uncle.

The subsections above have focused on the strategy of using a variety of metapragmatic verbs to express different types of inappropriate speech behavior. Besides this, speakers also produce impolite MPCs by means of lexical choices which express a contrast concerning situations talked about. Through this contrast, the speech behavior of one’s addressee is judged improper, as the data in the following section show.

5.4 Using Words in an Impolite MPC which Express a Contrast Concerning Situations Talked About

This section deals with evaluative MPCs in which words expressing a contrast concerning situations talked about are used to show how the described addressee’s behavior is socially unsuitable. Such improper attitude or behavior is lexically expressed and takes the form of a contrast such as: talking as if one is celebrating

because someone is having problems, talking nonsense where one is expected to talk sense, behaving as an idle consumer instead of being an active producer, and keeping on uttering words rather than moving ahead to perform actions.

In the following sections, the words between inverted commas in the headings indicate the type of contrast to be discussed; and, in the examples used for illustration, the words conveying the contrast mentioned above are highlighted in bold italics.

5.4.1 Speaker talking about “having a trouble” versus hearer “taking it lightly”

An example here is taken from *Ninde* play “*Imisi y' igisuma iraharuye*” ‘The days of a thief are limited’. It is a conversation between a husband (H) and his wife (W) at home. H has been riding a bicycle, belonging to the brother of W, in order to make money for his family’s livelihood by taking people or their goods to various places. This time, the bicycle has just been stolen by a customer in a tricky manner. As H is back at home, he is trying to explain this to his wife.

EXCERPT 16:

- 1 H (Breathing with difficulty): Karabaye!
- 2 W: Ni ibiki?
- 3 H: Rya kinga bararitwaye.
- ...
- 4 W: Ikinga bararitwaye?
- 5 H: Ee. Uwo muntu namuzanye ambwira ko yamugaye
- 6 ngo yavunitse.
- 7 W: Ikinga rya musazanje bararitwaye?
- 8 H: Imyaka.
- 9 W: Urubahuka.
- 10 H: Ngize gutya rero, sinzi ivyo yampenze ngo nje kuraba
- 11 ngo ndamujanire ku muhana wari uhari,
- 12 ngarutse nsanga yikoreye.
- 13 W: Jewe ntavyo numva.
- ...
- 14 W: Jewe ikinga rya musazanje yampaye ngo uze urakora
- 15 ubu ‘taxi velo’ uze urazana udufaranga tudufasha
- 16 ntavyo nemera, aho waririye.
- 17 H: (Still breathing with difficulty) None wewe ga Marita ivyo ndakubwira
- 18 ntuvyumva, wewe ntuvyumva ingene vyagenze?
- ...
- 19 W: Nimba warigurishije, aho sinemera.
- 20 H: Umve, umve. Umve kandi. Nkarigurisha ibiki?
- 21 W: Warigurishije wewe ndakuzi=

- 22 H: =Jewe ndagusigurire ingene vyagenze hama [ngo narigurishije ibiki
 23 W: [Vyagenze gute? Igisuma...
 → 24 H: Wewe **ndagorwa** nawe uka...**ukaririmba**? None nk'ubu ntitugowe twese?

TT:

- 1 H (Breathing with difficulty): Too bad!
 2 W: What's wrong?
 3 H: The bicycle has been stolen.
 ...
 4 W: The bicycle has been stolen?
 5 H: Yes. The thief is a man whom I carried on the bicycle as a customer, he
 6 pretended he had had a fracture
 7 W: You mean my brother's bicycle has been stolen?
 8 H: Stolen really.
 9 W: You're too much daring.
 10 H: On our way, he stopped me and told me to hand in his luggage to a person
 11 who, he pretended, was in a nearby home; I left him seated on the bicycle.
 12 Unfortunately, when I came back, I found he had disappeared with the bicycle.
 13 W: I really don't understand this.
 ...
 14 W: My brother gave us that bicycle so that we may earn a living as you ride it
 15 taking customers or their luggage to various places. I can't believe you.
 16 Certainly, you have sold it and eaten the money.
 17 H: (Still breathing with difficulty) But Marta, can't you really understand what
 18 I'm telling you which happened accidentally?
 ...
 19 W: If you have sold it, I can't accept this.
 20 H: Listen! Listen! Why should I sell it?
 21 W: You have sold it, I know you=
 22 H: =I explain to you what happened but you keep on saying [that I sold it?
 23 W: [What happened? A thief...
 → 24 H: (lit. 'While I get trouble you sing a joyous song?') *How come that I get a
 trouble and you delight in it?*

In Excerpt 16, after several attempts to explain and convince his wife that the bicycle has been stolen, the husband realizes that his wife is not ready to understand him and that she continues to suspect him that he has sold the bicycle. In fact, the wife says “*Jewe ntavyo numva*” ‘I don’t understand this’ as a response to her husband’s explanation. She even makes him repeat this explanation as she says “*subiramwo numve*” ‘repeat for me’. Finally, she concludes this: “*Warigurishije wewe ndakuzi*” ‘You have sold it, I know you’ (in line 21).

Therefore, the husband reacts to his wife’s attitude and produces the MPC: “*Wewe ndagorwa nawe uka...ukaririmba?*” (lit. ‘While I get trouble you sing a joyous song?’)

‘How come that *I get a trouble and you delight in it?*’ (in line 24). His MPC is an evaluation of his wife’s behavior as not good. He disapproves of her attitude of not sympathizing with him in the present trial, in spite of his repeated explanation of what happened. It is true that the wife is expressing her doubt concerning the so-called theft of her brother’s bicycle as well as her anger, because, as she says, she believes that her husband can misuse family property. However, in a previous scene of this *Ninde* play, the bicycle was really stolen under circumstances as narrated by her husband in this Excerpt. His MPC conveys his strong criticism and his very negative evaluation of W’s attitude. The MPC is impolite as it is likely to endanger W’s face in this conversation.

At the interpersonal level, by producing the impolite MPC, the husband readjusts his relation with his wife at the current moment of interaction. Through this MPC, he portrays his wife’s attitude as not humane enough because she is not understanding and not compassionate when he expresses the misfortune he had as the bicycle was really stolen from him. The wife is behaving not as a wife and a companion who should understand and comfort her husband in times of trouble but rather as an enemy who delights in seeing him in trouble.

In the example above, we have a case of an MPC displaying a contrast of attitudes by the interactants as they talk to one another, specifically a husband and his wife in a situation of theft of a family property and therefore reactions to this sad event. In the data in Excerpt 17 below, we have an MPC which contains a contrast of ways of talking particularly ‘talking nonsense’ vs. ‘talking sense’.

5.4.2 “Talking nonsense” versus “talking sense”

In this subsection, we illustrate an instance of metacommunication where ‘talking nonsense’ is contrasted with ‘talking sense’ within one meta-utterance. The following

extract of conversation is from *Ninde* play “*Ineza imbere, inda inyuma*” ‘Let goodness lead, leave greed behind’. A greedy young man (YM), who works in a certain town away from his parents’ village, has just come back home for a visit. On his arrival at home, he requests his father (F) and mother (M) to give him a portion of the food which they were offered as meal during a party of his dowry payment; the ceremony took place in his absence but his parents and family were present. As his parents fail to grant him this odd request, and subsequent to the argument which follows among them, YM beats his father, almost causing him to suffocate. Upon hearing the commotion, the neighbors come in a hurry to help settle the dispute. YM tries to justify his ridiculous act.

EXCERPT 17:

- 1 YM: Uwo dawwe, reka ndabereke ico dupfuye uwo dawwe.
 → 2 F (angry, breathing with difficulty): ***Dedemba uragapfa utavuze.***

TT:

- 1 YM: This father of mine, let me tell you why I was beating him, this father of mine.
 → 2 F (angry, breathing with difficulty): ***Say your nonsense! May you never talk sense.***

The father is angry and curses his son “*Uragapfa utavuze*” ‘*May you never talk sense*’ in addition to his description of his son’s speech as “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk gibberish, to talk nonsense’ in “*Dedemba*” ‘Say your nonsense’. The son’s nonsense talk is evident in his words “*Uwo dawwe, reka ndabereke ico dupfuye uwo dawwe*” ‘This father of mine, let me tell you why I was beating him, this father of mine’. Nobody can ever understand a son saying that he has a reason for beating his father and, moreover, when the son is referring to his father disdainfully as “*uwo dawwe*” ‘this father of mine’.

The father’s strategy in his MPC “*Dedemba uragapfa utavuze*” ‘*Say your nonsense! May you never talk sense*’ consists in drawing a contrast between the meanings of two

lexical items: the verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk gibberish/talk nonsense’, on the one hand; and the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ in the usual and normal way, with the implied meaning ‘to talk sense’ in the present context, on the other hand. The verb “*kuvuga*” is used by the father with a positive connotation to mean ‘to talk sense’. In a sense similar to this one, the verb can even be used to mean ‘to say that which is good to listen to’ in the sense in which it was traditionally used during the monarchy time in Burundi in the Kirundi expression “*Vuga duhabwe, Mwami w’i Burundi*” ‘May you talk and we [lit. ‘get gifts’] benefit from it, oh Dear King of Burundi’ which was said by people expressing recognition and appreciation of their King and what he was going to tell them.

The father characterizes what his son has just said and what he is going to tell people as ‘nonsense’. In fact, the son says that he is going to tell people the reason why he has assaulted and beaten his father and almost caused him to suffocate. First of all, telling people that one has a reason for beating his father is ‘nonsense’. Second, the son referring to his father with contempt when he says “*uwo dawu*” ‘this father of mine’ conveys a ‘nonsensical speech’. Third, the reason why the son decided to beat his father is because his father and mother were unable to keep for him and give him the portion of the food which was served to them on the day of his dowry payment, a party which took place in his absence two months ago. This reason is ‘nonsense’ as well.

The MPC by the father is impolite in that it is face-attacking: the use of the imperative for imposition in “*Dedemba*” ‘Say your nonsense’, the meaning of the verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk gibberish’ and the curse “*uragapfa utavuze*” ‘May you never talk sense’.

Besides the emotional drive behind the father's performance of his impolite MPC, he used it in order to exercise power and to readjust the interpersonal relation between him and his son at the present moment of interaction. Now that people have gathered and that he is no longer under the threat of physical harm by his son, the father, through his MPC, expresses the fact that after all he remains his father, a moral authority in his household despite the fact that physically he is now weaker than his son; and at the same time the father is the only person who can utter a blessing or a curse upon his children and things come true, as far as the belief in Kirundi tradition is concerned.

A further type of contrast in our data is expressed in a marked MPC which the speaker constructs in the form of a parodistic mimicking. An example is illustrated below, whereby the contrast in terms of social roles consists in 'being idle' and yet 'having the need to eat'.

5.4.3 "Choosing to be idle" versus "having the need to eat"

In Excerpt 18 below from *Ninde* play "*Ingenzi y'imihana ni yo nzanyi y'amazimwe*" 'Wandering through the homes of neighbors is the source of many social problems', we have an example of contrast concerning two situations involving one individual, who happens to be a participant in the conversation. In this play, a certain family living in a village has farming as the major source of food and incomes. One day, the man who is the head of the family is ready to leave the house early in the morning and go to pubs as he has the habit. His wife is against his bad habit and requests him to go with her to the fields and assist her in the farming activities.

EXCERPT 18:

- 1 Wife (W): Ehee. Mbaye ndakuzanira umupanga, isuka nayo ngomba nze kuyitora.
- 2 Husband (H): Uyizanira nde?
- 3 W: Wewe.

- 4 H: Jewe narakubwiye ku munsu w'isoko ko *nzoja kurima*?
 → 5 W: Ewee! Ha! (mimicking H) Uti “NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W'ISOKO NSHOBORA KURYA?”

TT:

- 1 Wife (W): I have already brought you the machete. I'm going to bring you a hoe as well.
 2 Husband (H): To whom are you bringing them?
 3 W: To you.
 4 H: Have I ever told you that *I will go to cultivate* the land on a market day?
 → 5 W: Hmh! (mimicking H) So, you say: “HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT I CAN EAT ON A MARKET DAY?”

Excerpt 18 begins with the wife saying that she is bringing a machete and a hoe for her husband so that they go together to work in the fields. In line 4, however, the husband refuses to go with her to do farming, saying “*Jewe narakubwiye ku munsu w'isoko ko nzoja kurima?*” ‘Have I ever told you that *I will go to cultivate* the land on a market day?’ In line 5, the wife reacts mimicking her husband, saying “NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W'ISOKO NSHOBORA KURYA?” ‘HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT I CAN EAT ON A MARKET DAY?’. In her mimicking, she intentionally substitutes the verb ‘*kurya*’ ‘to eat’ for the verb ‘*kurima*’ ‘to cultivate land’.

There are two meaningful things which the wife does in her turn in line 5 of this Excerpt 18: (1) she is mimicking her husband; (2) she replaces her husband's words “*nzoja kurima*” with her own words “*nshobora kurya*”. First of all, the wife uses parodistic mimicking to echo her husband's words, a style used by her to evaluate them as improper, that is, she is disapproving of his refusal to go with her to do farming activities on the pretense that it is a market day. Second, to the strategy of mimicking, she adds up another strategy whereby she replaces the verb “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’ uses with the verb “*kurya*” ‘to eat’. By so doing, her intention is to ridicule her husband by expressing the fact that, although he is refusing to go with her to “cultivate” land on a market day, he will still “eat” the food on a market day, which is produced on the same farming land. The wife's strategy echoes the Kirundi saying: “*Uwutarima ntamira*” (lit. ‘S/he who does not cultivate does not swallow’) ‘S/he who does not cultivate does not

find food to eat'. The wife's parodistic mimicking is an implicit MPC; it is impolite because mimicking someone encodes a criticism against them and doing it the way the wife has done it in line 5 causes feelings of ridicule to her husband.

Through her mimicking and her choice to substitute the verb "*kurya*" for the verb "*kurima*" in her MPC, the wife exercises power in the sense of redefining the power relations between her and her husband. In fact, whereas the man considers himself a boss who does what he wants and when he wants, his wife implicates the fact that she is the food provider for the family, including the husband himself, thanks to her effort in the farming activity. Therefore, she underscores the fact that her role in the household is of paramount importance, unlike him who is eating food which he has not produced given his idleness. The woman in her parodistic mimicking is implicitly saying that her role is "*kurima*" 'to cultivate land', whereas her husband's role is "*kurya*" 'to eat'. Putting these two verbs in parallel (that is, in H's words "*nzoja kurima*" 'I will go to cultivate' in line 4 and in W's echoic words "*nshobora kurya*" 'I can eat' in line 5) helps the wife to expose the extent to which it is ridiculous for her husband to behave this way.

In connection with the above case involving idleness, we have another example, in our data, of an MPC bringing in a contrast between 'words' and 'actions', in the sense of the proverb "Actions speak louder than words".

5.4.3.1 "Words" versus "actions"

The extract below was taken from the written play "*Semasunzu yasize araze*" 'Semasunzu left a testament about inheritance before dying', Part II, Scene III. It shows the speaker's deliberate use of a contrast as he employs the terms "*akarimi*" 'nice talk',

implying ‘words’, and “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate land’, implying ‘actions’ within the context.

Buyange and Misigaro are two children of the late Semasunzu. Their paternal uncle Rutuneza, brother of the late Semasunzu, has taken them to live at his home by force, as he has been threatening to chase their mother, the widow Nyankurubike, from her husband’s land so that he can own it. A young medical doctor called Nkundwa has come to Rutuneza’s home to visit Buyange. He is aware of this problematic situation which the family of the late Semasunzu is going through. As Buyange and her friend Nkundwa are chatting in the home of Rutuneza, they suddenly hear him coming back home but being still outside the fence. Nkundwa goes to hide in a nearby place; he appears only when Rutuneza starts threatening the orphans.

EXCERPT 19:

- 1 RUTUNEZA: (Asanga Buyange yicaye wenyene akabanza kweraguza araba
- 2 hose mugabo ntabona Nkundwa). Emwe baravuze ngo uwanse ibara
- 3 yirukanye abakobwa, jeha narabikwegeye, buca banta mu nyenga y’umuriro.
- 4 Ubwo ga wa mukobwa n’inda n’indesho nta n’isoni, gukwegera abasore mu
- 5 rwanje? Uraba wabajije ni kwa Bitutuza Bihonyi muvuyara wa Gitsirye, iyo
- 6 ndahiye simba nshaka zina mukobwa andahuruza.
- 7 (Ahamagara Misigaro, akinjira kuraba, ahaguruka). Ewe, ukumbure uvuge
- 8 iyo musazawe ari ahandi ho urakabona.
- 9 NKUNDWA: (ava aho yari yinyegeje). Mbega mushingantahe na we,
- 10 birakudabukanye. *Ukaza **akarimi** ntukaza **kurima***. Mpora numva ngo
- 11 uwanka isazi ata akanuka, none wewe ntiwokwikora mu kwaha ngo wikize
- 12 icaha?

TT:

- 1 RUTUNEZA: (he finds Buyange sitting alone in the compound, he looks
- 2 around but cannot see Nkundwa) People were right when they said that in
- 3 order to avoid problems one should chase girls from one’s home. I made a
- 4 mistake to host girls in my house; they’ll soon cause me trouble. You girl,
- 5 don’t you feel ashamed to bring boys in my home? You should know this is
- 6 the home of a strong man who doesn’t joke with girls who disobey his rules.
- 7 (He calls Misigaro, goes into the house to check). You must tell me where
- 8 your brother is; otherwise, you will get trouble.
- 9 NKUNDWA: (leaves the place where he was hiding). Sir, something is wrong
- 10 with you. *You are good at **talking** but you **take no action***. There’s a Kirundi
- 11 proverb saying that ‘He who doesn’t want flies around him throws away
- 12 anything of bad odor’; so, why don’t you chase your nieces from your home?

While he was about to reach his house, Rutuneza could hear his niece Buyange talking with a young man; this is Nkundwa who immediately went to hide. In lines 2-6, Rutuneza is complaining about Buyange whom he thinks has brought a man in his home, something which is forbidden in his home. In his complaint, Rutuneza indirectly threatens to chase his nieces when he says that the solution could be to chase the nieces Buyange and Misigaro from his house: “*Emwe baravuze ngo uwanse ibara yirukanye abakobwa, jeho narabikwegeye, buca banta mu nyenga y’umuriro*” ‘People were right when they said that in order to avoid problems one should chase girls from one’s home. I made a mistake to host girls in my house; they will soon cause me trouble.’ Then, Nkundwa shows up and responds to Rutuneza’s threat saying: “*Ukaza akarimi ntukaza kurima*” ‘You are good at talking but you take no action’ (line 10). Nkundwa’s utterance is an MPC.

The formal expression, of which the MPC is made up, is common in Kirundi and is based on the contrast ‘actions’ versus ‘words’. It is used to highlight the importance of putting into practice what one says. Two lexical items are brought in comparison: “*akarimi*” ‘words’ and “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’ which stands for ‘taking action’. The noun “*akarimi*” /aAUG12 -kaNP12,DIM. -rimi_{tongue}/ (lit. ‘a small/nice tongue’) ‘words’ is used metonymically whereby the tool “tongue” stands for the act of “talking” itself. It conveys the meaning of ‘being good at talking’, for example about what to do. The opposite, that is, ‘being practical through real action’, is expressed by means of the verb “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’. Cultivating land is one of the main activities which are valued in Kirundi culture, therefore, the verb “*kurima*” was chosen in the expression being discussed here to represent ‘action’ or ‘taking action’ or again ‘putting into practice something’ as opposed to ‘just talking about it’. This is the kind of contrast expressed in the English proverb “Actions speak louder than words”.

Moreover, the verb “*kurima*” is chosen in this expression because of the sound effect it has when used with “*akarimi*”, where there is a rhyme due to the common sound sequence /*rim*/ in the two words. Rhyme is meaningful because it produces a persuasive effect in the hearer through attracting his/her attention (Jakobson, 1980), the reason why it is used in the almost fixed Kirundi expression “*Ukaza akarimi ntukaza kurima*” ‘You are good at talking but you take no action’. Specifically in the present context, the speaker Nkundwa is persuading Rutuneza to move on to action and chase his nieces and his nephew from his house.

In effect, the MPC by Nkundwa is intended to provoke Rutuneza to chase his nieces and his nephew. The following utterance which he adds to his MPC indicates his intention: “*Mpora numva ngo uwanka isazi ata akanuka, none wewe ntiwokwikora mu kwaha ngo wikize icaha?*” ‘I have often heard about this Kirundi proverb which says that he who does not want flies around him throws away anything of bad odor, so why don’t you chase your nieces from your home?’. Nkundwa is a boyfriend of Buyange and knows very well how this girl, her sister Misigaro and their brother have been mistreated by their uncle Rutuneza. Therefore, if he chases them they will get back to their mother’s house in their late father’s home and they will enjoy more freedom and a better life. Indeed, they were brought by their uncle to his home by force and for ill motives.

Nkundwa’s MPC in line 10 is impolite. In fact, after listening to Rutuneza from the place where he has been hiding, the young man Nkundwa decides to show himself and then tells Rutuneza: “*Ukaza akarimi ntukaza kurima*” ‘You are good at talking but you take no action’. This MPC attacks the face of his interlocutor, that is Rutuneza, who is the owner of the house where they are now and the uncle of Nkundwa’s girlfriend

Buyange. As such, Nkundwa normally should behave very politely towards Rutuneza. However, the impoliteness in his MPC is aimed at achieving a communicative goal.

At the interpersonal level, through this MPC, Nkundwa readjusts his power relation with Rutuneza by showing him that he is not afraid of him and that he can even be impolite to him by criticizing him. In fact, the young man Nkundwa, a lawyer by training and by profession, does not show respect to Rutuneza, even if he is the uncle of his girlfriend Buyange, simply because he knows that he is not a good relative. Rutuneza has planned to chase Buyange's mother from her house so that he may claim ownership of the land left by her late husband Semasunzu, who was the brother of Rutuneza. For this reason, Rutuneza has moved by force his nieces and nephew (that is, Buyange, her sister and their brother) to his house. Nkundwa is thus performing this MPC to provoke Rutuneza to chase them and send them back to their late father's house, as already discussed above. But beyond this, regarding his interpersonal relations with Rutuneza, Nkundwa shows this old farmer that he does not deserve to be respected given his misconduct and his ill-treatment of his nieces and nephew and particularly his evil intention to chase their mother from her late husband's house and land. Moreover, Rutuneza is a drunkard as seen from the context when his sister-in-law Nyankurubike, the mother of Buyange, Misigaro and their brother, responds to Rutuneza's threat directed to her and says: "ngira bakundogeyeko, nangwa *ni ivyo wanyoye bikuzinda ubwenge*" 'you've been bewitched to be against me. Or, *it's the beer you've drunk which is making you act so foolishly.*' (cf. Excerpt 13 presented earlier, which is from the same play as Excerpt 19 above).

5.5 Conclusion

In chapter 5, I have analyzed the use of lexical choices in impolite MPCs and the implicated meanings of power relations in the fictional conversations sampled. The analysis of data indicates that speakers make choices of words which allow them to convey their intended metapragmatic evaluation and the meanings of power relations with their co-participants. Lexical choices in impolite MPCs are of different kinds.

First, speakers manipulate a term of address as regards what it refers to. Second, speakers manipulate a word by extending its meaning, for example the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ semantically extended to mean ‘to talk (in)appropriately’, ‘to talk praising oneself’, or ‘to talk opposing the opinion of someone’. Third, another lexical strategy consists in using a metapragmatic verb to encode an MPC and convey the inappropriateness of someone’s speech behavior. We have seen that Kirundi speakers have a range of metapragmatic verbs; they vary in their metapragmatic senses and the degree of negative evaluation which they convey. The fourth and last category of lexical strategies is the use of words to express a contrast concerning situations talked about.

In this chapter, I have provided and discussed many examples for illustration of lexical strategies employed by interactants, one of which is the one encountered in Excerpt 2, line 12. A man (M1), to whom his friend (M2) has been owing money for a long period of time, used an impolite implicit MPC “*Sha jewe*” (lit. ‘buddy, me?’) ‘Are you calling *me buddy*?’ immediately after M2 had referred to him as “*sha*” ‘buddy’. M1 uses this MPC to echo and disapprove of M2’s use of the endearment term of address “*sha*” ‘buddy’ to refer to him. M1 does not consider M2 as a friend for now but as his debtor; therefore, the MPC serves to mean this challenge and readjustment of their interpersonal relations, which are in this case power relations (cf. M1 as Creditor more

powerful than M2 as his Debtor). Indeed, M2 acknowledges this by changing the term of address to refer to his Creditor M1, saying “*Mushingantahe*” ‘Sir’ (Excerpt 2, line 14). What is happening here is the ‘interpersonal self’ or ‘relational self’ and ‘other’ being negotiated in this verbal encounter, in line with the theory of ‘self’ by Brewer & Gardner (1986), Spencer-Oatey (2007) and Baumeister & Bushman (2011).

In the following chapter, grammatical strategies used by interactants are discussed together with the meanings of enactment of power relations through such language use.

CHAPTER SIX

GRAMMATICAL CHOICES IN IMPOLITE METAPRAGMATIC COMMENTS AND EXPRESSION OF POWER RELATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the second objective of the study. It presents the grammatical choices made by speakers using impolite MPCs as well as the meanings of power relations which they convey in the fictional conversations under study. The chapter comprises of two major sections. On the one hand, we have morphological strategies. They include the use of affixation (use of diminutive and augmentative affixes), the use of derivation during coinage of a new word, and the use of compounding. On the other hand, we have syntactic strategies such as exploiting an NP, modality or aspect, substituting a lexeme or a clause, and making particular constructions like ellipsis (in statements and in echoic questions) and evidential constructions. The functions of the various choices in terms of interpersonal relations are also discussed, and findings are compared with previous related studies.

6.1 Morphological and Morpho-Syntactic Strategies Used to Emphasize Negative Metapragmatic Evaluation and Exercise of Power

In this section, we discuss the morphological and morpho-syntactic aspects of speakers' linguistic choices in metacommunicative utterances. They include: affixation, derivation, compounding, substitution, elliptical constructions, evidential constructions, echo-questions, rhetorical questions, and the use of nouns in the place of verbs. How such forms are chosen in such a way to have effect on the metacommunicative messages which they encode, particularly on interpersonal relationships between participants in conversations, is also discussed.

6.1.1 Affixation: Augmentative and diminutive affixes

The analysis of our data shows that augmentative and diminutive affixes were used by speakers in the selected fictional conversations with a metacommunicative intent. First of all, speakers use an augmentative affix to emphasize the negative evaluation they make about the speech behavior of the other participant. The example below is from Excerpt 3, presented earlier in Chapter 5, which was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ibihunda n’ibishurushuru bihuye vyose bicika ibihunda gusa*” ‘When two immoral persons keep company with one another, their immorality increases’:

- YM: Ee ma...Kuva aho wantukiye ngo ndi ikirumbagane, ngo ndi mu nzu iwawe, ngo...ngo ntaco maze.
 Ubu rero wamaze kubona ko ndakimaze. Erega...erega uwu ni umugeni, ni umu...ni umu...He!He!He!Hi! Ni umugore w’iwanje.
 → Mo: *Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo.*

- YM: Mum...For a long time you’ve been telling me that I’m a useless grown up son staying in your house.
 You’ve now realized that I’m worth something. Let me tell you...let me tell you, this [girl] is a bride...
 she is my...she is my...He!He!He!Hi! She is my wife.
 → Mo: *It is disgusting how you expose your ugly big teeth.*

In this chunk of conversation, the son, who is referred to as young man (YM) in this conversation, has just come back home with a young woman after spending a few days away without giving any notice to his mother (Mo) concerning where he was. Mo suspects her son of being involved in sexual immorality (see her words in Excerpt 3, line 3, “*Nimba uyo akumazeko iminsi*” ‘If this girl has been staying with you for the last few days’ and, line 5, “*...mwe na we ndiko ndabiyumvira nabi, nanke kubabesha*” ‘... I have a bad image of both of you, to tell you the truth’).

In line 11 of Excerpt 3, as re-written above, the mother, reacting to her son’s words and his laughter, makes the following MPC: “*Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo*” ‘It is disgusting how you expose your ugly big teeth’. Here, the mother expresses her disgust at the communicative behavior of her son. To do so, she uses the idiomatic expression

“*kwanikira ivyinyo*” (lit. ‘to expose one’s ugly big teeth’), which is a variant form of the expression “*kwanikira amenyo*” (lit. ‘to expose one’s teeth’); both expressions mean ‘to burst into laughter’ and are used in the context to disapprove of someone’s laughing.

While using the idiomatic expression “*kwanikira ivyinyo*”, the mother uses the augmentative prefix *-bi-* in the noun “*ivyinyo*” /i_{AUG8} - bi_{NP8, AUGV} - inyo_{tooth}/ ‘ugly big teeth’, where the augmentative particle *-bi-* becomes phonologically realized as “*vyi*”. The plural noun “*ivyinyo*” ‘ugly big teeth’ has a negative connotation, conveying the meaning of ‘ugliness’ and ‘hugeness’.

The use of the idiomatic expression “*kwanikira ivyinyo*” (lit. ‘to expose one’s ugly big teeth’) ‘to burst into laughter’ expresses the speaker’s negative evaluation of the verbal and non-verbal behavior of their co-communicator. The mother does not use the common plural form “*amenyo*” ‘teeth’ /a_{AUG6} -ma_{NP6} -inyo_{tooth}/ ‘teeth’, but rather uses the plural form “*ivyinyo*” /i_{AUG8} -bi_{NP8, AUGV} -inyo_{tooth}/ ‘ugly big teeth’, in which the augmentative particle *-bi-* accentuates such negative evaluation and puts emphasis on the mother’s disapproval of her son’s nonverbal (i.e. his laughter) and verbal behavior.

The sense of ‘ugliness’, which is amplified by the sense of ‘hugeness’, as brought about by the use of the augmentative particle *-bi-* in “*ivyinyo*” ‘ugly big teeth’, implicates ‘shame’, which the young man should feel, according to the mother. Moreover, the meaning ‘big’ of the augmentative particle *-bi-* in the same noun “*ivyinyo*” implicates the fact that the son is too grown up to say such improper words to his mother. The mother’s MPC “*Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo*” ‘What is disgusting is that you expose your ugly big teeth’ is impolite. She directly attacks the face of her son by means of that MPC.

At the interpersonal level, the mother is redefining her relationship with her son by distancing herself from the unacceptable son's talk which conveys disrespect to her and which therefore constitutes a violation of cultural norms. In other words, the mother behaves as a *keeper* of tradition and morals, while she views her son as a *transgressor* of the latter, a deviant son who is not ashamed of saying stupid things about his sexuality to his mother. Moreover, as the mother responds impolitely, she communicates to his son the fact that she is the *boss* in the household and therefore she exercises power. Not only is she the mother, and the only parent whom the son has got at this time, but she is also the owner of the house in which the son continues to live and the provider of food as well as the caretaker for the grown-up son concerning his many other needs. Put differently, the mother's impolite MPC serves the purpose of defining the power relations between her and her son.

In a similar fashion, a character in *Ninde* play "*Ni abacu*" 'They are our relatives' uses particles to implicitly emphasize the inappropriateness of his interlocutor's communicative behavior. Unlike the previous case, the speaker uses diminutive particles in this case. A wife (W) is arguing with her husband (H) about the ill-treatment by the latter of his nephews and nieces. These are orphan children born to H's late brother and who were brought to live in H's family after the death of their parents. H's sister (HS) who has come to visit the family finds the couple in this argument.

EXCERPT 20:

- 1 W: Uh!Uh!Uh!Uh! Aba bana bagire inzara, aho ari twe twobagaburiye, bagire
- 2 ubukene, bagire kurara batipfutse...
- ...
- 3 W: jewe gushika ubu ibi ntavyo nemera=
- 4 H: =Uze ubagaburire ivyo ukuye iwanyu=
- 5 W: =Isubireko aba [bana tubafate nk'uko ari abana
- 6 H: [Ivyo ngaha ntibibaho
- 7 (A woman visitor arrives at the gate of their compound and starts greeting. It is H's sister, HS)
- 8 HS: [Emwe

- 9 W: Eh! Kiranazira. [Ubu jewe nzohora ndabagaburira ndabe=
 10 H: =Itabe uwo...uwo [muntu, ureke kwenyaguza.
 11 *Tpfoo!* (as if spitting at her, a sign of his strong disapproval)
 12 W: [kandi ubona nyene
 13 HS (calling W by her name): Kari
 14 W (to HS): Saa.
 15 H (still addressing W): [Utisonera!
 16 HS (to W): [Mukama wanje, urazi aho nahamagariye?
 17 (to both W and H) Iyo ni induru muri uru rugo ga hemwe rurimwo abantu?
 18 W (to HS): Umviriza sha ndakubwire...baza musazawe;
 19 C (one of the orphan children complaining to HS): Twarigorewe...
 ...
 20 W (to HS): Uhanure musazawe
 21 HS: Kugira ugire bwakeye, haba hari amahoro
 22 W (to HS): Ahubwo ko ushitse ngira arahumura
 23 HS (to H): Nta n'isoni ga Kazinda...
 24 W (to HS): Banza wumvirize ibishitse ubu...
 ...
 25 H (to HS): Ehe ndakubwire ukuntu ubu bigenze, ngo bariko barakinira
 26 hampande y'umurima wiwe ngo bakawutumurira.
 27 HS: Ego.
 28 H: (mimicking his wife W): "K^hAWUT^hUMUYIYA"
 29 W: Aba bana yama aba...yo! (with a tone suggesting her emotional reaction)=
 → 30 H: =*Ingene gakanaguza [ubuso!*
 31 W: [sinobivuga ngo ndabishobore
 32 HS (to H): Reka rero je ndamubaze Kazinda
 33 H: Ubaza jewe?
 34 HS: Ego, ngomba ndakubaze ni ukuri
 35 H: Baza uwo mugore
 36 HS: Ndi mushikawe
 37 H: Baza uwo muri kumwe
 ...
 38 HS (still to H): Itongo ry'izo mpfuvyi ni we uririma, sinumva rero ukuntu
 39 woza kubaburutura, ubacisha ku biti no ku mabuye
 40 H: Reka nanje ndakubaze...
 41 W (to HS): Asanze ndabagaburiye honyene, aca abavutura bakagenda
 42 bariruka...
 → 43 H: Ndakubazanye n'uwo muri kumwe, *kaguma gafyuragura ubuso*
 ...

TT:

- 1 W: Uh!Uh!Uh!Uh! These children go hungry every day, and yet we are the
 2 ones to feed them; they are poor; and they have no beddings...
 ...
 3 W: Me I cannot remain insensitive to their situation=
 4 H: =You will feed them with the food from your parents' home=
 5 W: =Please, change your attitude; [let's treat them as they deserve as children
 6 H: [Don't ever feed them with our food
 7 (A woman visitor arrives at the gate of their compound and starts greeting. It
 is H's sister, HS)
 8 HS: [Hello
 9 W: Eh! Inacceptable! [Me, from now, I will feed them; come what may!=
 10 H: =See who...[who is coming in, stop talking so rudely and with noise.
 11 *Tpfoo!* (as if spitting at her, a sign of his strong disapproval)
 12 W: [I will feed them while you will be watching
 13 HS (calling W by her name): Kari
 14 W (to HS): Yes, please.
 15 H (still addressing W): [How impolite you are!
 16 HS (to W): [Oh my God! I have been calling for a while!

- 17 (to both W and H) Why this commotion in a household where there are people?
 18 W (to HS): Let me tell you, dear...ask your brother;
 19 C (one of the orphan children complaining to HS): We are miserable...
 ...
 20 W (to HS): Please, advise your brother
 21 HS: No greeting where there is no peace
 22 W (to HS): Maybe he will calm down as you are here
 23 HS (to H): Kazinda, don't you feel ashamed, really?...
 24 W (to HS): First listen what has happened this time...
 ...
 25 W (to HS): Let me tell you what happened: he said that these children were
 26 playing near his field and that they were scattering dust on his cassava
 27 HS: Yes.
 28 H: (mimicking his wife W): "K^hAWUT^hUMUYIYA" (Nonsense!)
 29 W: These children, he always mistreats them...Yo! (with a tone suggesting
 her emotional reaction)=
 —→30 H: =*See how this small woman is repeatedly blinking her small and unpleasant
 eyes!*
 31 W: [I can't tell it all.
 32 HS (to H): Let me ask Kazinda
 33 H: You want to ask me?
 34 HS: Yes, I want to ask you
 35 H: Ask that woman
 36 HS: I am your sister
 37 H: Ask that woman who is next to you
 ...
 38 HS (still to H): Since you are the one exploiting the land of these orphans, I
 39 don't understand why you mistreat them that way
 40 H: Let me also ask you...
 41 W (to HS): And when he finds me feeding them, he chases them and they leave
 42 running...
 —→43 H: Let me ask you and the woman beside you, *the small woman who keeps
 opening wide her small and unpleasant eyes*
 ...

In Excerpt 20 above, in lines 30 and 43, H respectively makes the following MPCs commenting on his wife's non-verbal behavior during her talk: "*Ingene gakanaguza ubuso!*" 'See how this small woman is repeatedly blinking her small and unpleasant eyes!' and "*kaguma gafyuragura ubuso*" 'the small woman who keeps opening wide her small and unpleasant eyes'. In these MPCs, H uses the diminutive particles **-ka-** in "*gakanaguza*" /ka_{SC12}, DIM – kanaguz_{blink. eye. repeatedly} - aFV/, in line 30, and "*gafyuragura*" /ka_{SC12} -fyuragur_{open. wide. eye. repeatedly} -aFV/, in line 43, and **-bu-** in "*ubuso*" /u_{AUG14} -bu_{NP14}, DIM - so_{eye}/ ('small and unpleasant eyes') in both lines. Through these MPCs, the husband evaluates negatively his wife's non-verbal behavior while she is talking to him and about him, in the presence of his sister, his nieces and nephews. He implicitly communicates that her behavior, specifically her facial expression, is inappropriate. Of

course, the man's communicative goal goes beyond the mere expression of inappropriateness of his wife's behavior, as it involves relational meanings as well, as will be shown below. To reach his goal, he uses diminutive particles in this MPC, as is analyzed above with the morphological details about the structures of the clauses ("*gakanaguza ubuso*" and "*gafyuragura ubuso*").

As we can see, both diminutive markers *-ka-* and *-bu-* convey the meaning 'small' (the woman and her eyes are criticized by her husband as 'small'); and *-bu-* adds the meaning 'unpleasant' to the description of the woman's eyes. The husband uses these grammatical devices in order to achieve a threefold communicative goal: (i) to evaluate his wife's nonverbal behavior as very inappropriate, (ii) to express his disgust at such behavior, and (iii) to exercise power through the impoliteness of his MPCs. The wife's communicative behavior is culturally inappropriate because it displays her lack of respect towards her husband. In fact, she has been daring rebuke him in front of everybody present, firmly saying that he should stop mistreating the orphan children staying with them. Her attitude is negatively appraised by her husband based on Kirundi social norms concerning the respect which a wife must show to her husband (e.g. Ntahokaja, 1978). This arouses emotions in her husband and causes him a feeling of disgust. Moreover, it makes him retaliate meta-communicatively by using diminutive affixes which belittle her.

The husband's impolite metapragmatic act is a reaction to his wife's attitude. We note that the husband does not directly react to what his wife is saying but rather to how she is saying it. Indeed, the man knows very well that she is saying the truth. So, he cannot deny it, though this truth does not please him. What irritates him most is his wife's use of aggressive non-verbal cues, particularly her look which expresses her high emotions

and her firm decision to fight for the orphans. Thus, the husband reacts by showing that his wife has gone too far and is humiliating him by being impolite towards him. So, he chooses to retaliate severely by belittling her as a ‘small’ woman who is ‘unpleasant’ to him given her attitude in their interaction.

By downgrading her, he strategically wants to achieve a readjustment of their interpersonal relations, a way of reminding his wife that she must respect him as the boss in the household, who should be talked to with due respect. The husband uses the impolite MPC in order to exercise power. In the process, he readjusts the relationship previously defined between him and his wife in the ongoing conversation: he puts her down in front of his sister and nephews/nieces, a way of reclaiming his power as the husband and head of the family. Therefore, the husband uses the belittlement strategy, which counts as a type of insult, in order to publicly lower her esteem. This is in agreement with Allan & Burridge’s (2006, p. 79) observation that interactants use insults in order to harm emotionally their interlocutors or to cause them disrespect and disgrace or both of them.

In conclusion, the examples of MPCs discussed above, respectively “*Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo*” ‘What is disgusting is that you expose your ugly big teeth’ (extracted from the Excerpt 3 presented in Chapter 4) and “*Ingene gakanaguza ubuso!*” ‘See how this *small* woman is repeatedly blinking her *small* and *unpleasant* eyes!’ (from Excerpt 20 above), have in common the fact that the speakers use affixes, respectively augmentative and diminutive, to attack the face of their addressee by implicating the supposed ‘ugliness’ of their addressee in order to humiliate them and degrade their status as interlocutors. Our finding is consistent with Allan & Burridge’s (2006, p. 79) claim that insults attack the target and humiliate them based for example on their physical appearance like being

too small or their apparent physical defects, which exactly match with what the speakers have done in the two cases of impolite MPCs analyzed above.

Besides the use of augmentative and diminutive particles in MPCs, speakers also have recourse to the morphological operation of derivation, notably through noninflectional affixation. This is what we move to in the following subsection.

6.1.2 Coining a word to express an impolite MPC

Using affixation, the speaker coins a word which echoes a word previously said by their interlocutor. Through the coined word, s/he expresses his/her disapproval of the utterance containing the echoed word. The following example illustrates this morphological manipulation. It was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ntawuhisha umwotsi inzu iriko irasha*” ‘You can’t hide the smoke when the house is burning’ (the play title is a Kirundi proverb). In a family, the husband has adopted a bad behavior of drunkenness and running after women. He has now even reached the stage of passing a night away from his home, despite his social status as a village council member. His wife is very disappointed by his misconduct.

EXCERPT 21:

- 1 The wife (W) (surprised to see her husband showing up early in the morning,
- 2 after spending a night away without her knowing anything about it): Huuuwa!
- 3 Ewe Mukama! Hariho abantu batamaramara. Mbega=
- 4 The husband (H) (calmly greets his wife): =Amahoro.
- 5 W: “*Uarakamahorwako*, urakarushwa. Mbega, ubu nk’ubu nta n’isoni wumva
- 6 mu mutima wawe wewe?
- 7 H: Isoni z’iki?
- 8 W: Nta n’isoni wumva ga Mukama w’ikigongwe? Ewe abataye umwanya ngo
- 9 bariko baragutora ngo urabaye abakuru b’imitumba! Barataye umwanya,
- 10 Mukama!
- 11 H: None jewe ndakubaza. Jewe ndi umukuru w’umutumba=
- 12 W:=Waraye he?
- ...
- 13 H: None sinaraye ku mutumba ntware?
- 14 W: Nawe=
- 15 H: =None ayo mabanga banshinze, si yo nari ku...[si yo naraye kurangura?
- 16 W: [Subirayo=
- 17 H: =Nsubira hehe? =
- 18 W: =Subira iyo waraye.

- 19 H: Iyo nzu ni iyo wubatse [wewe?
 20 W: [Subira iyo waraye. Nta kuntu novyihanganira.
 21 Usigaye ...uraraguza. Mbisa!

TT:

- 1 The wife (W) (surprised to see her husband showing up calmly early in the
 2 morning, after spending a night away without her knowing anything about it):
 3 Oh my God! Some people have no shame.
 4 The husband (H) (calmly greets his wife): = Peace be upon you.
 →5 W: *May you be given an insincere greeting of peace.* May you be extremely
 6 poor. Don't you even feel shame in your heart?
 7 H: Shame for what?
 8 W: You have no shame? Oh, my God! It's a pity; people wasted their time
 9 electing you as a village council member. They really wasted
 10 their time.
 11 H: Let me ask you. I am a local leader on this hill=
 12 W:=Where did you spend the night?
 ...
 13 H: Haven't I spent the night on this hill where I am the local leader?
 14 W: So, you=
 15 H: =The duties for which they elected me, aren't they [what I spent the night
 doing?
 16 W: [Go back there, then=
 17 H: =Where should I go back?=
 18 W: =Go back where you spent the night.
 19 H: Are you the one who built [this house?
 20 W: [Go back where you spent the night. I cannot bear this. You have adopted
 21 the strange behavior of ...sleeping away from your home. Unbelievable!

As the husband shows up at home early in the morning after spending a night away without anybody in his family knowing why, he calmly greets his wife saying “*Amahoro*” ‘Peace be upon you’. The wife responds saying “*Urakamahorwako*” ‘May you be given an insincere greeting of peace’. Her response echoes the husband’s greeting “*Amahoro*” ‘Peace be upon you’, which she considers to be contextually inappropriate, insincere and aimed at covering up his misconduct. Given that the wife’s response echoes her husband’s utterance, it is an implicit MPC which she uses to evaluate his verbal behavior in this situation.

Using the noun “*amahoro*”, which means ‘peace’ and ‘peace be upon you’ when used as a greeting as it is in the present case, the wife coins a new verb “*kumahorwako*” /kUNP15 -mahor(o)_{peace} -uAPPL -aFV -koLOC/ ‘to be given an insincere greeting of peace’. She uses affixation, specifically the applicative suffix -u- and the locative -ko to convey

the meaning ‘to be given an insincere greeting of peace’. The implicit meta-utterance which she addresses her husband is “*Urakamahorwako*” /u_{SC1} –ra_{kaOPT} -mahor(o)_{peace} – u_{APPL} –a_{FV} -ko_{LOC}/, whereby she uses the optative mood markers *-ra-* and *-ka-* in order to wish him the same disgrace of being given a similar insincere greeting of peace.

The greeting “*Amahoro*” ‘Peace be upon you’ is normally used among interactants who are on good terms in the context of their verbal exchange. The husband uses the same greeting as if things were normal and yet he has just come back home after spending a night away without any notice to his wife. Emotionally, the wife is shocked by her husband’s new behavior of spending a night away from home and for no reason since he was in a close neighborhood and nothing reasonable prevented him from coming back home at night. Therefore, as she suspects her husband of unfaithfulness, she negatively appraises the greeting of peace which he gives her in a calm manner, a way for him to pretend to be innocent. Her emotional attitude is also shown by the words which immediately follow her echoic meta-utterance “*Urakamahorwako*”, words such as: “*urakarushwa*” ‘May you be extremely poor’, “*Mbega, ubu nk’ubu nta n’isoni wumva mu mutima wawe wewe?*” ‘Don’t you even feel shame in your heart?’. The MPC “*Urakamahorwako*” ‘May you be given an insincere greeting of peace’ is impolite. The wife attacks her husband’s face in a direct and explicit manner using this MPC which is an insult and even a curse.

With respect to interpersonal relations, the wife’s use of this marked MPC above achieves a readjustment of power relations between her and her husband. In fact, the wife chooses to violate expectations by not giving a greeting in response to her husband’s greeting. Instead, she brings in a confrontational expression which sounds as a strong criticism and an insult. Therefore, at least temporarily, she redefines her

personal relations with her husband by showing the latter that he is not worthy of being greeted back because he is not serious as he has adopted the bad behavior of spending nights away from home without any reason known to her. Whereas the wife is a faithful partner constantly taking care of the household, the husband is viewed, through the MPC above, as behaving unfaithfully and thus his greeting of peace is not acceptable.

Through her impolite MPC, the wife dares confront her husband, who is normally the head of the family and thus the boss. Her impolite MPC therefore conveys the meaning of power relations being reconsidered at this moment of their interaction. Whereas the wife is temporarily in a more powerful position, which allows her to utter impolite comments on the greeting of her husband, the latter is in a disadvantaged position because of his misconduct and his feeling of guilt even if he pretends not to be ashamed of coming back home in the morning after spending a night away without any known reason. Indeed, the husband does not dare reprimand or do anything against his wife after she has made rude comments insulting him (i.e. the meta-utterance and the additional comment) in “*Urakamahorwako, urakarushwa*” ‘May you be given an insincere greeting of peace; may you be extremely poor’. The wife has strategically exploited the morphological process of affixation to come up with the expression “*Urakamahorwako*” and thus be able to convey the meanings implicated as discussed above.

Apart from having a metacommunicative word derived from another word, through the process of affixation, we can also have a noun with a metapragmatic meaning which is formed through the morphological process of compounding. This is discussed in the lines below.

6.1.3 Compounding

Let us consider the following example from Excerpt 6 previously presented in Chapter 4. We have a fictional conversation between two characters “Amazi” ‘Water’ and “Amata” ‘Milk’ in the book “*Igiti cokura cokweza*” ‘A grown up tree is remarkable by its fruits’ (Ngenzebuhoro, 1990), which is a sequence of fictional stories around a character called Bati.

- Amazi: Ko unyihakanye, ngo turamukanye. *Hoho ngira wohora ayo matakanwa utataguye nk’uwataye umutima.*
- Water: Given that you’ve rejected me, come and let us hug each other. *May be, then, you will stop your nonsense which you have uttered recklessly as if you were heartless.*

The MPC in which we are interested is the utterance “*Hoho ngira wohora ayo matakanwa utataguye nk’uwataye umutima*” ‘May be, then, you will stop your nonsense which you have uttered recklessly as if you were heartless’. Looking back to the co-text of this MPC, as illustrated in details in Excerpt 6 of the previous chapter, we note that the fictional character “Amazi” ‘Water’ produces the MPC in reaction to the following words previously said by her interlocutor “Amata” ‘Milk’: “*Akaruta akandi karakamira, ba ureka mvuge sindakuvuguswemwo, naremwe n’Imana*” ‘The powerless must respect the powerful. Keep quiet when I praise myself. I am not made out of you; I was created by God.’ These words reveal pride on the side of the character “Amata” ‘Milk’, which provokes a reaction by the other character “Amazi” ‘Water’ in the form of the MPC under discussion here. Within this MPC, the metacommunicative message is loaded in these words “*ayo matakanwa utataguye nk’uwataye umutima*” (Literally, ‘that silly talk/rubbish/nonsense which you have torn into pieces in your mouth as if you were heartless’) ‘your nonsense which you have uttered recklessly as if you were heartless’. The literal meaning of this meta-utterance conveys better the extent to which

the speech behavior being evaluated is inappropriate. The character “Amata” ‘Milk’ is criticized by her co-communicator “Amazi” ‘Water’ that what she has said is so inappropriate that it is comparable to rubbish which she has torn into pieces in her mouth.

The compound noun in which we are interested, and which is the core of the metapragmatic interpretation of the above MPC, is “*amatakanwa*” /a_{AUG6} – ma_{NP6} – ta_{throw} – ka_{NP12, DIM} – nwa_{mouth} /, which literally means ‘things thrown into the mouth’. In connected speech, as in “*ayo [ə]matakanwa*” (lit. ‘those things thrown into the mouth’) in the above MPC, the augment [a] of that compound noun is ellipted, both in speaking and in writing, because it immediately follows another vowel [o] of the demonstrative adjective “*ayo*” ‘this’. This is due to the fact that in Kirundi phonology, we cannot have two distinct vowels following one another. The noun *amatakanwa* is formed by combining two roots “-ta-” of the verb ‘*guta*’ ‘to throw’ and “-nwa” of the noun “*umunwa*” /u_{AUG3} – mu_{NP3} – nwa_{mouth} / ‘a mouth’. From the latter noun, we get another noun “*akanwa*” /a_{AUG12} – ka_{NP12, DIM} – nwa_{mouth} / ‘a small mouth’ inflected via the use of the diminutive prefix “-ka-”. Thus, the metapragmatic compound noun *amatakanwa* is morphologically analyzed into its components as follows: /a_{AUG3} – ma_{NP3} – ta_{throw} – (a_{AUG}) – ka_{NP12, DIM} – nwa_{mouth} / (lit. ‘things thrown into the mouth’) ‘foolish talk/nonsense’. As we can see, the augment of the noun “*akanwa*” has been elided during the compounding process.

With respect to the interpersonal aspect of communication, the MPC under analysis functions to achieve a readjustment of the relationships between the two characters in the verbal interaction. The character “Amazi” ‘Water’ looks down her interlocutor “Amata” ‘Milk’, portraying her as talking nonsense, notably when the latter proudly

tells the former: “*Akaruta akandi karakamira...sindakuvuguswemwo...*” ‘The powerless must respect the powerful...I am not made out of you...’. “Amazi” ‘Water’ reacts to these words by equating them with ‘nonsense uttered recklessly by a heartless person’ in the MPC “*ayo matakanwa utataguye nk’uwataye umutima*” ‘that nonsense which you have recklessly uttered as if you were heartless’. Put another way, the character “Amazi” ‘Water’ views her neighbor “Amata” ‘Milk’ as ‘reckless’ in speech, ‘heartless’ and ‘unfriendly’ (cf. the words preceding this MPC “*Ko unyihakanye*” ‘Given that you’ve rejected me and our relationship’). On the other hand, the character “Amazi” ‘Water’ considers herself as more powerful than “Amata” ‘Milk’, as the latter is mainly made of the former, contrary to the proud words by “Amata” ‘Milk’. Indeed, “Amazi” ‘Water’ challenges the latter to come so that they mix (“*ngo turamukanye*” ‘come and let us hug each other’), knowing that “Amata” ‘Milk’ will lose her properties after their mixture and that will be its end.

The character “Amazi” ‘Water’ produces an impolite MPC by saying “*Hoho ngira wohora ayo matakanwa utataguye nk’uwataye umutima*” ‘May be, then, you will stop your nonsense which you have uttered recklessly as if you were heartless’. The MPC is face-attacking. Through this impolite MPC, the character “Amazi” ‘Water’ exercises power. She readjusts the power relations between her and “Amata” ‘Milk’ by showing herself as more powerful contrary to what the latter had just uttered (cf. the previous words by the character “Amata” ‘Milk’ “*Akaruta akandi karakamira...sindakuvuguswemwo...*” ‘The powerless must respect the powerful...I am not made out of you...’, which the character “Amazi” ‘Water’ reacts to and comments on in the form of the above MPC).

Besides morphological and morpho-syntactic strategies used by speakers to evaluate their interlocutors' speech behavior as inappropriate, speakers also use purely syntactic strategies. Some examples are discussed in the following sub-section.

6.2 Syntactic Choices

The analysis of our data shows that speakers make impolite MPCs with various syntactic choices which have some effect on the metapragmatic meaning of the meta-utterances. Such syntactic choices include: nominalization, manipulation of modality, substitution of a lexical or clausal element, and elliptical as well as evidential constructions.

6.2.1 Nominalization

Verbs and nouns are the major source of expression of MPCs in language use; yet, more research has been conducted on speech act verbs, leaving nouns less analyzed in metacommunication (Hübler, 2011, p. 120). Therefore, investigating the use of nouns to convey metacommunicative messages contributes to studying other means of metacommunication other than verbs. Specifically in our data, we have the following case of nominalization used to make an MPC: the use of the nominal form “*intantabuke*” ‘a person talking in a very aggressive manner’, derived from the verb “*gutantabuka*” ‘to talk in a very aggressive manner’ in line 17 of Excerpt 22 below, a conversation from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*” ‘The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo’. Another noun which is used in Excerpt 22 as the vehicle of the metacommunicative message is “*imituragaro*” ‘thunder’, in the metaphorical expression “*singikangwa n’imituragaro*” ‘I am no longer threatened by thunder’ in line 15, which is also an MPC. However, unlike the above noun “*intantabuke*”, the noun “*imituragaro*” may not be a derivative of a verb, so that we may talk about

nominalization where this noun is used for metacommunication. Although we have a corresponding Kirundi metapragmatic verb “*guturagara*” ‘to talk making much noise and threatening one’s addressee(s)’, it seems that it is rather this verb which has been derived from the noun.

Our example of the nominalized form “*intantabuke*” ‘a person talking with a very aggressive tone’ is from the character Kimotabugabo talking to his grandson Kameya. This is a delinquent young man. For a long time, he has been staying away from his grandfather’s (Kimotabugabo) home, where they were taken to live after the death of their parents. He has just come back to his grandfather’s house to claim the fortune left as inheritance by their father. Upon arriving at Kimotabugabo’s home, Kameya is warmly welcomed by his grandfather and his siblings. However, he rejects the warm welcome through his verbal and nonverbal behavior.

EXCERPT 22:

- 1 Kimotabugabo: (yinjiye) Ingo musanganire mwene nyoko arasohoye...
- 2 (to Kameya) Wahora he ga mwuzuku?
- 3 Somambike (elder sister of Kameya) (to Kameya): Bite ga mwene ma?
- 4 Biyago (little brother of Kameya) (to Kameya): Nkora aha mukuru wa...
- 5 Mucurantimba (little sister of Kameya) (to Kameya): Amahoro ga musaza...
- 6 Kameya (to Mucurantimba): Uzire akaziri ntunyege.
- ...
- 7 Somambike (to Kameya): Nguyo sokuru Kimotabugabo
- 8 Mucurantimba (to Kameya): Ramutsa sogokuru Kimotabugabo
- 9 Kimotabugabo (to Kameya): Uranandamutsa nkiriho mwananje
- ...
- 10 Mucurantimba (to Kameya): Ingo uturwe mu nda turi abavandimwe
- 11 Kimotabugabo: Ubu nanje ndahinduye...Murabona,
- 12 tumwihohora kuki? Tutari incuti tutari umuryango,
- 13 natembe dutere impundu.
- 14 Kameya: Indamutso nkeneye ni itunga data yasize. Sokuru mfise ni amafaranga
- 15 data yasize. Bene mama mfise ni inzahabu data yasize. Incuti nkeneye ni inka
- 16 data yasize.
- 17 Kimotabugabo: ...Mbega aho wikakamisha nk’igikere ciyubuye...ukeka utera
- 18 ubwoba nde? Ndaba usanga narikoboye singikangwa n’imituragaro. Nayo
- 19 wewe ga mwana, uranemera impanuro z’umutama; hinda ubu bwoba mwana
- 20 w’ubusa hasaba amashi. Itunga rya so ryari iryawe.
- 21 Mugabo ko *uje nk’intantabuke*, uraribura ugireko utabuke akabondo.

TT:

- 1 Kimota: (coming in) Come to greet your brother, he has come...

- 2 (to Kameya) Where have you been, my grandson?
 3 Somambike (elder sister of Kameya) (to Kameya): How are you, my brother?
 4 Biyago (little brother of Kameya) (to Kameya): Let's greet, my elder brother...
 5 Mucurantimba (little sister of Kameya) (to Kameya): Peace be upon you, my brother...
 6 Kameya (to Mucurantimba): Dare not come close to me.
 ...
 7 Somambike (to Kameya): This is our grandfather Kimotabugabo.
 8 Mucurantimba (to Kameya): Please, greet our grandfather Kimotabugabo.
 9 Kimotabugabo (to Kameya): You'd better greet me while I am alive, my child.
 10 Mucurantimba (to Kameya): Come so that we can hug you, we are your siblings
 11 Kimotabugabo: Now I change my attitude towards him... Why on earth
 12 should we beg him to greet us? If he thinks we aren't his relatives, let him
 13 disappear from this house, then life goes on.
 14 Kameya: The only greeting I need from you is the inheritance which my late
 15 father left. The grandfather I have is the inheritance which my late father
 16 left. My siblings are the gold which my late father left.
 17 Kimotabugabo: ... You're proud like a metamorphosed frog... but you don't
 18 threaten anybody. Look, I'm old enough, I am no longer threatened by
 19 thunder. My child, you should accept my advice as an elder; get rid of fear,
 20 useless child, behave well and get what you want. You're supposed to inherit
 →21 from your late father. But since *you're talking with a very aggressive tone*,
 you'll miss inheritance and be harmed.

In line 21, the old man Kimotabugabo makes the MPC “*uje nk'intantabuke*” ‘you are talking with a very aggressive tone’. In this MPC, he uses the noun “*intantabuke*” /i_{AUG9} -n_{NP9} -tantabuk_{talk.with.a.very.aggressive.tone} -e_{FV}, Noun.marker/ ‘a person talking with a very aggressive tone’. He derives this noun from the metapragmatic verb “*gutantabuka*” /ku_{NP15}- tantabuk_{talk.with.a.very.aggressive.tone} -a_{FV}/ ‘to talk with a very aggressive tone’. By so doing, he describes the verbal behavior of his grandson Kameya as improper.

The use of the nominalized form “*intantabuke*” intensifies the metacommunicative meaning encoded in this verb because, through that noun, the addressee, here the grandson Kameya, is not only attributed the negatively evaluated behavior of aggressive talk, but also is himself pointed at as the agent of such inappropriate speech behavior. This fact amplifies the face-attack in this MPC and thus impoliteness in it.

Kimotabugabo performs his impolite MPC within his utterance “Mugabo ko *uje nk'intantabuke*, uraribura ugireko utabuke akabondo.” ‘But since *you're talking with a very aggressive tone*, you'll miss inheritance and be harmed.’ The impolite MPC,

together with the rest of the words in this utterance, is used by the old man to exercise power over his grandson Kameya. Through his impolite response to the young man's threatening speech, the old man readjusts the power relations between him and the boy, at a time when the latter thinks he can get what he wants by intimidating everyone in the house including his grandfather. Kimotabugabo explicitly downplays Kameya's threats and shows him that he is not afraid at all, instead, he also threatens this young man severe punishment, should he continue misbehaving.

We have so far analyzed the use of a nominalized form to encode an MPC. Next is an instance of manipulation of modality. More is discussed in the following subsection.

6.2.2 Manipulation of modality

In the following example, the speaker exploits modality as she manipulates language to fit her metacommunicative intent. In this example we repeat a few utterances from Excerpt 18, already presented in Chapter 5 and which was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ingenzi y'imihana ni yo nzanyi y'amazimwe*” ‘Wandering through the households of others engenders many social problems.’ The context of the conversation between the husband (H) and wife (W) was given in the same Excerpt 18.

- 5 H: Jewe narakubwiye ku muni w'isoko ko **nzoja** kurima?
 → 6 W: Ewee! Ha! (mimicking H) Uti “**NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W'ISOKO NSHOBOA KURYA?**”

TT:

- 5 H: Have I ever told you that on a market day **I will go** to cultivate the land?
 → 6 W: Mhm! (mimicking H) So, you are saying: “**HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT ON A MARKET DAY I CAN EAT?**”

In line 5 of Excerpt 18 (see Chapter 5), a man tells his wife “Jewe narakubwiye ku muni w'isoko ko **nzoja** kurima?” ‘Have I ever told you that on a market day I **will go** to cultivate the land?’. The wife (W) responds to her husband by mimicking him, saying

“Uti ‘*NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W’ISOKO NSHOBORA KURYA?*’” ‘So, you are saying: “*HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT ON A MARKET DAY I CAN EAT?*”’.

While mimicking her husband, the wife replaces the verb “*kuja*” ‘to go’ in the expression “*nzoja kurima*” ‘I will go to cultivate the land’ with the Kirundi dynamic modality marker “-*shobor-*” ‘can’ with its infinitival form “*gushobora*” /*ku*_{INF}-*shobor*_{can-aFV}/ in the expression “*nshobora kurya*” /*n*_{SC1}-*shobor*_{can}-*aFV* *ku*_{NP15}-*ri*_{eat}-*aFV*/ ‘I can eat’. Here the speaker brings in the notion of dynamic modality; through the Kirundi modal marker of possibility “-*shobor-*” ‘can’, the wife emphasizes the fact that her husband still ‘CAN eat’ on a market day, though he says he ‘WILL not go to dig land’ on such day.

The wife’s utterance ‘*NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W’ISOKO NSHOBORA KURYA?*’ is the parodistic mimicking of her husband’s utterance “*narakubwiye ku munsu w’isoko ko nzoja kurima?*”. In her mimicking, the wife makes the following meaningful changes in the words said by her husband. First, at the level of the main verb, she uses the verb “*kurya*” ‘to eat’ instead of the verb “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate the land’. Second, she uses the modal marker of possibility “-*shobor-*” ‘can’ in “*nshobora kurya*” /*n*_{SC1}-*shobor*_{can}-*aFV* *ku*_{INF15}-*ri*_{eat}-*aFV*/ ‘I can eat’ instead of the future tense modal marker “-*zo-*” ‘will’ which the husband used with the verb “*kuja*” ‘to go’ in “*nzoja kurima*” /*n*_{SC1}-*zo*_{FUT}-*zi*_{go}-*aFV* *ku*_{INF15}-*ri*_{cultivate}-*aFV*/ ‘I will go to cultivate the land’.

Therefore, the MPC which the woman performs, in the form of a parodistic mimicking, involves impoliteness. First of all, mimicking her husband with the criticism it involves is face-threatening. Second, as she replaces the verb “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’ in “*nzoja kurima*” ‘I will go to cultivate’ with the verb “*kurya*” ‘to eat’ in “*NSHOBORA KURYA*” ‘I CAN EAT’, she intensifies the face attack against her husband. This is impolite.

Therefore, through her impolite MPC, the wife redefines power relations between her and her husband in terms of role relations. She does so by implicitly referring to their roles, through her deliberate introduction of the verb “*kurya*” ‘to eat’ and the modal verb “-*shobor*-” ‘can’, a combination of which indirectly expresses the basic need which must daily be met even for her husband who rejects helping her to do crop farming. By so doing, she portrays him as a lazy person who depends upon the fruit of her labor and sweat, though he has been behaving as the boss, deciding alone whether to go to work in the farm or not. In their rural setting, the farming activities are the main sources of income especially the ones providing them with the subsistence food. Through her parodistic mimicking, the woman portrays her husband as a ‘parasite’ in the family, since he continues eating without working to produce food, while she shows herself as the food supplier for the family.

In short, power relations, understood here from the lenses of role relations, between the couple are challenged through the wife’s marked MPC. The syntactic choice of substitution of the dynamic modality marker “-*shobor*-” ‘can’ for the future time reference marker “-*zo*-” ‘will’, which is added to the substitution of the verb “*kurya*” ‘eat’ for the verb “*kurima*” ‘cultivate’, contributes to the speaker’s achievement of that readjustment of power in terms of role relations in the current interaction. The wife manipulates the role-identities, hers and that of her husband, portraying herself as more important/powerful as regards supplying food for him and for the entire household whereas he is an idle consumer of farm products.

Another syntactic choice within meta-utterances in our data involves lexical substitution.

6.2.3 Lexical substitution

An example of word substitution is taken from *Ninde* play “*Akababaje umugabo kababaza n’uwundi*” ‘Concerns of one man are similar to those of his fellow man’. In a family in a rural setting, a son called Burayonga is a delinquent; he does not help his parents in home activities such as farming. After spending a day away from home, he comes back home late at night. Burayonga arrives at his father’s house while his father, mother and sister are eating supper in the house.

EXCERPT 23:

- 1 Burayonga (drunk and proud of himself as he enters his father’s house): Mhm.
(He then calls his sister
- 2 called Emelyne): Eme! Eme!
- 3 Mother (to her son Burayonga): Ni umugore wawe?
- 4 Burayonga (praising and announcing himself as he reaches the sitting room
- 5 where his father, mother and sister are eating supper): **Burayonga** ndatashe.
- 6 Mother (mimicking her son): “**UMWAMI** NDATASHE.”

TT:

- 1 Burayonga (drunk and proud of himself as he enters his father’s house): Mhm.
(He then calls his sister
- 2 called Emelyne): Eme! Eme!
- 3 Mother (to her son Burayonga): Is she your wife?
- 4 Burayonga (praising and announcing himself as he reaches the sitting room
- 5 where his father, mother and sister are eating supper): Me **Burayonga**, here
I’m back home.
- 6 Mother (mimicking her son): “ME **THE KING**, HERE I’M BACK HOME.”

As the young man Burayonga comes back home late at night, he makes much noise in his parents’ house and in the presence of his father, the head of family. Yet, in Kirundi culture, it is impolite for a son to make noise in the house of his father especially when the latter is present. Moreover, members of the family such as the wife, the children and any other person living in that family should be at home before the head of family comes in when it is night. There are acceptable exceptions, of course, in some particular situations whereby a member cannot conform to the norm for well-known reasons. For the case of the son Burayonga in Excerpt 23 above, he defies the norm without any

reason, and besides, he is drunk. Moreover, he praises himself and proudly announces his arrival at home saying “*Burayonga ndatashe*” ‘Me Burayonga, here I’m back home’ (Excerpt 23, line 5), which is very impolite as he does it in the presence of his parents.

Therefore, in line 6 of Excerpt 23, his mother intervenes and challenges his improper verbal behavior. She uses the parodistic mimicking “*UMWAMI NDATASHE*” ‘Me the King, here I’m back home’. She deliberately substitutes the noun “*umwami*” ‘king’ for the proper name “Burayonga”, the son’s real name and the one which the young man has actually used in his bragging.

By making the above lexical substitution, the mother communicates to her son that his speech behavior is inappropriate and that he should behave since he is not a king, whose arrival anywhere in his kingdom is met with a special welcome and much reverence from his people. In the same way a king has authority over people in his kingdom, a man who is the head of a family has authority over other members of the family. In other words, the mother implies that authority in their family belongs to Burayonga’s father and therefore her son should behave politely in front of him.

The mother’s implicit MPC “*UMWAMI NDATASHE*” ‘Me the King, here I’m back home’ is impolite and marked at the level of interactional norms. In fact, the mother mimicking her son causes face-threat to his face through its sarcastic nature. Moreover, the fact that she uses the noun “*umwami*” ‘king’ instead of her son’s name “Burayonga” is face-attacking.

The mother makes the marked impolite MPC above in order to readjust the relationship between the son Burayonga and his parents. In fact, this deviant son, who has adopted a bad behavior of drunkenness, does not show respect to his parents when he comes back home late at night, as described above. Through her marked MPC, the mother

challenges the status of her son, by implicitly stating that he is not a king whose arrival must be announced for everybody to stand up and welcome such a great authority. More specifically, in the present family context, the mother indirectly tells his son that he has no authority over anybody in the family. The only person with authority over every family member is the father; the mother being the second person with authority after the latter. It is therefore the mother's way of advising, through her MPC, the young man to behave politely and obey his parents.

Aside from lexical substitution, interactants also make clause substitution in their MPCs, with an effect on interpersonal relations. Examples from our data are given and discussed in the section below.

6.2.4 Clause substitution

The following is an example of clause substitution taken from *Ninde* play “*Ntambira akaje*” ‘People with unstable minds’. A girl (G) is a bartender. She goes to see a man (M) at his home so that he may pay her back the debt for beer he drank at the bar.

EXCERPT 24:

- 1 G (after greetings, she talks to M): Jewe rero icari kinzanye
- 2 M: Ee.
- 3 G: Jewe nari nje gutora ya mahera yanje.
- 4 M: Amahera tuyakura hehe?
- 5 (Mimicking G) “NARI NJE GUTORA YA MAFA...YA MAHERA YANJE”
- 6 G: None jewe uriko urambarira uko ngo...*ngo ngw' iki ngo na ngw' iki?*

TT:

- 1 G (after greetings, she talks to M): The reason why I've come here
- 2 M: Mhm.
- 3 G: I have come to request my money
- 4 M: Where will we get your money?
- 5 (Mimicking G) “I HAVE COME FOR THAT MO... MY MONEY”
- 6 G: So, are you telling me your stories... *saying this and that?*

In this example, we have the case of clause substitution in the reported speech. In line 6 of Excerpt 30, the girl (G) strategically performs the following MPC: “None jewe

uriko urambarira uko ngo...*ngo ngw' iki ngo na ngw' iki?*” ‘So, are you telling me your stories... *saying this and that?*’. This is her response to what the man (M), who owes her money, has just said. In the second part of her MPC, which is highlighted in italics, she uses the reported speech twice and consecutively in a shortened form, using the reportative (REP) “*ngo*” ‘[saying] that’ (used twice) + “*iki*” ‘what’ in the form “*ngo ngw'iki*” /ngo_{REP} ngo_{REP} iki_{what?}/ (lit. ‘*saying that what?*’). The clause “uriko urambarira...*ngo ngw'iki ngo na ngw'iki?*” (lit. ‘you’re telling me...*that what and that what?*’) ‘you’re telling me this and that?’ is used by G in order to reflect upon the man’s verbal behavior and evaluate it as improper in the context.

In fact, M does two things which make G react this way. First, in line 4, M responds to her saying “*Amahera tuyakura hehe?*” ‘Where will we get your money?’. Second, in line 5, M is rudely mimicking G’s request (“*nari nje gutora ya mahera yanje*” ‘I have come to request my money’) saying: “NARI NJE GUTORA YA MAFA...YA MAHERA YANJE” ‘I HAVE COME FOR THAT MO... MY MONEY’. In short, M behaves rudely towards her in response to her polite request. Then, G retaliates with impoliteness in her MPC “None jewe uriko urambarira uko ngo...*ngo ngw' iki ngo na ngw' iki?*” ‘So, are you telling me your stories... *saying this and that?*’.

In this MPC, G uses a number of strategies. First of all, she uses the Kirundi word “*none*” ‘so,’ to indicate that she is beginning retaliation to M’s rude talk. Secondly, she brings in the role-identities by purposefully putting side by side her identity, represented by “*jewe*” ‘me’ and the man’s identity, represented by the subject marker prefix “*u-*” in “*uriko urambwira...?*” /u_{SC1-riko}_{be,PRES.CONT.marker} u_{SC1-ra}_{PRES.DISJ-noC1-bwir}_{tell-aFV/} ‘are you telling me...?’. Thirdly, she intentionally uses the substitute form “*ngo ngw' iki ngo na ngw' iki?*” ‘*saying this and that?*’ and, by so doing, avoids explicit mention

of what the man has said (in lines 4 and 5). Here, G implicitly means that M's words to her are equivalent to 'things which do not deserve to be mentioned, because they are unacceptable, not good to hear, etc.' In other words, by using that form, G conveys her disapproval and criticism of what M has said to her.

Coming back to the idea of role-identities as portrayed, though indirectly, by G in her MPC, we note that this strategy enables her to communicate about power relations and role relations between her and her host M, which she redefines as elaborated below. To begin with, G is an unmarried young woman, whereas M is a married man, older than her, and head of the family which she has visited. This characterization puts the two interactants in an asymmetrical relationship in which M is normally in a powerful position, culturally speaking and all things remaining equal. Indeed, G begins talking to M acknowledging this fact as when she says "*nari nje gutora ya mahera yanje*" 'I would like to request my money', whereby she shows respect to M. However, the latter reacts negatively by showing no respect to her: (i) by replying to her polite request using a question "*Amahera tuyakura hehe?*" 'Where will we get your money?' in which he shows no concern for her as regards her right to have her money recovered; and (ii) by imitating her in a parodistic mimicking in which he negatively criticizes her request and, therefore, looks down on her through his verbal act. G's response is a metacommunicative message, her MPC reflects upon M's rude utterances.

Through her impolite MPC, which she uses to retaliate to M's impolite remarks, G exercises power. She implicates the fact that, irrespective of M's social status as a man, married, older than her, and head of the family which she has visited – and unlike herself who is just a young and unmarried woman, and a guest in that family – she is currently the one in a powerful position in the ongoing interaction simply because the man owes

her money and is failing to pay her. Her MPC implicitly brings to the floor their readjusted relation: G as the creditor (cf. “*jewe*” ‘me’ mentioned in her MPC) and M as the debtor (cf. the prefix “*u-*” ‘you’ marking the subject in the MPC structure). Thus, G implicitly communicates to M that he should instead behave in a humble and respectful way towards her. G now wants this relationship to replace, at least for the time being, the relationship which was previously defined between these two interactants based on the rather general considerations of their social status involving their age, gender and marital status.

6.2.5 Elliptical constructions

There is ellipsis in discourse or a text when there is unsaid information that can be recovered by referring back to something in what was said or written before (Salkie, 1995); in other words, the omitted part of the utterance is recoverable from the analysis of the context (Crystal, 2008), specifically the co-text. Elliptical constructions are often used by speakers in everyday communication. This is the case of metacommunication in routine conversations. Our data indicate that meta-utterances which display elliptical constructions are either statements or echoic questions.

6.2.5.1 Ellipsis in statements

Metapragmatic statements resulting from elliptical constructions can be linguistically realized in several forms and structures. The example we are giving here is a single word used as an implicit MPC and which represents an ellipted statement. The example involves the use of the Kirundi particle “*oya*” ‘no’, which is generally used for negation. In English, the particles ‘not’ and ‘no’ have been described in linguistic research on negation as a negator (Hengeveld & Mackenzie, 2018) or a negative operator (Horn, 1985). The Kirundi negative operator is “*nti-*” ‘not’ for all persons except the first

person singular for which “si-” ‘not’ is used, as in “ntimukora” /nti_{NEG}-mu_{SC1}-kor_{work}-a_{FV.PRES}/ ‘you do not work’ and “sinkora” /si_{NEG}-n_{SC1}-kor_{work}-a_{FV.PRES}/ ‘I do not work’, respectively. The Kirundi particle “oya” ‘no’ generally indicates the negation of a proposition as in “Oya, ntituzogenda” /Oya_{no} nti_{NOT}-tu_{SC2}-zoo_{FUT}.-gend_{go}-a_{FV}/ ‘No, we will not go’.

However, as our data shows, the same Kirundi particle “oya” ‘no’ can be used for other functions, notably as an expression of a negative metapragmatic evaluation, when the word is used alone in an utterance and is not an answer to a question. An example for illustration is taken from *Ninde* play “*Agapfunsi k’uwundi ntikaba ihangiro*” ‘One should not count on the properties of other people’. Three people are having a conversation, two women (W1 and W2) and one man (M). W2 has come to claim the money which the husband of W1 owes her for meat he bought from her shop on credit. Unfortunately, W1’s husband is not at home to pay the money. The exchange between the two women turns into a quarrel.

EXCERPT 25:

- 1 W1 (to W2): None urazimbagamwo ubuzemwo ayo mahera? =
- 2 W2: =Nanje simva aha=
- 3 W1: =Rondera imbugita basi ukebe gatoyi gakwiranye n’ayo mahera yawe.
- 4 Murabona!
- 5 W2: Ahubwo ngenda ndagukuye urwo rutwe=
- 6 M (to W1 and W2): *Óya [reka-gutukana]. Óya [reka-gutukana]*. (‘óya’ said with a falling intonation).
- 7
- 8 W1 (to W2): ha!Ha!Huuwi! Urafyina sha.
- 9 W2 (to M): (calmly) Umvira jewe mutama
- 10 M: Aho
- 11 W2: Umve ndakubarire
- 12 M: Eego
- 13 W2 (to M): Jewe uwo mugabo w’uwo mupfasoni yaraje muhira, asanga
- 14 nitangiye igitungwa ngo bakibage bazompe amafaranga hageze ko abana baja
- 15 ku mashure
- 16 M: Aho
- 17 W2: Umugabo wiwe arampendahenda avuga yuko azoyatanga
- 18 Ngira amaze kuza nk’isafari sishika zingahe atampa ayo mahera
- 19 M: Eee
- 20 W2: None uno musi rero, ndaje uwo aciye ambarira ngo siho ari yagiye imyaka
- 21 W1: Vuga yuko wari uje kuraba uwo mugabo yemwe utari uje kwishuza ayo
- 22 mahera.
- 23 M: Oya reka gutukana rero.

TT:

- 1 W1 (to W2): Will you do a stomach surgical operation to remove that meat, then?
- 2 W2: I will not leave this place [till you give me that money]
- 3 W1: Look for a knife and cut some meat on my body, which fits the amount of
- 4 money owed to you. Shame on you!
- 5 W2: Instead, I will behead you before I leave this place.
- 6 M: *No [stop insulting one another]. No [stop insulting one another].* ('no' said
7 with a falling intonation).
- 8 W1 (to W2): Ha!Ha!What? Don't ever joke with me.
- 9 W2 (to M): (calmly) Please, listen, Sir
- 10 M: Mhm
- 11 W2: Let me tell you
- 12 M: Yeah
- 13 W2 (to M): The husband of this woman came to my house and found that I had
- 14 given a bull to be slaughtered so that people may get meat and pay later at the
- 15 beginning of the school year for children.
- 16 M: Mhm
- 17 W2: Her husband negotiated with me and pledged to pay for the meat he took;
- 18 he has come home from his workplace severally, but he hasn't yet paid me.
- 19 M: Yeah
- 20 W2: So, today she told me that he went back a long time ago.
- 21 W1: You'd rather say that you've come to look for my husband, not money
- 22 which you seem to be claiming.
- 23 M: No, stop insulting one another.

In line 6 of Excerpt 25, the man M tells the two women who are quarrelling: “*Óya*. *Óya*” ‘No. No.’ Here, M says the word “*Óya*” ‘No’ with a falling intonation and repeats it. Given the co-text of this utterance, specifically the preceding utterances, we can assert with certainty that M does not produce this utterance in order to negate some propositions said by his co-communicators. In fact, the two respective turns by W1 and W2 which precede M’s utterance are the following: in lines 3-4, W1’s utterance “*Rondera imbugita basi ukebe gatoyi gakwiranye n’ayo mahera yawe. Murabona!*” ‘Look then for a knife and cut some meat on my body, which fits the amount of money owed to you. Shame on you!’ and, in line 5, W2’s response “*Ahubwo ngenda ndagukuye urwo rutwe*” ‘Instead, I will behead you before I leave this place’. Therefore, when M says “*Óya*” ‘No’, with a falling intonation, to W1 and W2, he makes a comment in which he indirectly expresses his disapproval of the communicative behavior of the two women in their interaction, because they are insulting and threatening each other. Therefore, M’s utterance “*Óya*” ‘No’ functions as an implicit MPC.

As already mentioned above, we recover the part of the sentence which has been elided in the utterance “*Óya*” ‘No’ by referring to the co-text. The omitted part of this utterance could read like the following MPC which the same speaker M makes later in the same conversation: “*Oya reka gutukana rero*” ‘No, stop insulting one another’, in line 23 of the same Excerpt 25. As already said, W1 and W2 have been quarrelling and insulting each other, the reason why M has intervened to attempt to settle their dispute. So, in our data, we suggest the following words which are crossed out with a strikethrough line as representing the part that has been omitted in M’s utterance “*Óya [~~reka gutukana~~]*” ‘No [~~stop insulting one another~~]’; he repeats this meta-utterance once (see line 5).

The elliptical construction helps the speaker to achieve emphasis of their evaluation of their interlocutor’s communicative behavior. Ellipsis serves either economy, emphasis or style (Crystal, 2008). Whereas omission of some words in speech or text causes a reduction of the number of words that are used, in which case we talk of economy of the language used, omitting part of an utterance or sentence achieves also the emphatic function, with prominence put on the part that is remaining. The brevity of the message which ellipsis causes is associated with communicative efficiency (Chekulai, Lyashenko, Drygina, Suprun & Seredina, 2019).

In line 6 of Excerpt 25, therefore, the omission of a big part of the MPC “*Óya [~~reka gutukana~~]*” ‘No [~~stop insulting one another~~]’ (said with a falling intonation) brings about focus and emphasis on the part which is remaining. In fact, the elision of the clause coming after the particle “*oya*” ‘no’ causes emphasis of the negative evaluation of the interlocutor’s speech behavior. The man (M) intervenes while the two women

(W1 & W2) are in dispute and tells them “*Óya*” ‘No’ to convey the message contained in these words “*reka gutukana*” ‘stop insulting one another’.

Apart from the emphatic function, elliptical constructions in metapragmatic statements also play a role in interpersonal management. The omission of the words which are crossed out with a strikethrough line in M’s utterance “*Óya*” ‘No’ (line 6 of Excerpt 25) conveys the attitude of the speaker. In fact, besides telling the two women to stop insulting and threatening one another, M strongly insists, through brevity of expression and the falling intonation with which it is said, that any more insult is unwelcome. M implicitly stresses that the two women’s verbal behavior of insulting and threatening one another must stop. He is defending the social norms of morality and good conduct which must be observed by members of the society and particularly women of good conduct, in agreement with Kirundi culture. His short MPC conveys some imposition upon W1 and W2 to immediately stop their quarrel; and this is where impoliteness is involved in his MPC “*Óya*” ‘No’, given its sense of strong imposition upon the parties in the dispute to ‘stop their insults with immediate effect’. The polite alternative way of telling W1 and W2 to stop quarrelling would be to involve a request speech act as in “*Ndabingize mureke gutukana*” ‘I beg you, could you stop insulting one another, please?’

The MPC in line 6 is associated with M’s exercise of power over W1 and W2. Indeed, we realize that the two women obey and stop insulting and threatening one another; they resort to explaining their issues to M. Thus, for example, from line 9 to line 20, W2 is calmly explaining his issue to M, who responds with backchannels such as ‘mhm’ and “*eego*” ‘yeah’ as is characteristic of normal cooperative conversation. M readjusts his relationships with the conflicting women, besides being a neighbor, he is showing

himself, through his speech, as a calm mediator, ready to help conciliate the two parties. W1 and W2 must therefore obey and listen to him, do what he is telling them to do, that is, to stop any dispute and have their issues resolved amicably. Indeed, this is what they obey and do.

6.2.5.2 Ellipsis in echoic questions

Besides metapragmatic statements, our data show that echoic questions also involve elliptical constructions when used for metacommunication. An echoic utterance is defined as the one conveying the speaker's attitude towards the speech of his/her interlocutor (Sperber & Wilson, 1981, 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber, 1988a, 1992, cited in Iwata, 2003, p. 188). Moreover, by using an echo-question, the speaker expresses either his/her misperception of his/her interlocutor's utterance or his/her attitude towards that utterance notably a disapproval of what the interlocutor has just said or disputing it (Artstein, 2002). The definition of echoic questions points to their metacommunicative dimension in that they involve evaluation of speech behavior during interaction.

An example of an echoic question involving ellipsis is from *Ninde* play "*Urondera agahambaye ukaronka akarambaraye*" 'Seeking too much profit in a given situation leads to total loss'. A husband (H) and a wife (W) are arguing about their goat which has been missing at home for some days; H is accusing W of being irresponsible with regard to taking care of goats.

EXCERPT 26:

- 1 H: ...Jewe nakubariye nti impene yanje yaragiye akazimayongo nta
- 2 n'ukuyumva?...
- 3 W: ...nakubwiye nti impene jewe narabuze. Ntaho ntarondereye.
- 4 H: Ee!
- 5 W: Ivyo na vyo nimba utavyumva, ibindi ni ivyawe.
- 6 H: [~~Ibindi~~] ni ivyanje?
- 7 W: Ni ivyawe.

- 8 H: [~~Ibindi~~] ni ivyanje?
 9 W: None hari uwo mubisangiye?
 →10 H: [~~Ibindi~~] ni ivyanje?
 11 W: Nta we mubisangiye.

TT:

- 1 H: ...I asked you if my goat disappeared completely or if you haven't got any
 2 news about it..
 3 W: ...I told you that I could not find it, although I tried to look for it everywhere.
 4 H: Uhm
 5 W: If you don't understand what I'm saying, anything else is your own business.
 →6 H: [~~Anything else~~] it is my own business?
 7 W: It is your own business.
 →8 H: [~~Anything else~~] it is my own business?
 9 W: Of course, it is your own business, you alone.
 →10 H: [~~Anything else~~] it is my own business?
 11 W: It is your own business, no one else.

In line 5 of Excerpt 26 above, the wife (W) tells her husband (H) “*Ivyo na vyo nimba utavyumva, ibindi ni ivyawe*” ‘If you don’t understand what I’m saying, **anything else is your own business**’. Her utterance is followed by her husband’s reaction in the form of an echoic question, a reaction to W’s statement “*ibindi ni ivyawe*” ‘anything else is your own business’ within her utterance. Thus, in lines 6, 8 and 10, H makes and repeats the echoic question “[~~Ibindi~~] ni ivyanje?” “[~~Anything else~~] it is my own business?” echoing W’s statement. It reflects H’s attitude towards this: he is expressing his disapproval of the communicative behavior of his wife through his echoic question. His repeated utterance is therefore an implicit MPC. The elided part of this meta-utterance is recoverable from the co-text in the same Excerpt, that is, from the clause “*ibindi ni ivyawe*” ‘anything else is your own business’, which begins with the nominal subject “*ibindi*” ‘anything else’, the part that H has elided in his echoic meta-utterance “*ni ivyanje?*” ‘it is my own business?’. In our analysis, we represented this ellipsis using the strikethrough line (cf. H’s utterance in lines 6, 8 and 10) as follows: “[~~Ibindi~~] ni ivyanje?” “[~~Anything else~~] it is my own business?”.

By eliding some of W’s words in her statement, which he is echoing, H puts emphasis on the remaining words “*ni ivyawe*” ‘it is your own business’ as he echoes them

interrogatively saying “*ni ivyanje?*” ‘*it is my own business?*’. This is meaningful concerning what has captured his attention, among the several words said by his wife in her utterance (cf. line 5), and which he is evaluating as unacceptable by performing this implicit MPC.

In fact, the man disapproves of his wife’s behavior when she tells him “*Ivyo na vyo nimba utavyumva, ibindi ni ivyawe*” ‘If you don’t understand what I am saying, **anything else is your own business**’ (line 5). His wife is attacking his face directly by referring to him in the rude expression “*ni ivyawe*” ‘it is **your own business**’. Rudeness is much more felt specifically in the traditional Kirundi socio-cultural context where the wife must show much respect to his husband in conversation. As a reminder, Kirundi *Ninde* plays, including the one from which this Excerpt was taken, have been aired at Burundi national radio and television from the 1980^s. One of the objectives of *Ninde* program is educating, through entertainment, about living a harmonious life in families, sometimes by deconstructing some of the traditional socially constructed gender differences in the ways of behaving, living, relating, etc., among other things; deconstructing gender in the sense of reshaping it in new ways (Butler, 2009, cited in Nibafasha, 2017, p. 56), for example in the move from tradition to modernity.

The husband’s implicit MPC “~~[*Ibindi*]~~ *ni ivyanje?*” ‘~~[*Anything-else*]~~ *it is my own business?*’, echoing his wife’s words “*ibindi ni ivyawe*” ‘anything else is your own business’, is confrontational and a sign of a burgeoning dispute with his wife. In fact, the husband uses a high tone indicating that he is attempting to make his wife withdraw her statements; and he does this three times. But his wife maintains them and does not want to concede. We have impoliteness met with impoliteness.

This impolite MPC is used by the husband to exercise power, though it is met with an impolite reply from his wife. In other words, she is contesting power being exercised by her husband.

Apart from elliptical constructions, we also have evidential constructions which are used by speakers in metacommunicative utterances, as illustrated in the subsection below.

6.2.6 Evidential constructions

We are dealing here with utterances in which the speaker uses an ‘evidential’ construction to encode an MPC implicitly. In this study, we briefly talk about the notion of ‘evidentiality’ by adopting Murray’s (2010, p. 1) definition of linguistic evidentiality as “the encoding of information source, which can be direct (e.g., visual, auditory) or indirect (e.g., based on reports, inference, conjecture).” Research on evidentiality in language use looks into the kinds of evidence – and their various linguistic realizations – on the basis of which people assert things as a way of informing their peers. The terminology used for classification of the types of evidence varies in the literature on evidentiality. Thus, whereas Aikhenvald (2007) talks of ‘evidential category’, Willett (1988) refers to the same notion as ‘evidential type’ and Plungian (2001, 2010) simply uses the term ‘evidential value’. We adopt the latter terminology in this study. Our data show two types of evidential values which are used in Kirundi marked metapragmatic comments, namely an auditory evidential value and a visual evidential value.

The first example is from *Ninde* play “*Ibihunda n’ibishurushuru bihuye vyose bicika ibihunda gusa*” ‘When an immoral person chooses another immoral person as a companion, their immorality increases’. A delinquent young man (YM) has spent a day with a girl (G) with whom he has had an affair. As they were unable to go home early

and given that their respective homes are far away from where they are now, at a time when it is already dark at night, YM decides to go to the home of his married sister (S), which is nearer, in order to request her to accommodate them during that night. When they reach S's home, it is late at night, they knock at the gate and the YM's sister comes and opens for them. The two explain their problem to the sister.

EXCERPT 27:

- 1 YM (calling his sister S): Shanta
- 2 S: Saa.
- 3 YM: Nyugururira. Ni jewe.
- ...
 - 4 S (opens the gate and the house door, YM and G get in)
 - ...
 - 5 S (to both YM and G): None izi saha mwari he?
 - ...
 - 6 YM: Urumva twamanye, mugabo urumva bwaciye butwirirako. Nagomba rero
 - 7 ukuntu mwodusasira umuntu aruhuke.
 - ...
 - 8 S: Ndakurahiye ahera h'Imana, jewe nta nzu y'abamaraya mfise.
 - 9 YM: Ee! None utwise abamaraya?
 - 10 G: Mbega ni nde yamubariye ko turi abamaraya?
 - 11 S: Ha. *Umve uwo mukobwa ntuze we!* Ntimuri abamaraya?
 - ...
 - 12 S: jewe sindi buvuge ngo sindabaha indaro. Umwe ndamusasira muri
 - 13 'chambre' rwiwe aryamemwo, uwundi mu cumba ciwe aryamemwo.
 - 14 Mugabo ntimurarana muri ino nzu yanje ndaka...Yo! Oyaa. Oya.Oya.
 - 15 YM: Erega banza urindire. Erega uyu ni umugore wanjye.
 - 16 S: Yaba umugore wawe yareka, nta we nzi.
 - 17 G: Ni ukuri ureke kwigora ngo uriko urasasa habiri. Emwe, dusasire hamwe ari
 - 18 akaba kabaye.
 - 19 YM (to G): *Umve. Ntiwumva wewe nawe? Umve nawe. Ntiwumva nawe ivyo*
 - 20 *uca uvuga?*
 - 21 S (to YM): Oo. None sinakubariye?
 - 22 YM (to G): None nk'ivyo vyari bikenewe kuvuga?

TT:

- 1 YM (calling his sister S): Shanta
- 2 S: Yes, please.
- 3 YM: Open for me. It's me [your brother].
- ...
 - 4 S (opens the gate and the house door, YM and G get in)
 - ...
 - 5 S (to both YM and G): It's getting so late at night, where have you been?
 - ...
 - 6 YM: I was with her today, we realized it was late at night, we couldn't reach
 - 7 home. That's why I'm requesting you to accommodate us tonight and we rest
 - ...
 - 8 S: For God's sake, I swear I don't have a house to accommodate prostitutes.
 - 9 YM: What! So, are you saying that we are prostitutes?
 - 10 G: Who told her that we are prostitutes?
 - 11 S: *Listen to what this girl is saying!* Are you denying that you are prostitutes?

-
- 12 S: I won't say that I will not accommodate you tonight. However, I will give
 13 each one of you their own sleeping room. You won't be allowed to sleep in
 14 the same room in my house, I swear....Oh! No! No! No!
- 15 YM: Wait a moment. This girl is my wife.
 16 S: Whether she is your wife or not, I do not recognize her.
 17 G: Don't bother preparing two bedrooms; allow us to sleep in the same room,
 18 things have already happened.
- 19 YM (to G): *Listen. Don't you hear what you're saying? What are you saying?*
 20 *Don't you hear yourself revealing what you shouldn't?*
 21 S (to YM): Oh! You see! Haven't I told you?
 22 YM (to G): Was is necessary to say that?

YM's sister disapproves of the company of the two young people, her brother YM and the girl he has spent the day with, as she refuses to accommodate them in one bedroom. She uses a strong word, qualifying them as 'prostitutes' in her reaction. The girl replies expressing her astonishment to hear YM's sister call them prostitutes. Then, in line 11, YM's sister reacts with an MPC "*Umve uwo mukobwa ntuze we!*" 'Listen to what this girl is saying!' in which she evaluates and criticizes the girl's reply.

The evaluative sense of this MPC lies in the word "*umve*" /umV_{listen} -eFV,IMPER/ 'listen' used with *an auditory evidential value*. In fact, by evoking the act of careful listening (cf. her use of the form "*umve*" 'listen') and by using the Kirundi indeterminate referential expression "*ntuze we*" in her MPC, the sister of YM is implicitly referring to any persons present or overhearing their conversation as earwitnesses to testify with her – thus its auditory evidential value – that what YM's girlfriend is saying is inappropriate.

It is inappropriate for the girl to deny that she misbehaves given that she wanders around late at night and in company with a man who is not officially her husband. This is in keeping with Kirundi tradition. In the current interactional context, YM's girlfriend is expected to feel ashamed of walking into the home of YM's sister at a late hour at night in the company of a man (i.e. YM) who is not her husband. Instead of displaying such

feeling of guilt, YM's girlfriend reacts to the statement of YM's sister by rejecting that YM and her are not people of bad behavior like prostitutes.

The sister's MPC "*Umve uwo mukobwa ntuze we!*" 'Listen to what this girl is saying!' is face-aggravating because the utterance is a criticism marked with an ironical tone. In fact, the speaker is asserting strongly that any other person, except the girl being criticized and her boyfriend, would agree with her that this girl is saying unacceptable things. Furthermore, the use of the demonstrative adjective "*uwo*" 'this' in the NP "*uwo mukobwa*" 'this girl' is also face-threatening because it is pointing at the girl who is the victim of that criticism. Therefore, the MPC is impolite.

With regard to the interpersonal function of this impolite MPC, YM's sister uses it to exercise power in her interaction with the strange girl. As the host in her home, she questions the conduct of this girl, particularly when the latter shamelessly rejects the fact that she and YM are misbehaving and infringing on the socio-cultural norms regarding good behavior for men and women. Moreover, given that YM's sister who is making the statement about the girl and YM as being prostitutes is the one hosting them, the girl normally should display respect to her by keeping quiet. On the other hand, whereas YM's sister is a married woman, the girl coming with YM is single, thought of as a misbehaving girl. YM's sister shows no respect to that girl, referring to her as "*uwo mukobwa*" 'this girl' in the criticism-loaded MPC as described above.

Another MPC with the use of the same kind of evidence, that is, the *auditory evidential value*, is YM's utterance "*Umve. Ntiwumva wewe nawe? Umve nawe. Ntiwumva nawe ivyo uca uvuga?*" 'Listen. Don't you hear what you're saying? Listen, you, too. Don't you hear yourself revealing what you should not?' (line 19 of the same Excerpt 27). YM's utterance is a metapragmatic comment on G's utterance in which she reveals that

she slept with YM before coming to YM's sister (lines 17-18). In his comment, YM says that G herself is an earwitness of the inappropriateness of her statement, with auditory evidence encoded in the forms “*umve*” ‘listen’ and “*ntiwumva*” ‘don’t you hear’.

Another example is from *Ninde* play “*Ndyakarika*” ‘Be content with what you can afford’. A man (M) and a woman (Wo) are strongly arguing about a piece of land whose ownership each of them is claiming. A third person, a woman neighbor (WoN) intervenes to appease the situation as they are about to start fighting.

EXCERPT 28:

- 1 M: (with a high threatening tone): Mvira mu murima hoci
- 2 Wo (angry, making noise): Isarishirize hiyo! Isarishirize hiyo!
- 3 ... (they continue their dispute, making much noise)
- 4 WoN: *Ko mbona muriko murabika nk'isake z'agasema?*
- ...
- 5 M (to WoN): None ubu bwatsi ntubuzi?
- 6 Ntuzi ko bwahora ari ubw'umukwe wawe?
- 7 WoN: Jewe ubu bwatsi ndabuzi...
- ...
- 8 M: Umve rero mupfasoni ndakubwire,
- 9 WoN: Eego
- 10 M: Twumvikane mu majambo yumvikana,
- 11 WoN: Ego, bukebuke
- 12 M: Tureke kuvuga nk'inyomvyi z'ubuca
- 13 WoN: Ego tureke kuvuga cane, muhumure

TT:

- 1 M: (with a high threatening tone): Leave my piece of land immediately!
- 2 Wo (angry, making noise): Get away, you fool! Get away, you fool!
- 3 ... (they continue their dispute, making much noise)
- 4 WoN: (lit. Since I see you crowing like cocks of bad omen'?) *As I can see, you're crowing like cocks of bad omen! Why?*
- ...
- 5 M (to WoN): Don't you know something about this piece of land?
- 6 Don't you know that it used to belong to your son-in-law?
- 7 WoN: I really know this piece of land...
- ...
- 8 M: Let me tell you, Madam
- 9 WoN: Yeah
- 10 M: Let's talk in a more cooperative way,
- 11 WoN: Yes, calmly
- 12 M: Yeah, let's stop talking like birds singing at dawn break
- 13 WoN: Yes, could everyone stop talking too much and calm down, please?

The expression “*Ko mbona*” (lit. ‘Since I see’), roughly translated as ‘As I can see’, conveys the speaker’s *visual evidential value* in her MPC “*Ko mbona muriko murabika nk’isake z’agasema?*” ‘As I can see, you’re crowing like cocks of bad omen! Why?’. The woman neighbor (WoN) makes this strong assessment of the verbal and non-verbal behaviors of the man (M) and the woman (W) who are disputing based on the evidence of what she is seeing with her own eyes and what she is hearing from them. Thus, she makes the assertion that the two persons are behaving like cocks which are crowing at a time when they are expected not to do so, that is, at night, and which is a sign of bad omen in Kirundi cultural beliefs. Her evidence is visual as well as auditory, because she can ‘see’ and at the same time ‘hear’ them arguing. Through her MPC, she evaluates negatively their speech behavior. The speaker achieves this evaluation by using the trope known as simile, realized in “*muriko murabika nk’isake z’agasema?*” ‘you’re crowing like cocks of bad omen’. Simile is a trope where one thing is compared with another thing with which it is similar for description; and a given linguistic expression (e.g. the word “like” in English) is used in order to explicitly mark that comparison (Alm-Arvius, 2007, p. 125).

The criticism and the negative evaluation which are encoded in WoN’s MPC makes the meta-utterance impolite because it is face-attacking. In fact, likening someone’s speech to the crowing of cocks of bad omen is a strong and negative assessment of someone’s behavior. This is likely to cause them to feel bad.

As far as interpersonal relations are concerned, this impolite MPC is used to exercise power. The woman neighbor (WoN), who steps in to attempt to settle the dispute between the man and the woman, intervenes as a peacemaker in this conflict situation. Therefore, the social role which she is playing grants her some status enabling her to

speak impolitely to the two neighbors – who are the two parties in the conflict – without fear of retaliation, which is in essence one of the defining features of power in relational terms. Indeed, the disputing participants accept to stop their behavior and come to terms through peaceful talk (cf. lines 10-13). Moreover, M acknowledges the social role of WoN in this context: first, he states that she is the person who knows well about the piece of land whose ownership is being disputed (lines 5 and 6); second, he refers to her using a term of address showing respect “*mupfasoni*” ‘madam’ (line 8).

6.3 Conclusion

The chapter has shown that speakers make grammatical choices of different kinds in impolite MPCs and that they are mainly morphological and syntactic in nature. They are deliberate in most cases, being pragmatically aimed at achieving some communicative goals in their context of use. Indeed, speakers’ choices of grammar in language use often have pragmatic reasons (Thomas, 2013, p. 184). The functions of speakers’ grammatical choices in the studied data have been analyzed in relation to the metapragmatic evaluation of talk and the management of interpersonal relations in interaction.

First, at the morphological level, it has been found in Chapter 6 that speakers use morphological strategies in their impolite MPCs with an aim to emphasize the negative evaluation of speech and the exercise of power. Among these strategies is affixation, with the use of augmentative and diminutive affixes to exacerbate face attack against their addressees, which has an impact of heightening the force of imposition upon them and thus increases the exercise of power upon them.

An example for illustration is the use of diminutive markers in the MPC “*Ingene gakanaguza ubuso!*” /*ingene*_{how} *ka*_{SC12}, DIM -*kanagur*_{blink.repeatedly} -*i*_{CAUS} -*a*_{FV} *u*_{AUG14} -

buNP14,DIM -so_{eye}/ ‘See how this small woman is blinking her small and unpleasant eyes!’, in Excerpt 20 discussed above, performed by a husband disapproving his wife’s behavior in their interaction as she utters strong criticism against him and in a furious way and blinking her eyes, saying that he mistreats his own nephews and nieces who stay with them in the family. The husband uses the diminutive markers *-ka-* and *-bu-* to mean respectively the smallness of the woman and her eyes, thus describing her unpleasantly in his impolite MPC aimed at both evaluating negatively her speech behavior towards him and exercising power over her.

This chapter has also illustrated the speaker’s use of the morphological strategy of coining a word to encode an MPC expressing negative evaluation of the interlocutor’s speech behavior. The meta-utterance “*Urakamahorwako*” ‘May you be given an insincere greeting of peace’ in Excerpt 21 is said by a wife responding to her husband’s greeting of peace “*Amahoro*” ‘Peace be upon you’, which she views as contextually insincere and improper. In fact, the husband makes this greeting as he shows up after spending a night away from home though near home and his wife knows that he usually spends evenings in pubs being with other women.

Second, the chapter has dealt with syntactic choices made in impolite MPCs, like the use of nominalization for communicating that the speaker disapproves of their addressee’s behavior. For example, a grandfather called Kimotabugabo to his grandson Kameya says: “ko uje *nk’intantabuke*...” ‘since you’re talking very aggressively...’, in Excerpt 22 treated before (from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*” ‘The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo’). The word “*intantabuke*” ‘a person talking in a very aggressive manner’ is a noun derived from the verb “*gutantabuka*” ‘to talk in a very aggressive manner’ as the speaker’s choice while making his MPC.

The chapter has covered other syntactic choices including the manipulation of modality, lexical and clausal substitution, elliptical and evidential constructions, all of which are chosen strategically by speakers to reach their communicative goal, that is, exercising power over their addressees through behaving impolitely towards them. An example of an evidential construction to illustrate one of those strategies is from Excerpt 28 from *Ninde* play “*Ndyakarika*” ‘Be content with what you can afford’. A woman helping to settle a dispute between another woman and a man performs the MPC “*Ko mbona muriko murabika nk’isake z’agasema?*” ‘As I can see, you are crowing like cocks of bad omen? Why?’. In this meta-utterance, she uses the visual evidential value as well as the auditory evidential value – encoded in the expression “*ko mbona*” ‘as I can see’, which limits the possibility of her two addressees of refuting what she is saying, because evidence is given.

In short, the chapter has concluded that interactants use different grammatical strategies in order to perform impolite MPCs which enable them (i) to express their evaluation of their interlocutors’ speech behavior, and (ii) to exercise power in the way they intend to, which are the main goals of their meta-communication.

In the next chapter, I analyze the rhetorical strategies used by interactants in impolite MPCs and their interpersonal meanings concerning power relations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RHETORICAL DEVICES IN IMPOLITE METAPRAGMATIC COMMENTS AND EXERCISE OF POWER

7.0 Introduction

This chapter is about the third objective of the study which deals with the rhetorical devices used by speakers in impolite MPCs, both implicit and explicit, and their interpersonal meanings in Kirundi fictional conversations being analyzed. It sought to uncover how such devices are actually realized in the MPCs and their functions. The following figures of speech are analyzed: repetition, parallelism, irony in backchannels and in statements, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, metonymy and wordplay. Wordplay in our data mainly comprises parodistic mimicking (PAMI) realized accoustically as phonetic play, PAMI in the form of onomatopoeia, word substitution, and various forms of echoing one's interlocutor. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

7.1 Repetition in Impolite MPCs and Meanings of Power Relations

The rhetorical device 'repetition' in impolite MPCs is realized in our data as repeating a parodistic mimicking (PAMI) in a chunk of conversation from *Ninde* play "*Urondera agahambaye ukaronka akarambaraye*" 'Living beyond one's means is self-destructive'. Excerpt 29 below is a conversation between a husband (H) and his wife (W). H is insisting that W should make more effort in searching their goat which has been missing at home for two weeks. What the husband is saying implies that he suspects his wife is involved in the theft of the missing goat.

EXCERPT 29:

- 1 H: None ya mpene ga rero, nta...nta n'uruhunihuni wigeze wumva ko yoba
- 2 yara...uwoba yarayitoye hoho?
- 3 W: Ntuze we, impene imaze indwi zibiri, ubwo wewe nturahebura?
-
- 4 H: ...Ahubwo utegerezwa kuba uzi ahantu iri.
- 5 W: Urumva rero ni je nayitwaye?

- ...
- 6 H: Wewe ukaba uzi aho yoba yaragiye canke aho woba warayibikije,
7 urayizana...
- 8 W: Ahubwo tuma uvuga ikiri ku mutima...Urapfuma umbwira uti irya mpene
9 itagarutse ngaha urasohoka uve muri iyi nzu.
- 10 H: Ivyo bindi ni rwawe, jewe mbabajwe n'impene yanje yagiye...
- ...
- 11 W: Umve jewe ndakubwire, nakubwiye nti impene jewe narabuze. Ntaho
12 ntarondereye.
- 13 H: Ee!
- 14 W: Ivyo na vyo nimba utavyumva, ibindi ni ivyawe.
- 15 H: Ni ivyanje?
- 16 W: Ni ivyawe.
- 17 H: Ni ivyanje?
- 18 W: None hari uwo mubisangiye?
- 19 H: Ni ivyanje?
- 20 W: Nta we mubisangiye.
- 21 H: Wewe ntiwumva akanyaro kawo rero ga yemwe. Utangure kunyishura nabi
22 ndiko ndakubaza impene iyo yagiye?
- ...
- 23 W: Eka Mukama wanje! *Nta co ntakoze*; kandi nguma ndakubwira nti impene
24 nayibuze.
- 25 H (angry): Uraga...Tyuuu! (Mimicking W) "*NTA CO NTAKOZE*", nawe ko
26 wakoze yarabonetse (Mimicking W for the second time) "*NTA CO*
27 *NTAKOZE*", ukishinga kugangarara ngaha urya gusa, impene zanje ziriko
28 zirazimira (Mimicking W for the third time) "*NTA CO NTAKOZE*".

TT:

- 1 H: Tell me, about our missing goat, haven't you got any information
2 concerning who may have found it?
- 3 W: Do you still hope to find a goat which has been missing for two weeks?
- ...
- 4 H: ...By the way, you must be knowing where it is.
- 5 W: So, you mean that it is me who stole it?
- ...
- 6 H: If you know where that goat went or where you may have kept it, please
7 bring it back...
- 8 W: Instead, you'd rather say what you feel in your heart...You'd better tell me
9 that I leave this house as long as that goat is not back here.
- 10 H: That is your own side of the story, my only concern is my goat missing ...
- ...
- 11 W: Listen well, I'm telling you, I have told you that I looked for the goat
12 everywhere but couldn't find it.
- 13 H: Uhm
- 14 W: If you don't understand what I'm saying, anything else is your own
business.
- 15 H: It is my own business?
- 16 W: It is your own business.
- 17 H: It is my own business?
- 18 W: Of course, it is your own business, you alone.
- 19 H: It is my own business?
- 20 W: It is your own business, no one else.
- 21 H: See how proud you are! How come that you begin responding to me so
22 rudely while I'm asking you where the goat could be?
- ...
- 23 W: My God! I did my best. Indeed, I often told you that I missed the
24 goat.
- 25 H (angry): May you...Disgusting! (Mimicking W) "*I DID MY BEST*". If you

- 26 did your best, was it found? (Mimicking W for the second time) “*I DID MY*
 27 *BEST*”, you spend the day here eating only, while my goats are getting lost.
 28 (Mimicking W for the third time) “*I DID MY BEST*”.

In lines 25, 26 and 28 in Excerpt 29, the husband repeats three times his parodistic mimicking “*NTA CO NTAKOZE*” ‘*I DID MY BEST*’ in which he disapprovingly imitates his wife’s words “*Nta co ntakoze*” ‘I did my best’. Through this PAMI, the husband expresses his disgust at the speech behavior of his wife. In fact, she claims that she did her best in searching for the lost goat and yet her husband accuses her of idleness and irresponsibility (see line 27) and even suspects that she could be involved in the theft of the missing goat (see lines 6 and 7). Moreover, the wife has been causing annoyance to her husband when he asked her about the missing goat (cf. lines 11-20).

The PAMI which the husband uses to evaluate his wife’s speech behavior is impolite since it threatens her face. Moreover, it is marked as it involves impoliteness and repetition; the speaker repeats it three times in the same turn. The PAMI, which is ironical and criticizing the addressee, is an implicit MPC which is impolite: the speaker performs a face-threatening act directly without ambiguity and in a repeated fashion (Culpeper, 1996, p. 356).

Through his impolite MPC, the husband readjusts the interpersonal relations between him and his wife at the moment of their interaction. The woman’s talk to her husband, characterized by pride and lack of respect to him (see lines 11-20), is an encroachment on his rights as the head of the family. In the continuation of their interaction, the wife, while explaining that she made an effort to look for the missing goat, claims the following: “*Nta co ntakoze*” ‘I did my best’. To these words, the husband retaliates immediately by mimicking her saying “*NTA CO NTAKOZE*” ‘*I DID MY BEST*’, a PAMI through which he evaluates what she is saying as inappropriate. The husband implicitly

expresses his ‘antipathy’ towards his wife, particularly her rude speech and her pride in the previous turns when he was asking her about the missing goat.

This PAMI is an implicit MPC; it is impolite and marked. The communicative function it helps achieve is the redefinition or readjustment of power relations between him and his wife. In fact, through his use of impoliteness, the husband reclaims his powerful position as the husband and head of the family, capable of producing this blatant impolite meta-utterance, thus constraining any verbal counter-attack by his wife. Repetition of his MPC adds emphasis to what he is saying; indeed, the rhetorical figure of repetition has an emphatic function (Hsieh, 2009; Kim, 2002; Mustéa, Stuerta & Botellaa, 2015; Norrick, 2000).

Other examples involving repetition of impolite MPCs are from the written play “*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*”, Act II, Scene 8. Two characters Kameya (Kame) and his young brother Biyago (Biya) are ordering, with threats, their sister Somambike (Soma) to show and give them the written bank document about the fortune which their late father left before dying and which their grandfather Kimotabugabo gave to her. Moreover, Somambike, the first born among her siblings, was chosen as heir by her father before his death (according to the grandfather). This violates the Kirundi customs according to which no woman can be heir among siblings, as this is customarily given to one of the male siblings and generally the first-born boy in the family (Ntahokaja, 1978, p. 41). On the other hand, Somambike claims that she and her young sister Mucurantimba will also inherit from the fortune left by their late father, which is once more against the cultural tradition that no woman inherits from her father if she has male siblings (Ntahokaja, 1978, p. 48). It is in this context that the two male siblings,

Kameya and Biyago, are arguing in the following Excerpt, showing that their sister Somambike has nothing to do with being heir or inheriting from their late father.

EXCERPT 30:

- { 1 KAME: *Uyage uca sindaguce izosi.*
2 BIYA: *Ndi ku rubanza ntundaze.*
- { 3 KAME: *Uvuge rimwe ritagora indamutso.*
4 BIYA: *Ntutere abiri wohava utama.*
- { 5 KAME: *Vuga rimwe s'ivyo uyobewe.*
6 BIYA: *Vuga rimwe ni ryo rivuga.*
- ...
- 7 KAME: *Amajambo ni urupapuro, ibisigaye ntituvyondeye.*
8 BIYA: *Sokorora isaho isiga Data, ibisigaye birakuraba.*
9 SOMA: *Urupapuro ntirukibonetse iyo rwajanye sindahamenya.*
- { 10 KAME: *Sinumvise!*
11 BIYA: *Sinategereye!*
- { 12 KAME: *Subira twumve.*
13 BIYA: *Nakurugutuye.*
- 14 SOMA: *Iragi rero*
15 KAME: *Niho ukivuga.*
16 BIYA: *Ntuba wumva.*
17 SOMA: *Nti iragi ryanyu ntiriyari kure, muri rya Banki Sogokuru ni yo yaribitse,*
18 *mugabo*
19 KAME: *Igereze aho, ico twapfa cari ico.*
20 BIYA: *Igaramangire muko, uzokurya urwara uze umbarire. Hari ikindi?*
21 SOMA: *Ikindi kiri mu nyuma, ari co c'iki: iryo ragi riragabuye, umwe wese*
22 *akagira igisa yega, mugabo...*
23 BIYA: *Nde na nde?*
24 KAME: *Na wewe?*
25 SOMA: *Sokuru yapfuye asiga urupapuro rubisobanura, ndarubika mu mabere,*
26 *mvyutse mu gitondo ndiko ndaruraba, nsanga abanyazi barurayeko.*
- { 27 KAME: *Ego me!*
28 BIYA: *Turavyemeye!*
- 29 SOMA: *Niho narira nkihanagura, runyagiriye ndagiha amaguru, mbuze*
30 *amahungiro ndakimirana, ngaruka hano, niho nasanga umutama bamugaritse,*
31 *mpumutse ku bitanga vy'amaraso yiwe umutima uraranduka. Amakuru yanje*
32 *akaba ayo, nkasigara ndabasaba ikintu kimwe, kunyica maze gutora uwanize*
33 *Sokuru.*
34 BIYA: *Ewe mukobwa wize vyinshi, ivy'ino minsi vyo biza kukuyobera.*
35 *Ni ukuri iragi ngo riragabuye?*
36 KAME: *Ni ukuri ngo urupapuro wabika ngo ntuzi iyo ruri? Mbe n'ahandi rwari*
37 *rwanditse Data yapfuye kandi na we yaterewe mu kiriri.*
38 SOMA: *Sokuru yabitumwe ni we yabigize. Musangwa rero mwababajwe n'uko*
39 *data na mama batihakanye ubura bwabo, menya yuko naho mworihirika*
40 *ntazogenda mpevywe intoranwa ya Mucurantimba na mukuru we, nanje iyo*
41 *urwo rupapuro rudatakara noravye.*
42 KAME: *Ziba sindakumene umutwe wa munyazi we.*
43 SOMA: *Gira ico ushaka, ariko iryo mvuze ntakaharenga.*
44 KAME: *Banza wikumire, na none ni ko kagayo.*
45 SOMA: *Ivyo mumbwira vyose ndavyemera, ico ntemera nakivuze.*
46 KAME: *Urasubiriye ga wa ntabarirwa we?*
47 BIYA: *Warerewe he?*
- { 48 KAME: *Turavuga ukavuga?*
49 BIYA: *Turahagarara ugahagarara?*

TT:

- { 1 KAME: *Be brief*, otherwise I will behead you.
2 BIYA: I have an important appointment, *don't delay me as you talk*.
- { 3 KAME: *Say one word; it's more convenient*.
4 BIYA: *Don't say much; it may disadvantage you*.
- { 5 KAME: *Say one word; it's not unknown to you*.
6 BIYA: *Say one word; it's more efficient*.
...
- 7 KAME: Words that matter are the bank document; the rest is not our concern.
8 BIYA: Show us the property (money) left by our dad; the rest is your business.
9 SOMA: The bank document was lost; I don't know where it could be.
- { 10 KAME: *I haven't got you well!*
11 BIYA: *I haven't understood!*
- { 12 KAME: *Repeat that, we're listening*.
13 BIYA: [*Repeat that*] *I'm carefully listening*.
14 SOMA: Concerning the inheritance
15 KAME: Now you're talking.
16 BIYA: Well said.
17 SOMA: I'm saying that your inheritance is not far, it's in the bank where
18 grandfather kept it; however
19 KAME: You may stop there, that was the object of our contention with you.
20 BIYA: Relax; and if anyone threatens you, just report to me. Any other thing?
21 SOMA: Another thing is the following: that inheritance is to be shared, each
22 one has their portion, but...
23 BIYA: Shared between who and who?
24 KAME: With you?
25 SOMA: Our grandfather left a document explaining this before his death, I kept
26 it under my bra, but when I woke up I didn't see it; thieves had taken it.
- { 27 KAME: *Alright!*
28 BIYA: *We accept that!*
29 SOMA: Then I cried so much, as I felt afraid, I fled away, but when I missed
30 where to stay away I came back here. That is the time when I found our
31 grandfather killed and in a pool of blood, which scared me. That's my news,
32 I request you one thing: to kill me after I have found who killed my
33 grandfather.
34 BIYA: Girl, you are failing on this, despite your much knowlegde. How can
35 you say that the inheritance is to be shared?
36 KAME: How can you say the bank document you were keeping is lost? Who
37 wrote it since our father had died and our grandfather was stabbed in his bed?
38 SOMA: Our grandfather who had been mandated for this wrote it. If you're
39 unhappy that our father and mother didn't forsake their daughters, you should
40 know that even if you disagree, I will not give up on the inheritance for
41 Mucurantimba and her elder sister
42 KAME: Shut up, thief, otherwise I will crush your head.
43 SOMA: Do what you want, but I won't change my position.
44 KAME: Get away from us; indeed, this is contempt.
45 SOMA: What you tell me I will accept, but one thing I said I will not accept.
46 KAME: There you go again, stubborn girl.
47 BIYA: Where were you brought up?
- { 48 KAME: (lit. 'Do we talk and you talk?') *How come that you oppose what we*
say?
49 BIYA: (Lit. 'Do we stand up and you stand up?') *How come that you oppose*
our position?

In Excerpt 30 above, we have several pairs of MPCs in which repetition is done by Biyago repeating the idea of the previous MPC made by his elder brother Kameya. These instances of repetition are discussed below.

- (1) Repetition of MPCs in lines 2, 4, and 6 (cf. pairs of MPCs from lines 1-6 as indicated by a left brace shape before the pair of the repeated MPCs)

To begin with, the idea of brevity by Kameya in his MPC “*uyage uca*” ‘be brief’ (line 1) is repeated by Biyago in his MPC “*ntundaze*” ‘don’t delay me as you talk’ (line 2). The two brothers are telling their elder sister Somambike to give a brief talk about their inheritance from their late father. It sounds as an order which they are giving her, given their use of the imperative mood in both MPCs “*uyage uca*” / $u_{SC1} -yag_{talk} -e_{FV, IMP} \quad u_{SC1} -ci_{cut} -a_{FV, IND}$ / (lit. ‘as you talk, cut your talk short’) ‘be brief’ and “*ntundaze*” / $nti_{NEG} -u_{SC1} -n_{OC1} -ra_{r_{spend.a.night}} -i_{APPL} -e_{FV, IMP}$ / (lit. ‘[as you talk,] don’t make me spend a night’) ‘don’t delay me as you talk’.

- (2) Repetition of MPCs in lines 10-13

In line 11, Biyago repeats the idea (see the MPC “*Sinategereye!*” ‘I haven’t understood!’) of his elder brother Kameya (cf. the MPC “*Sinumvise!*” ‘I haven’t got you well!’) in line 10, as they react to their sister’s mention that she lost the bank document of the money left as inheritance by their late father (see line 9). The two brothers use repetition in order to draw their sister’s attention to the fact that she must urgently give them the details and the bank document of that money. Repetition is therefore a tool for emphasis and persuasion.

- (3) Repetition of an MPC in line 26 (MPC in line 25 repeated)

In line 25, Kameya ironically says “*Ego me!*” ‘Alright!’ and Biyago repeats this idea saying, also ironically, “*Turavyemeye!*” ‘We accept that!’ in line 26. These two ironical utterances are implicit MPCs, where the speakers indirectly mock and reject what their

elder sister has just said that the bank document was stolen from her, after the short conversation that they have had in lines 17-24. The two ironical meta-utterances, instead of being an agreement with Somambike, are used by Kameya and Biyago to judge her claims as a lie. They explicitly indicate this in their next turns (see lines 30-33), disagreeing with their sister about what she said that the inheritance is to be shared even with the female siblings and that the document detailing this was lost. Here, the repetition plays the role of emphasizing their disapproval of their sister's claims.

(4) Repetition of MPCs in lines 43 and 44

In lines 34-36, 38 and 40, Somambike stands firm that she and her young sister Mucurantimba should inherit from their late parents in the same way their brothers Kameya and Biyago will inherit. The boys react with the MPCs in lines 43 and 44: “*Turavuga ukavuga?*” ‘How come that you oppose what we say?’ and “*Turahagarara ugahagarara?*” ‘How come that you oppose our position?’. These meta-utterances clearly bring forth the two antagonistic and gender-based groups that are in dispute regarding inheritance. This is shown by the use of the pronoun “*tu-*” ‘we’ in /tu_{SC1} -ra_{PRES.DISJ} -vug_{talk} -a_{FV}/ ‘we talk’ and /tu_{SC1} -ra_{PRES.DISJ} -hagarar_{stand} -a_{FV}/ ‘we stand firm’, representing the male siblings, and “*u-*” ‘you’ in /u_{SC1} -ka_{SUBSEC} -vug_{talk} -a_{FV}/ ‘you talk’ and /u_{SC1} -ka_{SUBSEC} -hagarar_{stand} -a_{FV}/ ‘you stand firm’, representing the female siblings.

In line 44, we have a repetition of the idea of standing firm on the issue of inheritance being discussed: Biyago repeats Kameya's point in line 43. This repetition is used to achieve emphasis and therefore persuasion that it is inappropriate for Somambike as a female child to insist on inheriting from their late parents, based on the Kirundi tradition that only male children are entitled to inherit from their parents' property such as land, cattle and the like; money being likened to such property.

In short, the rhetorical strategy of repetition is used by speakers to lay emphasis on what they are saying. More particularly in our instances of metacommunication, repetition is used for emphatic and persuasive function as far as (re)definition of interpersonal relations is concerned. Indeed, interactants draw upon repetition a great deal for interpersonal connection and relationship (Wales, 2014, p. 366) when used as a rhetorical device. It is in fact one of the several linguistic and discursive devices used for emphasis or ‘amplification’, as it is referred to in rhetorical studies (Jasinski, 2001). It is used, like other rhetorical devices, with a persuasive effect on one’s speech. Repetition is very important for emphasis and for involving highly emotions (Fahnestock, 2011, p. 230).

7.2 Parallelism in Impolite MPCs and Exercise of Power in Interaction

The rhetorical tool ‘parallelism’ or ‘parallel structure’ (Kolln & Gray, 2013) consists in repeating a structure, for example a phrase or clause, as illustrated in these examples:

- (i) “*Out of sight, out of mind*” where the prepositional phrase ‘out of’ is repeated and
- (ii) “*He came, he saw, he conquered*” in which we have repetition at the clause level (Wales, 2014, pp. 301-302).

In Excerpt 30, we have a number of occurrences of parallel constructions:

- (1) 5 KAME: *Vuga rimwe s’ivyo uyobewe.* Say one word, it is not unknown to you.
- 6 BIYA: *Vuga rimwe ni ryo rivuga.* Say one word, it is more efficient.

The two MPCs by Kameya and Biyago display a common structural pattern as represented below respectively:

/vug_{say} -a_{FV}.IMP rimwe_{one} [word] si_{NEG} (it is not) ivyo_{DEM}.PRON u_{SC1}-yober_{be.unknown.to} -u_{PASS}
 -e_{FV}/
 [Vuga rimwe_{CLAUSE}] si ivyo [uyobewe_{CLAUSE}]
 &

/vug_{say} -a_{FV}.IMP rimwe_{one} [word] ni_{AFFIRM} (it is) ryo_{DEM}.PRON ri_{SC5} -vug_{talk} -a_{FV}.IND/
 [Vuga rimwe_{CLAUSE}] ni ryo [rivuga_{CLAUSE}]

The common structural pattern, which achieves parallelism in the two MPCs, is:

[Vuga rimwe_{CLAUSE}] + AFFIRM/NEG + DEM. PRON. + CLAUSE.

(2) → 10 KAME: *Sinumvise!* *I haven't got you well!*

→ 11 BIYA: *Sinategereye!* *I haven't understood!*

Parallelism is achieved here through the common structural pattern: /si_{NEG} + n_{SC1} + a_{REC}

PAST + Verb stem + i_{PAST} -ye_{FV, PERF}/ in:

“*Sinumvise!*” /si_{NEG} -n_{SC1} -a_{REC}.PAST -umv_{hear/understand} -i_{PAST} -ye_{FV, PERF}/
 ‘I haven’t got you well!’

“*Sinategereye!*” /si_{NEG} -n_{SC1} -a_{REC}.PAST -teger_{understand} -i_{PAST} -ye_{FV, PERF}/
 ‘I haven’t understood!’

(3) → 31 BIYA: ...*Ni ukuri iragi ngo riragabuye?* ‘How can you say that the inheritance is to be shared?’

→ 32 KAME: *Ni ukuri ngo urupapuro wabika ngo ntuzi iyo ruri?* ‘How can you say that the bank document which you were keeping is lost?’

Parallelism is in line 32: Kameya repeats the structure “[Ni ukuri_{PHRASE}]...ngo_{REP} + CLAUSE...?” ‘[Really_{PHRASE}]...you’re saying that + CLAUSE...?’ used previously by Biyago (line 31).

(4) → 48 KAME: *Turavuga ukavuga?* ‘How come that you talk after we have talked?’

→ 49 BIYA: *Turahagarara ugahagarara?* (Lit. ‘How come that you stand up after we have stood up?’)

‘How come that you stand firm on the issue of inheritance and oppose our position on it?’

PARALLELISM

In both meta-utterances, we note a common structure: /tu_{SC1} -ra_{PRES}.DISJ -verb u_{SC1} -ka_{SUBSEC} -verb/ in “*Turavuga ukavuga?*” /tu_{SC1} -ra_{PRES}.DISJ -vug_{talk} -a_{FV} u_{SC1} -ka_{SUBSEC} -vug_{talk} -a_{FV}/ “*Turahagarara ugahagarara?*” /tu_{SC1} -ra_{PRES}.DISJ -hagarar_{stand.up} -a_{FV}.IND u_{SC1} -ka_{SUBSEC} -hagarar_{stand.up} -a_{FV}/.

In all the four examples of occurrence of parallelism in the MPCs above, speakers are the two brothers Kameya and Biyago who are addressing their meta-utterances to their elder sister Somambike while talking about the inheritance left by their late parents. The aim of their use of the rhetorical strategy ‘parallelism’ is to emphasize the point which they are communicating and thus achieve persuasion. In fact, due to the emphasis it achieves (van Dijk, 1991), the rhetorical device ‘parallelism’ has a persuasive effect (Fahnestock, 2011).

In (1), the two brothers are warning their sister that she should say what pleases them concerning the same topic of inheritance from the late parents. In (2), (3) and (4), their message to their sister is that she is talking inappropriately, simply because she is not saying what they want her to say about the topic raised. All these MPCs, from (1) to (4), are impolite. In the four instances of paired MPCs, which involve parallelism, the speakers make MPCs which are face-threatening: the two brothers Biyago and Kameya give their sister orders and frighten her, making her believe that something bad will happen to her if she does not do their will.

The use of impoliteness is aimed at exercising power (Culpeper, 1996, 2016). This is the case of the two brothers using impolite meta-utterances while talking to their sister. They use impolite MPCs in order to readjust the power relations between them and her. In fact, their elder sister Somambike had been given some power by their grandfather Kimotabugabo when he appointed her as the person in charge of the management of the family property after the death of their parents; and she is the first-born child in their family. Through their impolite and marked talk, the two young men show their elder sister that, although she has been in that position, they are more powerful by virtue of

being male siblings in accordance with the Kirundi tradition which gives them the privilege to have more rights to inherit their late parents' properties.

So far, we have analyzed repetition and parallelism as rhetorical strategies which are used by speakers in the fictional conversations under study in order to achieve specific goals while metacommunicating impolitely. Now, we move to irony, another communicative strategy used by speakers in their impolite meta-utterances.

Ironical meta-utterances which we have in our data are mainly of two types as far as their linguistic realization is concerned: (i) those realized as backchannels and (ii) those in the form of statements.

7.3 Ironical Backchannels as Implicit MPCs and Expression of Power Relations

In *Ninde* play "*Inda ni imanga*" 'No satisfaction for the greedy', a woman (W) selling beer in her shop has been having an argument with two men, who are village council members (VCM1 and VCM2) and who owe her money for beer they drank without paying some time before. Again, VCM1 and VCM2 want beer without paying money. W refuses to give them beer and asks them to pay her money which they owe her first of all.

EXCERPT 31:

- 1 W (angry) (to VCM1 & VCM2): Mpa amafaranga yanje rero.
- 2 VCM1 (to W): Erega two...twoshobora kuhugara ngaha kandi hakugara.
- 3 VCM2 (to W): Kandi nti...ntihokwugurura. None.
- 4 W: *Ego kweri*. None nimunyugaze.

TT:

- 1 W (angry) (to VCM1 & VCM2): Pay me the money which you owe me, please.
- 2 VCM1 (to W): You know what? We can close this shop indefinitely.
- 3 VCM2 (to W): And it wouldn't open again, of course.
- 4 W: *What you're saying is unacceptable!* Then, why don't you close it right now?

In line 4, reacting to the threats made by VCM1 and VCM2 (lines 2 and 3), the woman W uses the two-word backchannel “*ego kweri*” whose primary meaning is ‘*Yeah, really*’, a Kirundi backchannel normally used with a falling intonation pattern to agree with the speaker and approve of what they have just said. However, in the present context, W uses it with a rising tone to mean the opposite: she is expressing disagreement about what her interlocutors VCM1 and VCM2 are saying. Specifically, W is disapproving of their threats to close her shop indefinitely by using their authority as village council members because she has refused to give them free beer. W uses this expression “*ego kweri*” in the form of a backchannel normally used for agreement, but for expressing the opposite, that is disagreement with what her interlocutors are saying. By using the expression, she implicitly means ‘*What you’re saying is unacceptable!*’. This utterance reflects on the statements previously made by VCM1 and VCM2 and is therefore an implicit MPC. This MPC involves sarcasm, irony and impoliteness because it. This impoliteness strategy follows Leech’s (1983, p. 82) Irony Principle (IP) which says that, as a speaker who is speaking ironically, you cause offence in such a way that the addressee will work out indirectly the implicature that your comment was offensive.

The woman’s use of the impolite MPC “*Ego kweri*” allows her to achieve the interpersonal function of redefining the power relations between her and the two men VCM1 and VCM2. In fact, the latter have been displaying their power, as village council members, vis-à-vis the woman, who happens to be under their authority as a member of the village. For instance, they previously asked for beer from her shop without paying and even now they want to be offered free beer, just because of their leadership position in the village. However, at the present moment in this ongoing exchange, the woman uses impoliteness and markedness to reshape the interpersonal relation between her and them, as the person to whom the two men owe money

(Creditor) versus VCM1 and VCM2 who owe her money (Debtors). In other words, by making her implicit MPC impolite and thus marked, the woman shows herself to be in a powerful position as regards the context of their interaction.

Speakers not only use ironical short talk, such as listener responses like the one in Excerpt 31 above, but also, they use full sentences to make ironical statements in their metacommunication.

7.4 Ironical Statements in Impolite MPCs

We considered an ironical statement taken from Excerpt 32 below, from *Ninde* play “*Akanse uraheba*” ‘Those who refuse advice should reap consequences’. A young man called Ntakimazi (NTA) is a delinquent who has become a nuisance in his family. After the death of Ntakimazi’s mother, his father (F) married another woman, with whom he got other children. One day, the grown-up son Ntakimazi decides alone to go to portion his father’s land property and claims that he is giving himself the bigger portion from this land and that his half-brothers will share the remaining small portion of the land. His father, his step-mother (SM) and a neighbor (N) subsequently come to the place and advise him to stop his irrational and socially unacceptable move.

EXCERPT 32:

- 1 F (to his son Ntakimazi, who is busy delimiting his own land in his father’s
- 2 land property): Nta muntu yishingira akarimbi wenyene Ntakimazi.
- 3 NTA: Ndiko ndagashinga ku rugo kwa data.
- ...
- 4 N (to F): Uyu muhungu wawe (to NTA) We Ntakimazi, irya mihimbiri
- 5 wishinga mukwegana mububana munywana ama...amaki, ama vodoka
- 6 n’amakanyanga n’ibimogi
- 7 F: Ee Ohee! Ntiwumva!
- 8 N (to NTA): Ndakubwire, ntufyu...ntufyure ayo maso; ndagiye ngiye
- 9 ndabivuze. Ni ukuri, utisubiyeko
- 10 NTA (to N): Raba muka dawwe ingene... Raba muka dawwe ingene=
- 11 SM (to NTA): Akugize iki muka so wawe akugize iki?
- 12 NTA (to N): Raba muka dawwe ingene yatose akanatagarara ukamenga ni
- 13 mawe, ukamenga ni mawe yari uwugenda=
- 14 SM (to NTA): None ndi ngaha nyene ndacafise ijambo muri uwu mwanya
- 15 kandi narahavyaye nzokwama mvuga. Eee.
- 16 N (to SM): Ee mupfaso, ushima urifise

- 17 SM (to N): Eego.
 18 N (to SM): None agaburirwa na nde?
 → 19 SM: *Ariko aranshimira.*
 20 NTA (to N): Ndakubwire
 21 N (to NTA): Uyuunye ni we nyoko wawe
 22 NTA (to all): Umviriza. Ndigiriye, ndigiriye. Ndagiye nitegure, nze kugaruka
 23 nsanga mugihagaze aho nyene. (He stops land delimitation and goes away).
 ...
 24 SM (to F): Ewe Mariya mawe! Ndagowe. Urumva ga ntuze ingene aza kuntuka
 25 ngo ndi muka se; urazi ko nashitse ndakarera ari akadogonya, ari je
 26 namugaburira, ari je namurera, ari je nagira gute.
 27 F (to SM): Arabizi?
 28 SM (to F): Mugabo umvira ingene ariko arantuka.
 29 F (to SM): Aho kari kavyimvye inda
 30 SM (to F): Ntiyahatswe
 31 F (to SM): Si we wakina
 32 SM (to F): Ntuzi ko yari yavyimvye n'amatama?
 33 F (to SM): Eee, karwaye Bwashi

TT:

- 1 F (to his son Ntakimazi, who is busy delimiting his own land in his father's
 2 land property): Nobody can delimit his land property alone Ntakimazi.
 3 NTA: I'm delimiting my land in my father's land property.
 ...
 4 N (to F): This son of yours (to NTA) Ntakimazi, those useless delinquent boys
 5 with whom you spend time together, drinking together strong spirits like
 6 Vodka and even local brew spirits and smoking drugs
 7 F: Oooh! Did you hear this?
 8 N (to NTA): Don't stare at me, let me tell you; I'm going but I have said it.
 9 Truly, you need to change.
 10 NTA (to N): Look at my step mother, how... Look at my step mother, how...
 11 SM (to NTA): What wrong has your step mother done to you?
 12 NTA (to N): Look at my step mother, how she is healthy as if she were my
 13 mother, as if she were my mother who had to leave us.
 14 SM (to NTA): I'm here, and I enjoy all my rights. I can say something now
 15 and always since I have got children in this family. Yeah.
 16 N (to SM): Dear madam, you really have the speaking right in this family
 17 SM (to N): Yeah.
 18 N (to SM): Indeed, who gives him food?
 → 19 SM: *He is expressing gratitude to me.*
 20 NTA (to N): Let me tell you
 21 N (to NTA): This is your mother
 22 NTA (to all): Listen well. I'm going, I'm going. I'm going to prepare myself.
 23 Let me find you in this land. (He stops land delimitation and goes away).
 ...
 24 SM (to F): Oh, Hail Mary, mother! Too bad for me. Did you hear how he
 25 insults me calling me his step mother? When I came, I raised him when he
 26 was still a small thin child, I fed him, I took care of him in everything.
 27 F (to SM): Does he know that?
 28 SM (to F): But listen how he is insulting me.
 29 F (to SM): I remember when he had a swollen belly.
 30 SM (to F): He almost died.
 31 F (to SM): You used to pump warm water in his anus to make him feel better.
 32 SM (to F): He also had swollen cheeks.
 33 F (to SM): Yeah, he had Kwashiorkor.

In lines 12 and 13, the young man Ntakimazi says: “*Raba muka dawwe ingene yatose akanatagarara ukamenga ni mawe, ukamenga ni mawe yari uwugenda*” ‘Look at my step mother, how she is healthy as if she were my mother, as if she were my late mother’. He points at the wife of his father who raised him and took care of him when he was a very small and sickly baby boy, arrogantly calling her his “step mother” and accusing her of eating too much food from his father’s land and thus becoming fat. The woman cannot withstand being so accused and particularly being referred to as “step mother” by the young man whom she brought up and took care of while he was an unhealthy baby.

Therefore, in line 19, the woman reacts to the words by her step son Ntakimazi and makes the following MPC: “*Ariko aranshimira.*” ‘He is expressing gratitude to me.’ This MPC consists in an ironical statement which means the opposite (i.e. ‘He isn’t grateful to me at all.’) as this is the defining feature of irony (Cook, 2005). In fact, the step mother conveys her disapproval of the behavior of Ntakimazi, as the latter insults her and yet she is the person who, after the death of his mother, took care of him as he was a very small thin and sickly baby (see lines 25-33). The step mother’s MPC above is impolite given its ironical dimension. It is face-threatening. It is also marked, because it conveys impoliteness.

At the interpersonal level, the step mother (SM) who makes the marked, impolite MPC above does so in order to convey her exercise of power. More specifically, she readjusts the power relations between herself and her step son Ntakimazi (NTA). By being impolite in her MPC, the woman stands in a powerful position vis-à-vis the ungrateful son, because, though she is his step mother, she has been motherly and has played the role of a real mother for him. Indeed, the neighbor (N) is a witness: in line 21, he makes

a strong claim while addressing Ntakimazi: “*Uyuunye ni we nyoko wawe*” ‘This is your mother’.

In our discussion above, we have stressed that speakers perform impoliteness by being ironical/sarcastic in their meta-utterances, therefore exercising power over their addressees. Besides irony, speakers also choose to use metaphor as a way of conveying better their metacommunicative message.

7.5 Metaphor in an Impolite MPC and Definition of Power Relations between Interactants

The following example of the metaphor “IMPROPER TALK IS PHYSICAL VIOLENCE” was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ni akaga*” ‘It’s catastrophic’. In Excerpt 33 below, a man is complaining to his wife (W) that, while she was washing his clothes recently, she damaged his money which he had kept in the pockets. However, W justifies herself saying that it is the husband (H) himself who cleaned the clothes when he offered to help in the washing.

EXCERPT 33:

- 1 H (after calling his wife [W] ...Ubwo wewe uremera ko uri umugore wanjye?
- 2 W: Ndeke kuvyemera n’imbere ya Komine, n’imbere ya Patiri naravyemeye?
- 3 H: Ego ivyo waravyemeye. Iyo uvyemera ntuba uriko unkorera amakosa
- 4 nk’aya.
- 5 W: None ga yemwe amakosa nkoze ni aho nari namanutse ntakubariye basi=
- 6 H (with a high tone): =Oya. Ndiko ndavuga ntihagire irindi jambo usubira
- 7 kuvuga.
- 8 W (with a low tone): Ego basi.
- ...
- 9 H: Wewe, neza, ndaguhaye impuzu, ukazimesa kurya?
- 10 W: None ga yemwe jewe, izo nameshe jewe, ni ukuri ko zi...jewe sinazimeshe
- 11 nk’uko nahora ndazimesa?
- 12 H (with a high tone): Uragapfa utameshe. Kurya ni ko abandi bamesa?
- ...
- 13 W: Oya ni ukuri kwose jewe hakagira impuzu namesuye nabi jewe mbona
- 14 naragerageje.
- 15 H: Ehe raba. Urabona? Aya si amafaranga wamesanye wewe?
- 16 W: None, ayo yari mu mpuzu iyihe ga muntu?
- 17 H: Uriko umbaza impuzu yarimwo, canke uriko umbaza amafaranga?
- 18 W: None vy’ukuri, wewe ubwawe urazi [yuko
- 19 H: [Eh!Eh! Ntihagire ikindi kintu na kimwe usubira kumbwira.

- 20 W (with a low tone): *Reka kumpambagira* ndeka mvuge.
 21 H: Emera ibi ko wabigize ubibona.
 22 W: Wosanga ayo mafaranga yari muri za mpuzu zimwe, hamwe ushitse ku
 23 mwonga ugaca unyakira ngo ngire ningoga tuduge ngo urashonje=

TT:

- 1 H (after calling his wife (W) ...Do you accept that you are my wife?
 2 W: Yes, I do. I accepted this at the Civil Registrar's office and in the church.
 3 H: Ok, you did that. But, were you really committed, you wouldn't be doing
 4 wrong things to me this way.
 5 W: What wrong have I done? Going to the valley without telling you?=
 6 H (with a high tone): =No. As I'm talking, don't dare say any other word
 7 again.
 8 W (with a low tone): Ok, I accept.
 ...
 9 H: How come that you washed my clothes that way?
 10 W: The clothes I washed? Isn't it that I washed them the same way I've been
 11 washing them?
 12 H (with a high tone): Shame on you! Is that washing?
 13 W: No, really, there are no clothes which I washed badly. Those I washed, I
 14 think I did my best.
 15 H: Look at this. Isn't this money that you damaged in pockets while washing?
 16 W: In which clothes was that money, Sir?
 17 H: Are you asking me about the clothes or about the money?
 18 W: But, frankly speaking, yourself you know [that
 19 H: [Eh!Eh! Don't tell me anything else.
 →20 W (with a low tone): (lit.: Stop burying me so repetitively and brutally) *Stop*
denying me my speaking rights so repetitively and brutally. Let me speak.
 21 H: Accept that you did this evil thing intentionally.
 22 W: May be the money was in the clothes you washed, when you came to help
 23 me wash in the valley at the water stream for finishing quickly, you said you
 were hungry=

In line 20 of this Excerpt, the wife makes the following metacommunicative utterance:

“*Reka kumpambagira ndeka mvuge*” (lit. ‘Stop burying me so repetitively and brutally.

Let me speak’) ‘Stop denying me my speaking rights so repetitively and brutally. Let

me speak.’. This meta-utterance is a reaction to her husband’s harsh verbal behavior in

their interaction. In fact, whereas in line 8 the wife obeys her husband’s demeaning

order (cf. lines 6-7) which restricts her contributions in the ongoing interaction, the

man’s rude behavior continues as he rebukes and insults her (in line 12), before reaching

the climax of his infringement of her speaking rights when he orders her not to say

anything more to him (see line 19). The wife’s reaction is a meta-utterance made of two

MPCs: the MPC1 “*Reka kumpambagira*” /Reka_{stop} ku_{NP15} -nOC1 -hamb_{bury} -aFV -

gi_{REPET}-aFV/ (lit. ‘Stop burying me so repetitively and brutally’) ‘Stop denying me my

speaking rights so repetitively and brutally’ and the MPC2 “*ndeka mvuge*” ‘Let me speak’.

In this study, we are interested in MPC1, in which the wife uses the metaphorical verb “*guhambagira*” /ku_{NP15} -hamb_{bury} -aFV -gir_{REPET}-aFV/ (lit. ‘to bury someone/something repetitively and brutally’). The wife uses this metaphor to express the fact that her husband is brutally denying the speaking rights to her. Through the choice of this verb, she expresses how much inappropriate and aggressive is his communicative behavior, which she compares with physical violence done to her and, worse, burying her.

MPC1 under analysis is impolite. The wife issues a direct order to her husband to stop his verbal behavior towards her as hinted by her use of the verb “*reka*” ‘stop’ in the imperative mood in “*Reka kumpambagira*” ‘Stop denying me my speaking rights so repetitively and brutally’ and the tone she uses. Moreover, MPC1 conveys impoliteness in that the wife explicitly associates her husband with a kind of person who is brutal and a wrongdoer, as implied in the literal meaning of the metaphor in “*guhambagira*” ‘to bury someone/something repetitively and brutally’.

Through her impolite MPC, the wife claims her speaking rights and does not allow her husband to infringe on these rights, simply because of his power position as the husband and head of family. In other words, she brings in some balance by implying that as a wife, she also has a say as far as household matters are concerned. By using an impolite MPC, in fact, the wife readjusts the power relation between her and her husband to make it become what she believes it should be between them as spouses. Thus, she positions herself, at least at this very moment of interaction, in a power relation which she thinks she deserves to occupy as a life partner with her husband who has the rights to say something concerning family issues without being forbidden to do so. This is in

keeping with Spencer-Oatey's (2002) notion of *sociality rights* in rapport management within the framework of politeness theory.

'Sociality rights' are what a person claims to be entitled to as an individual and as a social actor and as he interacts with others (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9). In Excerpt 33 above, therefore, as the wife performs the MPC1 "*Reka kumpambagira*" 'Stop denying me my speaking rights so repetitively and brutally', what is so important for her is the *equity rights*, a subcomponent of sociality rights. Equity rights consist in the fact that a person claims the entitlement to fair treatment as more elaborated in the following: "We have a fundamental belief that we are entitled to personal consideration from others, so that we are treated fairly: that we are not unduly imposed upon or unfairly ordered about, that we are not taken advantage of or exploited, and that we receive the benefits to which we are entitled" (Spencer-Oatey, 2002, p. 9). Therefore, the wife believes and upholds that her husband should recognize that she has the personal and social entitlement – which are part and parcel of her sociality rights – to enjoy fully her speaking rights, as long as it is in conformity with the communicative norms in Kirundi culture. These customs allow a wife to speak politely while in company with her husband as when discussing household affairs or any personal issues and to socialize. Restrictions upon her speaking rights are mainly in public places where the husband is the one to speak on the behalf of the family.

In this section, we were interested in how speakers used metaphor to evaluate their interlocutor's speech behavior. To do so, we examined how speakers chose the source domains in order to map aspects of these to target domains. Then we examined which evaluative meaning was implied through the mapping of aspects of the source domains to target domains. Specifically, the analysis of the wife's use of the metaphorical verb

“*guhambagira*” (lit. ‘to bury someone/something repetitively and brutally’) revealed that she mapped the aspects of “burying” and “repetition” of the source domain ‘burial activity’ onto the target domain ‘interactional behavior’.

We argued that the metaphor “*guhambagira*” (lit. ‘to bury someone/something repetitively and brutally’), which the wife used in the present context of conversation to mean ‘to deny someone their speaking rights repetitively and brutally’, was not only the vehicle of her metacommunication but also a tool which she used *to intensify her negative evaluation* of her husband’s speech behavior. This metaphor did both roles of encoding the metacommunicative message and intensifying it. This result corroborated that of Pérez-Hernández (2016), who found that one of the uses of metaphors by male and female journalists in Spanish and English newspapers was to intensify aspects talked about – such as the criticism of something, telling qualities of someone, describing or portraying negatively somebody or something. Besides, the same metaphor has the function of communicating the speaker’s emotions. In MPC1, the wife expresses her motions, through the metaphor, and appeals to her husband’s emotions by telling him that he is behaving so inappropriately in the verbal interaction with her that she feels as if she were being repetitively buried alive (see the literal meaning of her MPC1 “*Reka kumpambagira*” ‘Stop burying me so repetitively and brutally’).

Moreover, the finding concerning the evaluative function of metaphor, as discussed above, is in agreement with the findings in previous studies (e.g. Ahrens & Zeng, 2022; Charteris-Black, 2003; Ilchenko, Tkach, Sinna, Kadaner, & Overchuk, 2021; Knowles & Moon, 2006; Kövecses, 2010; Moon, 1998). Metaphor in discourse is associated with positive and negative evaluation (Moon, 1998). In our data on impolite MPCs,

metaphor conveys the negative evaluation of the interlocutor's behavior in interaction. Besides, the metaphor in the woman's impolite MPC under analysis serves her to achieve persuasion of her husband concerning the extent to which his verbal behavior towards her is improper. In this regard, Díez-Prados (2016, p. 220) claims that the more a metaphor is used for evaluation the more it achieves the persuasive function. Finally, it is shared knowledge and shared values which allow interactants to understand in the same way this evaluative function of metaphor (Moon, 1998).

As regards the interpersonal relations between the woman and her husband, she brings in the dimension of power relations and particularly role relations, whereby she believes to have equal rights to say something in their household matters. In fact, she is convinced that she has the right to speak and to be listened to in their household. Through her impolite MPC, she claims her rights and thus repositions herself as a partner. She dares retaliate to the words of her husband by imposing upon him (cf. her use of the imperative in "*Reka kumpambagira. Ndeka mvuge*" 'Stop burying me so repetitively and brutally. Let me speak.') to stop his behavior and to let her speak. Therefore, the woman readjusts her power relations with her husband, refusing him to think that he is so powerful that she cannot even say a word in his presence; she puts their power and role relations on a balance and claims that she and her husband should benefit somehow balanced power and role relations, because, as it is in a Kirundi saying "*Urugo ni babiri*" 'Two persons [husband and wife] make a home'.

We now move to another function which metaphor achieves in the MPCs we are analyzing: it helps both to increase the negative evaluation of speech behavior and to achieve the economy of linguistic means in the expression of the metacommunicative message.

7.6 Metaphor for Achieving the Economy of Linguistic Means in an Impolite MPC

In line 18 of Excerpt 22, presented earlier in Chapter 6, the old man Kimotabugabo makes an MPC in which he uses a metaphor in the noun “*imituragaro*” (lit. ‘thunders’): “*singikangwa n’imituragaro*” ‘I am no longer threatened by thunder’. This noun, in the context of metacommunication, like this one, conveys the meaning ‘persons talking in a thunderous and threatening manner’. It is used by Kimotabugabo to describe the inappropriate way of talking of his grandson Kameya. He chooses this noun, instead of its equivalent verb “*guturagara*” /ku_{NP15} -turagar_{make.a.thunderous.noise} -a_{FV}/ ‘to speak in a thunderous and threatening manner’, for the following effect on the metapragmatic meaning: the young man Kameya is likened to thunder itself while he talks to his grandfather.

The use of the noun has an emphatic effect on the metacommunicative message conveyed. Moreover, using the noun “*imituragaro*” ‘thunder strikes’, which in our mind means a lot concerning the threat they cause to people on earth and the devastating effects of thunder when it strikes deadly living creatures especially animals and human beings. Thus, the use of that noun enables the speaker to say much about his negative evaluation of his addressee’s behavior and yet using just one lexical item “*imituragaro*”, therefore achieving the economy of linguistic means in the present MPC. The speaker’s (i.e. Kimotabugabo) use of noun pluralization, saying “*imituragaro*” ‘thunders’ instead of its singular form “*umuturagaro*” /u_{AUG3} -mu_{NP3} -turagar_{make.a.thunderous.noise} -O_{Noun.marker}/ ‘thunder’, and yet he is referring to one individual, Kameya, increases the negative evaluation, suggesting that the addressee (i.e. the grandson Kameya) is a troublemaker talking aggressively not only once but repetitively (cf. the sense ‘several’ suggested by the plural form of the noun). Through this pluralization, the boy’s verbal behavior is described by his grandfather as being like not

just one strike of a thunder but as several thunders striking one after another. Through his MPC Kimotabugabo means that he is not at all intimidated by his grandson's very inappropriate behavior, however many times he may do it.

The metaphor being discussed serves to 'economize linguistic means.' In short, the metaphor used by the husband achieves both the evaluative function and the function of the economy of linguistic means in the expression of that evaluation. Indeed, the many aspects of the meaning implicated by the speaker through his use of the metaphor as analyzed above points to the fact that it is used to express many things using one lexical item. This result corroborates the finding of the study by Ilchenko, Tkach, Sinna, Kadaner, & Overchuk (2021) that the economy of linguistic means is one of the several functions of metaphor.

7.7 Simile in an Impolite MPC and Interpersonal Implications of Its Use

The following example from the written play "*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*" 'The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo', Act III, Scene 6, illustrates the use of simile in a meta-utterance. After the death of their parents, four siblings (two sons Kameya and Biyago and two daughters Somambike and Mucurantimba) have been raised by their grandfather Kimotabugabo. Based on the Kirundi patriarchal tradition, the two young men Kameya and Biyago claim that only them, as boy children, have the right to inherit from the property of their late parents and that their two sisters Somambike and Mucurantimba have no such right at all. In this regard, the young man Kameya, a delinquent who had been away from home for a long period of time, has come back home and threatens those he finds there, claiming to be given the money which has been kept in his late father's bank account as an inheritance. Because of Kameya's attitude, the grandfather Kimotabugabo warns him and advises him to behave well and

to be kind with everybody in the family so that he may effectively obtain his inheritance. The grandfather says this because he is the one who has the details of the bank account of their late father and who has access to it.

EXCERPT 34:

- 1 KIMO (speaking to an audience made of his grandchildren and elders
- 2 who are neighbors): Ibiri imbere ndabamenyesheje: Mu buzukuru ba
- 3 Kimotabugabo, Kameya ndamusobanuye. (to KAMEYA) Mbega
- 4 Kame, harya wikakamisha nk'igikere ciyubuye, wakeka ko utera
- 5 ubwoba nde? Mbega urabizi ga mwana, imbwa igira ipfe ibanza
- 6 kwimba. Nayo wewe imbere y'abagabo ndakurahiye, utihanuye
- 7 ndaguhana wihanagure.
-
- 8 (to SOMAMBIKE) Urupapuro rw'iragi nari naguhaye, nije naruzuye mu
- 9 mabere iyo wari waruzitse...None ubu aho tugereye aha, Kameya
- 10 ndamuhamagariye imfyisi: (amubwira) ukagayana zirakurya, ukigaya
- 11 ndakugarukira.
- 12 KAMEYA: Urihenda muta, sinigaye sinacumuye.
- 13 FILIPO: (abwira Kameya) Sogokuru ni umuhanuzi, uranumva neza iryo
- 14 agutegereza.
- 15 KAMEYA: Naruce uko ashaka, ntangarukira ntari Imana. Ni umutama, ariko
- 16 mbona ata n'imyaka ijana aramara.
- 17 FILIPO: *Reka kumoka nk'igikoko*, emera uhanurwe, aho ni ho ubugabo
- 18 buhagaze.

TT:

- 1 KIMO (speaking to an audience made of his grandchildren and elders who are
- 2 neighbors): I'm telling you all: I remove Kameya from the list of
- 3 Kimotabugabo's grandchildren. (to KAMEYA) Listen Kame, do you think
- 4 you threaten anybody with your pride and self-ascribed grandeur like a
- 5 metamorphosed frog? Did you know, little child, the sign that a dog is going
- 6 to die is that it starts digging a burrow? You, too, I tell you in the presence
- 7 of elders, unless you change, I'm going to punish you, you'll regret terribly.
-
- 8 (to Somambike) The document showing details of your inheritance from your
- 9 late father, It's me who took it from your bra where you had hidden it [while
- 10 you were sleeping]...Now, I'm going to send hyenas to Kameya (to Kameya)
- 11 If you behave proudly, they'll devour you, if you repent, I'll save you.
- 12 KAMEYA: You're mistaken, Sir. I don't repent because I've not sinned.
- 13 FILIPO: (to Kameya) Your grandfather is giving you good advice, please obey
- 14 him.
- 15 KAMEYA: Let him take any decision, he won't save me because he isn't God.
- 16 He's an old man, but he isn't a hundred years old yet.
- 17 FILIPO: *Stop roaring like an animal*; accept to be advised, it's a sign of
- 18 maturity as a man.

In Excerpt 34, the old man Kimotabugabo (KIMO), the grandfather of the four siblings (Somambike, Kameya, Biyago and Mucurantimba) and who has been their tutor from the death of their parents, is giving advice to the delinquent young man Kameya,

admonishing him to behave well in the family. However, Kameya continues to display an impolite behavior and lack of respect of his grandfather. Thus, for example, Kameya responds to his grandfather's advice with arrogance: (i) "*Urihenda muta, sinigaye sinacumuye*" 'You're mistaken, Sir. I don't repent because I've not sinned.' in line 12; and (ii) "*Naruce uko ashaka, ntangarukira ntari Imana. Ni umutama, ariko mbona ata n'imyaka ijana aramara*" 'Let him take any decision, he won't save me because he isn't God. He's an old man, but he isn't a hundred years old yet' in lines 15-16.

In response to Kameya's words, in line 17, the old and wise man Filipino, who has been invited to try to settle the conflict between the siblings concerning inheritance, metacommunicatively says: "*Reka kumoka nk'igikoko, emera uhanurwe, aho ni ho ubugabo buhagaze*" 'Stop roaring like an animal; accept to be advised, a sign of maturity as a man'. The MPC in this utterance is the first clause "*Reka kumoka nk'igikoko*" 'Stop roaring like an animal'. The speaker, Filipino, uses the verb "*kumoka*" /ku_{NP15} -mok_{roar} -aFV/ 'to roar' as being semantically the vehicle of the meta-utterance. This verb is normally used while talking of noises of certain animals such as lions or other large wild animals to mean 'to utter a full, deep and prolonged cry'. When used figuratively to describe somebody's speech, the verb implies a negative evaluation of their speech behavior when they are talking too loudly and with threat.

Simile is used in the MPC "*Reka kumoka nk'igikoko*" 'Stop roaring like an animal', as already mentioned, through the metaphor plus comparative form in the expression "*kumoka nk'igikoko*" 'roaring like an animal'. This rhetorical tool helps the speaker to convey emphasis of the fact that their addressee has indeed behaved in a very inappropriate manner. Moreover, this MPC is impolite and thus marked. The impoliteness lies, first, in Filipino's use of the verb "*kumoka*" 'to roar' which involves a

negative criticism of Kameya's talk and, second, in his use of the imperative mood in the verb "*reka*" 'stop' whereby the speaker sounds as threatening the interlocutor not to continue his way of talking.

The speaker uses the impolite MPC under analysis in order to exercise power. In fact, Filipo, as an old and respected man who, indeed, has been called upon to come and attempt to help settle the misunderstandings in the family, is more powerful as a participant in the present conversation than the young man Kameya. Whereas the latter has been behaving impolitely and proudly with respect to his siblings and even his grandfather, the elder Filipo specifically uses the marked, impolite MPC to readjust the power relations at this time of interaction, redefining the status of the young delinquent Kameya as lower compared to his own and even to that of the grandfather Kimotabugabo.

Another rhetorical strategy used in our data is hyperbole or exaggeration, which we discuss in the following section.

7.8 Use of Hyperbole in an Impolite MPC and its Interpersonal Function

Exaggeration is exemplified in the following Excerpt 35 from *Ninde* play "*Ndyakarika*" 'Profit from what is profitable'. In this extract of a conversation, a man (M) and a woman (W1) are having an argument, disputing the ownership of a farmland, as M finds W1 in it. Another woman (W2) intervenes to try to calm them down. Upon arriving on the ground, W2 intentionally uses the verb "*kubika*" /ku_{NP15} -bik_{crow} -aFV/ 'to crow' as she describes the way M and W1 have been talking and behaving in their argument.

EXCERPT 35:

- 1 M (as he finds W1 doing some farming on the piece of land which he claims

- 2 to be his property, with a high tone, giving an order to W1): Ndakubwiye
 3 nimba ukomeye mu mutwe, mvira kw'itongo=
 4 W1 (with a high tone): =Jewe ndakubwiye ko maze imyaka ibiri ndaharima,
 5 wewe wari hehe? Ko utari bwaze unsangaho?
 ...
 6 M (with a high tone): Ivyo bikoti wariko uragemura, ntukurayo na kimwe
 7 ngaha=
 8 W1(with a high tone): =Ndabikuraho, ndabikuraho kuko ni ivyo nateye
 ...
 9 M (with a high tone): Ntavyo ukuraho.
 ...
 10 W1(with a high tone): Ndabikuraho. Ndabikuraho.
 ...
 11 W1(with a high tone): ...Ni ivyo nitereye si ivyo wantereye.
 12 M (with a high tone): Wabiteye iwawe?=
 13 W1(with a high tone): =Nabiteye iwanje nyene.
 ...
 14 M (with a high tone): Wahaguriye nde?=
 ...
 15 W1(with a high tone): Jewe nije naguze ubwa mbere...
 16 M (with a high tone, threatening W1): Mvira mu murima hoci!
 17 W1(with a high tone): Ndeka nicire ibikoti sha ndeka...Isarishirize hiyo.
 18 W2 (intervening, calling W1 and M): We Kari...Matiya...
 19 M (to W2): Nkurako uyo murwayi.
 ...
 → 20 W2 (to M and W1): *Ko mbona muriko murabika nk'isake z'agasema?*

TT:

- 1 M (as he finds W1 doing some farming on the piece of land which he claims
 2 to be his property, with a high tone, giving an order to W1): I'm telling you,
 3 if you're not insane, leave my piece of land right now=
 4 W1 (with a high tone): =Listen, I've been farming on this land for two years.
 5 Where were you during this period of time, since you never came?
 ...
 6 M (with a high tone): These cassava plants which you're gathering, you won't
 7 take any=
 8 W1(with a high tone): =I will take them; indeed this cassava field is mine
 ...
 9 M (with a high tone): You won't take them.
 ...
 10 W1(with a high tone): I will take them. I will take them.
 ...
 11 W1(with a high tone): ...It's me who planted this cassava, not you.
 12 M (with a high tone): Did you plant the cassava in your land?=
 13 W1(with a high tone): =I planted them in my land of course.
 ...
 14 M (with a high tone): From whom did you buy the land?=
 ...
 15 W1(with a high tone): I bought it before you...
 16 M (with a high tone, threatening W1): Leave my piece of land, go away!
 17 W1(with a high tone): Let me gather my cassava plants. Stop being mad at me
 18 W2 (intervening, calling W1 and M): Caritas...Mathew...
 19 M (to W2): Please, get this sick person away from me.
 ...
 → 20 W2 (to M and W1): *Why are you crowing like cocks of bad omen?*

In line 20 of Excerpt 35, W2 makes the MPC “*Ko mbona muriko murabika nk’isake z’agasema?*” ‘Why are you crowing like cocks of bad omen?’. She uses the verb “*kubika*” ‘to crow’ so as to portray the nature of argument which M and W1 have been having. This is an exaggeration since this verb is normally said of the noise made by cocks at specific times of the day. The hyperbole is used as a tool to show the extent to which the two persons involved in the dispute have been talking inappropriately.

The MPC by W2 is impolite because it is face-threatening. In fact, the speaker intentionally uses the verb “*kubika*” ‘to crow’ in order to describe the speech behavior of two human beings, M and W1.

Having one’s speech likened to the crowing of cocks is having one’s face attacked in an interaction. The speaker W2 portrays M and W1 as noise makers and extremely quarrelsome people. She describes their speech behavior as socially unacceptable in the same way the crowing of a rooster is especially when it is done at night contrary to expectations. In fact, in Kirundi culture, a cock which crows at such time is believed to be a bad omen to the family, symbolizing for example imminent death in the family. Such unacceptability sometimes is the cause of the cock crowing at night being slaughtered and eaten by the owners.

W2’s use of the impolite MPC is associated with exercise of power. The fact that W2 makes a strong criticism of the speech behavior of M and W1 indicates that she is in a position to do so without fear of retaliation. Moreover, at the beginning of her MPC, she uses the evidential expression “*ko mbona*” ‘As I can see’, which encodes a *visual evidential value*, mixed with an *auditory evidential value* (Plungian, 2001), because W2 can both see and hear the two interactants arguing. This gives strength to her

statement, indirectly denying her two addressees the possibility of rejecting her claim as wrong.

The above MPC involves hyperbole. This is an intentional exaggeration (Gibbs, 1994, cited in Claridge, 2011, p. 7). The metapragmatic expression “*kubika nk’isake z’agasema*” ‘to crow like cocks of bad omen’ is a metaphoric and imagistic expression which W2 uses with an amplifying effect on the point she is making. In relation to this, Wales (2014) stresses that hyperbole is one of the stylistic resources used to amplify or intensify the emotional impact of what one is saying. Through the emphatic effect of hyperbole, the woman’s use of this rhetorical tool plays a persuasive function that her addressees have gone too far in their improper verbal behavior. In effect, hyperbole is a persuasive device (Claridge, 2011). Besides hyperbole, speakers making impolite evaluative MPCs also use ‘metonymy’, one of the several rhetorical tools.

7.9 Metonymy and its Evaluative Function in an Impolite MPC

Our data also reflect the use of metonymy. This is a figurative style whereby the speaker replaces the name of something with that of something else which is related as an attribute, for example cause and effect, whole and part, etc. (Wales, 2011, pp. 267-268). Below we analyzed an example taken from Excerpt 5, which we presented earlier in Chapter 4. In this case, we have a conversation between a woman and her husband at home. The wife is requesting money from her husband so that she can buy kitchen salt (see lines 3-5) because there is no more salt left in the house and yet she wants to go to the field to harvest potatoes. However, the husband does not cooperate and refuses to grant her request. Instead, he mockingly tells her that if she cannot eat the potatoes without salt, then let her not eat supper. The wife responds to her husband’s mockery and his lack of cooperation by indicating that, whether he likes or not, she will harvest

the tubers. In her response, she implies that it is her right to organize kitchen matters the way she likes without being forbidden by anybody, a criticism which indirectly targets the husband himself. In fact, she stubbornly replies to her husband saying: “*Ndabisoroma nyene; mbuzwa na nde?*” ‘I will harvest the tubers whether you like or not; who will forbid me this?’ in line 15 of Excerpt 5 and “*Ndabireka kuri angahe? Jewe ndabizana. Uko mbona binshobokeye ni ko ndabizana.*” ‘Why on earth would I give it up? I will surely harvest them, in my own and easy way’ in line 21 of this Excerpt.

The woman’s response prompts her husband to react, in line 23 of Excerpt 5, with two consecutive MPCs: [MPC1] *ndazi ko wakameze* (lit. ‘I know that you’ve got it [the tongue] grown in your mouth’) ‘I know that you are loquacious’; [MPC2] “*akarimi kawe ni ngongo*” (lit. ‘your small and unpleasant tongue is too sharp’) ‘You’re too much talkative and offensive’. Core to the double MPC is the noun “*akarimi*” /a_{AUG12} -ka_{NP12}, DIM -rimi_{tongue}/ whose diminutive prefix *-ka-* gives it the literal meaning of ‘a small tongue’ which is, therefore, ‘unpleasant’ because unexpected to be of a smaller size than a normal tongue for a grown-up person.

The noun “*akarimi*” ‘a small tongue’ is used metonymically and with a negative connotation to characterize the disapproved verbal behavior of talking too much and in an annoying way. In the husband’s two MPCs above, the noun “*akarimi*” is referred to twice, in both MPC1 (cf. “*wakameze*” /u_{SC1} -á_{PST} -ka_{NP12}, DIM -mer_{grow} -ye_{FV}/ through the diminutive particle *-ka-* which functions as the object marker representing the noun “*akarimi*”) and MPC2 (cf. “*akarimi kawe*” /a_{AUG12} -ka_{NP12}, DIM -rimi_{tongue} ka_{NP12}, POSS, DIM -we_{you}/ lit. ‘your small and unpleasant tongue’). The noun which is central to the meta-utterance is a body part and particularly a speech organ in our example above. A

similar metapragmatic meaning is conveyed in Kirundi by another expression which has a speech organ at the center of it as well and which Kirundi speakers use also to disapprove of their addressees' speech behavior: "*akanwa kawē*" /a_{AUG12} -ka_{NP12, DIM} -nwa_{mouth} ka_{NP12, POSS, DIM} -we_{you}/ (lit. 'your small and unpleasant mouth') used to mean that one's interlocutor has the habit of talking too much and about unnecessary things, which generally may cause trouble to himself/herself or to others. In our data, in Excerpt 20 already presented in Chapter 5, the speech organ 'mouth' is referred to through a verb coined from this noun in "*Na wewe uza wanwanwagiza*" 'You're kidding and exaggerating in what you're saying'. The noun stem "*-nwa*" 'mouth' (from the noun "*umunwa*" /u_{AUG3} -mu_{NP3} -nwa_{mouth}/ 'a mouth') is reduplicated as "*-nwa-nwa-*" into the coined verb "*kunwanwagiza*" /ku_{INF15} -nwa_{mouth}-nwa_{mouWQAth} -giz_{CAUS} -a_{FV}/ ('lit. to cause lips to move in speed') 'to talk about something without being serious and often with exaggeration'. In short, we have been looking at meta-utterances whose metacommunicative message is based on the name of a body part.

In other cases, the word used as the vehicle of the MPC is one referring to something semantically related to a speech organ. One example from our data is the noun "*amate*" 'saliva' related to the speech organs "*ururimi*" 'a tongue' and "*umunwa*" 'a mouth' as illustrated in the MPC "*Reka guta amate angana n'amata*" (Lit. 'Stop throwing as much saliva as milk') 'Stop talking so much in vain'. This metapragmatic utterance was taken from the written play "*Abuzukuru ba Kimotabugabo*" 'The grandchildren of Kimotabugabo', Part I, Scene VII. It is an MPC made by the grandfather Kimotabugabo while addressing his granddaughter Somambike, the first born among her siblings, in reaction to her repeated refusal to be blessed by him as the heir of the family, after the death of her parents. In that MPC, the expression "*guta amate*" (lit. 'to throw saliva') 'to let one's saliva overflow as a result of too much talking' is used metonymically. In

fact, the ACTION of “talking too much” is expressed through its RESULT or CONSEQUENCE “*guta amate angana n’amata*” ‘having one’s saliva overflow from one’s mouth in a big quantity as milk’.

Such MPCs, whose core expressive means is a body part and generally a speech organ as in the MPC “*akarimi kawe ni ngongo*” (lit. ‘your small and unpleasant tongue is too sharp’) ‘you’re too much talkative and offensive’ discussed above, are impolite. They are, in fact, face-threatening since they target the addressee’s ‘negative face’ wants as far as their rights to freedom of action and freedom from imposition are concerned. Therefore, the speakers making such MPCs use the *Negative impoliteness* strategy (Culpeper, 1996). Moreover, these meta-utterances aim at achieving some interpersonal function.

The impolite MPC “*akarimi kawe ni ngongo*” (lit. ‘your small and unpleasant tongue is too sharp’) ‘you’re too much talkative and offensive’, which is said by the husband to his wife, is used to exercise his power as the head of family. It is like a reminder by the man to his wife that, given his powerful position, she should respect him by not saying too much to him and particularly by not accusing him so openly in the presence of his nephews and nieces.

Metonymy in the above cases of metacommunication is used to intensify the evaluative function of the impolite MPC in which it is used. In the specific case of the MPC “*akarimi kawe ni ngongo*” ‘you’re too much talkative and offensive’ analyzed above, using the name of a part of the body to symbolize what it is used for, that is ‘speech’, adds emphasis to the evaluative metacommunicative message of the MPC and it does even more so when used in its diminutive form “*akarimi*” (lit. ‘a small tongue’) which has a negative connotation. More evaluation is brought about by the adding of “*ni*

ngongo” (lit. ‘it is sharp’) to the noun phrase “*akarimi kawé*” (lit. ‘your small and unpleasant tongue’). This result is in agreement with Charteris-Black’s (2003) finding that using a human body part in combination with an adjective or a noun is used to express evaluation of some social behavior with the aim of discouraging behavior that is disapproved in the Malay society.

A further rhetorical strategy used by speakers in our data is wordplay in different forms though with similar effects.

7.10 Wordplay as a strategy to convey and emphasize power exercise in impolite MPCs

This section is about wordplay of different kinds in impolite MPCs. I adopted the following definition of the term ‘wordplay’:

Wordplay is the general name for the various *textual* phenomena in which *structural features* of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a *communicatively significant confrontation* of two (or more) linguistic structures with *more or less similar forms* and *more or less different meanings*.

(Delabastita, 1996, p. 128; emphasis is original)

This definition indicates that the manipulation of form with effect on meaning is key in wordplay. The formal aspect lies in the manipulation of the sounds, for example as when one is producing spoken language. In connection with this, Stanley (2001, p. 339) defines wordplay as “the playing upon the sounds and senses of words”. The formal similarity can be complete or partial, in the form of “homonymy (identical sounds and spelling), homophony (identical sounds but different spellings), homography (different sounds but identical spelling), and paronymy (there are slight differences in both spelling and sound)” (Delabastita, 1996, p. 128). Such differences in spelling and in sound, as noticed in paronymy, may be very noticeable in MPCs behaving like

onomatopoeia in our data from *Ninde* plays as we shall see below; onomatopoeia being also used in discourse as a form of wordplay.

The impolite MPCs which are concerned by this analysis of wordplay are those realized implicitly either as a parodistic mimicking (PAMI) or as an echoic mention of an interlocutor's expression disapproved of by the speaker. First of all, I did a linguistic analysis of the wordplay in the implicit MPC and the evaluative function associated with the linguistic choice. Second, I drew conclusions about the implications of the specific wordplay on the interpersonal relations between the participants in interaction.

PAMI is one of the means of implicit metacommunication (Hübler, 2011). Parody is defined as "*imitating the characteristic style of a speaker...with the intention to ridicule or achieve a comic effect*" (Hübler, 2011, p. 112; emphasis is mine). The speaker who produces PAMI indirectly expresses his/her disgust at what the interlocutor has just said or the manner in which the latter has said it (Hübler, 2011), thus achieving an indirect evaluation of their interlocutor's speech behavior.

Besides PAMI, the data shows the presence of wordplay in echo-utterances. When a speaker echoes their interlocutor, by repeating in a special manner what the latter has said or aspects of it, we have an instance of metacommunication, though not a strong one (Hübler, 2011). It is such kind of meta-utterance, which is implicitly realized as an echo-utterance and which involves wordplay, which I analyzed, seeking to uncover the function of the latter in terms of both metacommunication and interpersonal relations between interactants.

Below are various patterns of wordplay presented starting from those appearing in PAMI (phonetic play, onomatopoeia-like forms, and word substitution), then those present in echo-utterances (manipulating (i) homonymy and (ii) sound similarity

between the echoed word and the word used to echo it, and coining a word during the act of echoing one's interlocutor).

7.10.1 Phonetic play in PAMI

In the MPCs realized as PAMI, impoliteness is used, for example where the speaker ridicules the hearer and expresses his/her relative power by belittling him/her.

In my attempt to describe the phonetic play in PAMI, I used phonetics and phonology references such as Kemp (2006: 408) – the International Phonetic Alphabet, revised to 1993, updated 1996 – and Katamba (1989). An example to illustrate the phenomenon of phonetic play in PAMI was taken from Excerpt 36 below, from *Ninde* play “*Urondera agahambaye ukaronka akarambaraye*” ‘Exaggeration in one’s lifestyle leads to self-destruction’. This is a conversation between a husband (H) and his wife (W). The two will soon attend a social function of a friend. So, W is requesting H to buy her clothes like those which their neighbor Ntamenya bought for his wife, suggesting that they shall then go together with that couple on the day of the function.

EXCERPT 36:

- 1 W: ...Twandyoheye utwo duhuzu nk'utwo muka Ntamenya azoba yambaye...
- 2 Tuzoce duhitana Ntamenya n'umugore duce tuja gupinda duce tuja
- 3 n'ugusorora mu kabare.
- 4 H: Uragepindirwako urakarushwa.
- 5 (Mimicking W) “YEⁿ YEⁿ YIⁿ YAⁿ YUⁿ YIⁿ JA”
- 6 Mwahora mupindana kangaha? ...Ubu ndabihinyuye, genda ubwire
- 7 Ntamenya azikugurire.
- ...
- 8 (Complaining, as the wife leaves the place) Ubu rero ndavyemeye, bwa
- 9 bundi uri umugore wa Ntamenya.

TT:

- 1 W: ...I've have liked the clothes like those which the wife of Ntamenya will
- 2 put on the day of the party... With Ntamenya and his wife, we'll go out to
- 3 eat and drink in a bar and boast while posing in our smart dresses.
- 4 H: May you be upset by people posing and boasting to disturb you, may you
- 5 be very poor. (Mimicking W) “YEⁿYEⁿ YIⁿ YAⁿ YUⁿ YIⁿ JA”
- 6 /jeⁿjeⁿjiⁿjaⁿjuⁿjiⁿja/ (‘You’re talking nonsense’)
- 7 How many times have you posed and boasted with them? ...
- 8 I see what you mean, go and tell Ntamenya to buy those nice clothes for you.

- 8 ...
 9 (Complaining, as the wife leaves the place) Now this is evidence; I conclude
 that you are Ntamenya's mistress.

In lines 2-3 of this Excerpt, the wife (W) makes the following suggestion to her husband (H): “*Tuzoce duhitana Ntamenya n’umugore duce tuja gupinda*” ‘With Ntamenya and his wife, we’ll go out to eat and drink in a bar and boast while posing in our smart dresses’. The part of this utterance “*duce tuja gupinda*” ‘and boast while posing in our smart dresses’ is imitated by H in the form of a PAMI in the line 5: “*YEⁿ YEⁿ YTⁿ YAⁿ YUⁿ YTⁿ nAⁿ*”, Kirundi sounds which we phonologically transcribed as */jeⁿjeⁿjiⁿjaⁿjuⁿjiⁿna/* and whose implicated meaning is that the imitated speaker W has been talking nonsense. These sounds are marked in that they are neither clear nor articulate and convey no meaning as far as the interpretation of Kirundi sounds, words and sentences is concerned. Sounds are *distorted* by the speaker during the PAMI; indeed, mimicry “consists of a caricatured re-presentation” and involves “a distortion” or “a caricature” (Culpeper, 2005, pp. 56-57). Indeed, intentional manipulation of sounds takes place as H imitates W’s words “*duce tuja gupinda*” by making the PAMI “*YEⁿ YEⁿ YTⁿ YAⁿ YUⁿ YTⁿ nAⁿ*”, which we represent phonologically as */jeⁿjeⁿjiⁿjaⁿjuⁿjiⁿna/* and which conveys the meaning ‘You’re talking nonsense’. Such sounds manipulation is shown in the detailed description below.

On the one hand, while mimicking his wife’s three words “*duce tuja gupinda*”, which make up a clause, H substitutes the semi-vowel /j/ for every consonant sound in these three words being imitated, except for the last consonant cluster /nd/, in the verb “*gupinda*” ‘to boast while posing as one believes he/she is looking smart’. Here, H pronounces /nd/ as /n/ during his mimicking. Moreover, H nasalizes all the vowel sounds in this mimicking. On the other hand, in addition to his nasalization of vowel

sounds, H operates further significant changes to the vowel sounds in his parodistic mimicking.

First of all, while imitating the Kirundi two-syllable word “*duce*” – which has just been pronounced by his wife as /du-tʃe/ in the normal way – H pronounces it as /jeⁿjeⁿ/, whereby he produces the mono-syllabic sound /jeⁿ/ and reduplicates it into the bi-syllabic sound sequence /jeⁿjeⁿ/. We note here that the nasalized unround front vowel /eⁿ/ is used to imitate both the round /u/ and the unround /e/ in the word “*duce*”.

Second, H imitates the word “*tuja*” /tu_{SC1} - ja_{go}/ ‘we shall go’ (phonologically represented as /tu-dʒa/) by pronouncing it as /jiⁿjaⁿ/. Specifically, H uses the nasalized unround front vowel /iⁿ/ as a substitution for the round back vowel /u/ while imitating the Kirundi syllabic sound /tu/ saying /jiⁿ/. Then, he uses the same vowel /a/ but nasalizes it as /aⁿ/ and phonologically produces the sound /jaⁿ/.

Third and last, for the Kirundi three-syllable verb “*gupinda*” ‘ku-pi-nda’ ‘to boast while posing as one believes he/she looks smart’, normally pronounced as /gu-pi-nda/, H uses the tri-syllabic sound sequence /juⁿjiⁿjaⁿ/ to substitute for the full word. As said before, we note that the consonant cluster /nd/ is changed into [ɲ] in the mimicking.

All the types of sound manipulation operated by H, as presented and described above, are aimed at emphasizing his metapragmatic evaluation of what his wife has said, using his PAMI “YEⁿ YEⁿ YIⁿ YAⁿ YUⁿ YIⁿ ɲA” /jeⁿjeⁿjiⁿjaⁿjuⁿjiⁿjaⁿ/, implying the meaning ‘You’re talking nonsense’. The sounds which he produces during his mimicking are not articulated, unclear and do not conform to the Kirundi phonological system.

The husband’s twisting of the sounds of the words spoken by his wife constitutes a face-threatening act (FTA) because the implicature is that all which she has said is

nothing more than pure nonsense or can be likened to babbling of a baby who hasn't yet acquired how to speak articulately. Thus, H's PAMI is an act of impoliteness as it makes his wife feel ridiculed. H uses the *Negative impoliteness* strategy by behaving contemptuously towards W. Contempt in this PAMI is realized through H's phonetic distortion of W's sounds during the mimicking, whose accompanying facial expression, like during the intentional rounding of vowels, may add up to the rudeness of the PAMI. The meaning is that the man is disapproving of his wife's inclination to the life style of another couple, specifically the Ntamenya's, of whom he feels jealous (cf. lines 5-8).

With respect to interpersonal relations, the husband uses his impolite meta-utterance to exercise power. His implicit MPC, which is a PAMI adorned with a play on the sounds being imitated, puts an emphasis on the fact that, as her husband and the head of family, he deserves respect and honor and that his efforts to meet the family needs, not only those of his wife but also those of children, should be recognized and appreciated. Thus, a warning is sent to his wife to stop this inappropriate behavior of envying the lifestyle of another couple and particularly when she seems to admire another man concerning what he did to his wife (cf. her mention that Ntamenya has bought new clothes to his wife).

Phonetic play in PAMI is achieved when a speaker imitates their interlocutor by manipulating sounds of the imitated words, making them unclear and inarticulate or not making sense. In this case, the speaker is implying that the addressee, whom he/she is imitating, is talking completely 'nonsense' or is talking 'very inappropriately'. The evaluative function of wordplay in PAMI is achieved through the sarcastic meaning which is associated with the speaker's imitation of his/her interlocutor's words and

which hints that such words are inappropriate, in the same way it is for echoic repetition (see Sperber & Wilson, 1981).

Apart from the phonetic play, as discussed above, speakers use in their impolite MPCs linguistic devices operating like onomatopoeia as a way of playing with the language.

7.10.2 Parodistic mimicking (PAMI) in the form of onomatopoeia

The term onomatopoeia is used in this section to mean a relationship between the sound of a word and something else. This relation is about things like "imitating," "echoing," and "sounding like" (Bredin, 1996, p. 555). The example in Excerpt 37 below was taken from *Ninde* play "*Washaka iki?*" "What was your intention?". A married woman goes out with another man to drink beer in a pub without her husband being aware of it. On their way back home, as they are drunk and it is night, they accidentally fall into a deep pit which they cannot get out of without the assistance of other people. In the early morning, at dawn, people passing by see them and help them get out of the pit. The husband (H) starts investigating with his wife (W), in the presence of the crowd, concerning what happened and particularly why she is found in the pit with another man.

EXCERPT 37:

- 1 H (to W): Udusigurire
- 2 W: Saa.
- 3 H: Ingene vyagenze.
- 4 W: Ee.
- 5 H: Mwe n'uwo muntu w'umugabo muri kumwe muri iri joro ry'iyi nyo...muri
- 6 iyi nyomvyi.
- 7 W: Mhm.
- 8 H: Aho ko ari yo nzu nakwubakiye utahamwo.
- ...
- 9 W (to H): Na...na...na...na...nari nagiye kugura agatabi.
- 10 H (mimicking W): "VYI!VYI!VYI!VYI!"
- 11 (to the people who helped remove W and the man from the pit): Subizayo
- 12 sunurirayo mufurire.
- 13 W (to H): Bafurire kandi, aho kuntahana
- 14 H (to W): Aho waja kugura itabi, ntaryo jewe nahora ndagutahanira?
- ...

- 15 H (warning W): Ndakurahiye, ugasubira kungerera muhira!
 16 W (pleading, apologizing to H): Oya ndagusavye ikigongwe, ndakomye
 17 amashi.

TT:

- 1 H (to W): Explain to us
 2 W: Yes, please.
 3 H: What happened.
 4 W: Yeah.
 5 H: Why you spent a night in this pit with this man, why you're together at this
 6 time at night.
 7 W: Mhm.
 8 H: Tell us whether this is the house which I built for you to stay in.
 ...
 9 W (to H): I...I...I...I...I had gone to buy tobacco for smoking.
 → 10 H (mimicking W): "VYI!VYI!VYI!VYI!" /vji vji vji vji/
 → 11 (to the people who helped remove W and the man from the pit): Return her
 12 down into the pit, bury her in it.
 13 W (to H): Instead of burying me, you should take me home.
 14 H (to W): Going to buy tobacco, why? I've always bought it for you.
 ...
 15 H (warning W): You're no longer allowed to step in my homestead, I swear!
 16 W (pleading, apologizing to H): No, please, forgive me. I beg your pardon,
 17 please.

In line 9 of Excerpt 36, the woman tries to explain to her husband what happened to her, saying while stammering: "*Na... na... na... na...nari nagiye kugura agatabi*" 'I... I... I... I had gone to buy tobacco.' In line 10, in response to her unconvincing argument, her husband performs an implicit MPC in the form of a parodistic mimicking "*VYI!VYI!VYI!VYI!*" /vji vji vji vji/, through which he implicates that she is talking nonsense.

Onomatopoeia involves representing in language the sounds produced in the physical world (Attridge, 1984); in a similar way, the linguistic device "vyi" /vji/ is used repeatedly (i.e. four times) in the form of a PAMI in order to represent the particles and words uttered by W in line 9 (i.e. "*Na... na... na... na...nari nagiye kugura agatabi*" 'I... I... I... I had gone to buy tobacco'). By so doing, the speaker H performs an implicit MPC which operates like an onomatopoeia, a way of implying that what W has said can be reduced to the sound "vyi!" /vji/ repeated four times. In other words, H implicates

that W has just said nonsense while attempting to explain why she passed her night in the pit and in the company of another man.

The co-text sustains our analysis, the husband challenges his wife's explanation that she fell in the pit while she was coming back home from buying tobacco: "*Aho waja kugura itabi, ntaryo jewe nahora ndagutahanira?*" 'Going to buy tobacco, why? I've always bought it for you.' A number of facts hint at her guilt and make her husband and other people suspect the woman for being unfaithful: the wife was found in a pit with another man at night and she is stammering while trying to justify herself.

Through his MPC, the husband considers his wife's explanation as 'disgusting' and 'nonsense'. His use of the imitative sound sequence "*VYI!VYI!VYI!VYI!*" suggests that his wife's explanation, which he is imitating, is simply noise which he is indeed representing in the same way sounds are imitated through onomatopoeia. Moreover, by using the form "*vyi!*" repeated four times, he implies that what the wife has just said is unacceptable, unpleasant comparable to very ugly things (cf. the use of the augmentative particle "*-bi-*" as in "*ivyinyo*" /*i*_{AUG8} -*bi*_{NP8}, *AUGV* -*inyo*_{tooth}/ 'ugly big teeth', where *-bi-* is realized as "*vyi*" given its phonetic environment).

The MPC in line 10 is very confrontational and loaded with criticism. This could find a justification in the context in which the interaction with his wife is taking place, a situation which opens up a conflict talk between the husband and his wife. The meta-utterance is face-attacking and thus impolite.

By using the impolite MPC above, the husband is exercising power. The wife has been caught "red-handed" in company with a man to whom she is not married, which makes her husband and the gathered crowd think of her as adulterous. In this way, she is in a powerless position, she cannot dare retaliate to her husband's impolite talk with

impoliteness; and this is the essence of power exercise in interaction (cf. Culpeper, 1996). We see further exercise of power by the husband when he bans her from stepping again in their homestead – which he defines now as being ‘his’ – after which the woman starts apologizing and pleading with him to forgive her (see lines 16-17).

We now move to another form of wordplay in parodistic mimicking which involves word substitution.

7.10.3 Wordplay by word substitution in PAMI and implications for power relations

There is word substitution in the following example from *Ninde* play “*Akababaje umugabo kababaza n’uwundi*” ‘Men have similar concerns’. A young man called Burayonga is a delinquent who is idle at home and does not help his parents in family activities like farming. One day, he comes back home late at night after spending the whole day away.

EXCERPT 38:

- 1 Burayonga (drunk and proud of himself as he enters his father’s house): Mhm.
- 2 (Calling his sister Emelyne): Eme! Eme!
- 3 Mother (to her son Burayonga): Ni umugore wawe?
- 4 Burayonga (praising and announcing himself as he reaches the sitting room
- 5 where his father, mother and sister are eating supper): **Burayonga** ndatashe.
- 6 Mother (mimicking her son): “**UMWAMI NDATASHE**”

TT:

- 1 Burayonga (drunk and proud of himself as he enters his father’s house): Mhm.
- 2 (Calling his sister Emelyne): Eme[lyne]! Eme[lyne]!
- 3 Mother (to her son Burayonga): Is she your wife?
- 4 Burayonga (praising and announcing himself as he reaches the sitting room
- 5 where his father, mother and sister are eating supper): Me **Burayonga**, here I’m back home.
- 6 Mother (mimicking her son): **ME THE KING, HERE I’M BACK HOME.**

Upon arriving home late at night, the delinquent young man Burayonga says “*Burayonga ndatashe*” ‘Me **Burayonga**, here I’m back home’, praising and

announcing himself at the door of his parents' house (see lines 4 and 5). In line 6, the mother reacts to her son's self-praise by making the PAMI "**UMWAMI** *NDATASHE*" 'Me **the King**, here I'm back home'. The mother's PAMI is an implicit evaluative MPC of her son's speech behavior. In her PAMI, she intentionally substitutes the word "*umwami*" 'king' for the son's proper name "Burayonga". By so doing, she is challenging her misbehaving son that he is not an important person like a king, who is worthy of protocol and honor and who can do what pleases him in his kingdom. Moreover, she is implying that in the same way a king as the highest authority in a kingdom is respected by his people, his father is the head of family and therefore the person to be respected by every family member, including Burayonga himself.

The mother's MPC is impolite and marked: it involves sarcasm, as she substitutes the noun "*umwami*" "king" for her son's name "Burayonga" while imitating his words. By performing this MPC using her style, the mother intends to ridicule her son through her sarcastic comment. The PAMI, which the mother addresses her son Burayonga in the presence of his father, conveys a challenge to her son's self-praise when he says "*Burayonga ndatashe*" 'Me Burayonga, here I'm back home'. Her MPC is face-attacking and thus impolite and marked. It is also marked by the fact that she replaces the name "Burayonga" with the proper noun "Umwami" 'king'.

Regarding the interpersonal meaning of this MPC, the mother uses it to exercise power by challenging her son and his pride, reminding him that he is just a child in the family and not the boss and that, therefore, he should behave accordingly following the Kirundi culture and tradition which define a well-behaved child. More importantly, the mother is addressing her son's misbehavior of spending a day away from home and coming back home being drunk and at a time when even his father is already indoor, which is

against the expectations in Kirundi tradition that all members of a family, except for the father and head of family, are expected to be back in the house in the evening before night fall. Through her MPC, the mother is reminding her son of his low position in the house and thus admonishing him to behave appropriately and come back home early as a sign of respect for his parents and particularly his father.

So far, we have been analyzing wordplay achieved in PAMI. We now move on to investigate wordplay which is a result of echoing the co-communicator's disapproved expression. In all the examples from our data, the speaker's imitative word is a verb, whereas the interlocutor's echoed word is either a verb, a pronoun, or a noun. We also note the grammatical pattern of using the particles *-ra-* and *-ka-* which combine as Kirundi markers of the optative mood; this is a mood used to express a wish, hope, or desire (Crystal, 2008).

Below we look at the use of an implicit impolite MPC in which the speaker echoes their interlocutor's words by manipulating homonymy between the echoed word and the word used to imitate it, which happens to be a verb in our example.

7.10.4 Manipulating homonymy between the echoed word and the imitative word

In the data of this study, there are instances of implicit metacommunication, where the speaker uses a word – either existing or coined – to imitate a word previously used by their interlocutor. By so doing, the speaker performs an implicit meta-utterance commenting on the utterance made by his/her co-communicator, in which the imitated word is embedded. The speaker uses an imitative word which is homonymous with the echoed one. The homonymy brings about the wordplay effect. The utterance containing the echoed word is the one which is implicitly judged as inappropriate in the utterance containing the imitative word.

An example to illustrate this is in Excerpt 39 below from *Ninde* play “*Ubuntu burihabwa*” ‘Good reputation depends on one’s good conduct in life’. A woman has been elected as member of the council of a village. She usually leaves home early in the morning and comes back at night. Today, she has spent the whole day away and she is coming back home late at night. A dispute arises between her and her husband who has been waiting for her. The husband uses an imitative verb to echo a verb used by his wife, and to challenge what she is saying.

EXCERPT 39:

- 1 W (knocking at the door and calling her husband to open for her): Hewee!
- ...
- 2 H: Isayine n’insu, ku mugore!
- 3 W: None wewe, ivyo njejwe ntubizi?
- 4 H: Ujejwe kwangara, kwohoha, kurara mu bunywero?
- 5 Ujejwe iki?
- 6 W: Nyugururira ndakubwira.
- ...
- 7 (As H delays to open for her, W breaks the door and gets into the house)
- 8 H: Yampaye inka we rero.
- ...
- 9 W: None, ducishe bugufi, igihe muntora, we nta jwi wampaye?
- 10 H: Ee! Nariguhaye kugirango wigenze, habure n’ikintu worangura ngaha muri
- 11 uru rugo?
- 12 W: None erega, umutware ategerezwa *gutwara*.
- 13 H: *Uragatwara* imbeba mu menyo. Aho utwara iki?
- 14 W: Ee! Nawe wantoye urimwo mu bo ntware.
- 15 H: Ee. Urumva Urumva rero nta jambo ngifise ngaha mu rugo.
- ...
- 16 W: Ntegerezwa kugenzura segiteri mfise, ndayigenzura yose nkaraba ko
- 17 baryamyeye neza.
- 18 H: Jewe ndasiba kwumva ko uteramira mu mabare usegerereza, ubatwaje
- 19 umukazo ngo urabarongoye?

TT:

- 1 W (knocking at the door and calling her husband to open for her): Hey!
- ...
- 2 H: Coming back home at ten and a half p.m., as a wife!
- 3 W: So, don’t you know about my duties and power?
- 4 H: Are your duties about wandering away from home and spending the night in
- 5 pubs? What are your duties?
- 6 W: Open for me, I will tell you.
- ...
- 7 (As H delays to open for her, W breaks the door and gets into the house)
- 8 H: Oh my God!
- ...
- 9 W: Let us talk calmly. When you voted for me, didn’t you cast a vote for me?
- 10 H: What! Did I cast a vote for you to spend a day wandering, without achieving

- 11 anything at home?
 12 W: Of course, a leader must surely *rule*.
 →13 H: May you *carry* a rat between your teeth. Which authority do you have?
 14 W: What? You, too, are among those under my authority. You voted for me.
 15 H: Mhm. So, you mean that I no longer have authority in this family.
 ...
 16 W: I must do a night patrol in the sub-area under my authority in order to see if
 17 people are sleeping well.
 18 H: I always hear that you spend the evening in pubs begging for beer, forcing
 19 barkeepers to give you beer by abusing your position as a local leader.

A husband (H) is angry with his wife (W), a woman who has been elected member of a village council, as she comes back home late at night and after spending the whole day away. We can hear him accuse her of spending nights in pubs drinking beer in lines 4-5 “*Ujejwe kwangara, kwohoha, kurara mu bunywero?*” ‘Are your duties about wandering away from home and spending nights in pubs?’ As H refuses to open the house door for her before she explains herself, W forces her way into the house by breaking the door. As their argument goes on, in line 12, the wife says “*None erega umutware ategerezwa gutwara*” /none_{so} erega_{indeed} uAUG1 -muNP1 -twar_{rule} -eFV, N.M. a SC1-tegerezwa_{DEON. MOD} kuNP15-tw_{rule}-aFV/ ‘Of course, a leader must surely rule’. According to her, being absent from home from morning till late at night, without any notice to her husband, is not an issue because, she says, she is doing her duties as one of the village council members. This prompts H’s reaction in the form of an implicit MPC. Thus, in line 13, H reacts to W’s mention of the word “*gutwara*” ‘to rule’ or ‘to govern’ by playing with a homonymous word “*gutwara*” ‘to carry (something)’, on the basis of which he makes the following implicit MPC “*Uragatwara imbeba mu menyo*” /uSC1-ra-kaOPT-tw_{carry}-aFV imbeba_{rat} mu_{in} menyo_{teeth}/ ‘May you *carry* a rat between your teeth’.

By using this MPC, the husband has the intention of ridiculing his proud wife and looking down on her by wishing her, in the form of an insult, to carry a rat between her teeth and move with it in the same way a cat does. In fact, H disagrees with W who

says that, as a member of the village council, it is normal for her to always be absent at home during the day and always come back home late at night on the pretence that she is doing her duties. Moreover, in lines 15 and 16, H points out a fact: “*Jewe ndasiba kwumva ko uteramira mu mabare usegerereza, ubatwaje umukazo ngo urabarongoye?*” ‘I always hear that you spend the evening in pubs begging for beer, forcing barkeepers to give you beer by abusing your position as a local leader.’ H demystifies his wife’s misbehavior, under the disguise as a local chief, when she moves from bar to bar obliging barkeepers to give her free beer just because she is an elected representative at the village level. The husband is surely very uncomfortable with such behavior done by a woman who is his wife, something which is against expectations regarding good behavior of women, and particularly wives, in Kirundi culture. The husband’s MPC is impolite because it is intentionally performed to ridicule his wife and thus to attack her face. H uses the strategy of performing an FTA directly, clearly and unambiguously.

At the interpersonal level, the husband’s use of the above impolite MPC achieves a readjustment of power relations between him and his wife at the moment of interaction. In fact, the wife has expressed the fact that, as a member of the village council, her husband is under her authority (cf. line 14), whereby the husband draws the implications that his authority in the household is undermined (cf. line 15). Indeed, the woman has been behaving strangely, being absent from home the whole day till late at night and coming back being drunk, without any respect to her husband. Thus, through his impolite MPC, the husband and head of family exercises power and redefines his power relations with his wife, by portraying himself as the person to which power in the household is conferred in accordance with Kirundi socio-cultural norms regarding the relations between a husband and a wife.

So far, I have been discussing about the speaker's manipulation of the homonymy existing between the echoic verb and the verb being imitated. In other data, a verb and a pronoun are involved in the manipulation strategy: the similarity between the sounds of the imitative verb and the pronoun which is echoed is manipulated by the speaker, as presented and discussed below.

7.10.5 Exploiting the sound similarity between the imitated word and the word echoing it

In the following Excerpt 40 from *Ninde* play “*Amagorwa ntasiga ayandi*” ‘It never rains but it pours’, two girls called Chantal (C) and Jocelyne (J) are having an argument. C is accusing J of spreading the gossip that she is pregnant. While defending herself, J hints at the fact that she is indeed among the gossipmongers, as she starts accusing C of being one of the many girls who strangle their new born babies and dump them in the bush.

EXCERPT 40:

- 1 C: Ariko ga Joselyne, uri umukobwa nanje nkaba uwundi
- 2 J: Hmh
- 3 C: Vy’ukuri guhera iyo imitumba iva
- 4 J: Aho.
- 5 C: Ukazunguruka, ugenda uragira itangazo ko jewe Chantal mfise inda.
- ...
- 6 J: Ugira ni je nagiye gutangaza ngo urafise inda wewe Chantal?
- 7 C: Eego ni ukuri.
- ...
- 8 C: Wa sema y’umukobwa
- 9 J: Inda, hewe itera ikura; ahubwo ntuzonige nihagera ko uvyara; ndazi ko ari
- 10 vyo mwiharaje
- 11 C: Ahubwo uzoza kumvyaza
- 12 J: Muniga muta mu ma sachets muterera mw’ishamba
- 13 C: Wosokorora abo maze guta mw’ishamba?
- ...
- 14 C: Ubu vyose birahindutse...Ndakubibe.
- ...
- 15 J: Mugabo jewe erega ni vyo wonkubita; noba ndiko ndakubitwa na *babiri*.
- 16 C: *Urakabira ifuro mu kanwa.*

TT:

- 1 C: Tell me, Jocelyne, as a girl like me
- 2 J: Mhm

- 3 C: Why on earth did you spread gossip about me in the whole village
 4 J: Mhm.
 5 C: Going around saying that me Chantal I'm pregnant?
 ...
 6 J: I'm not the one who said that you are pregnant.
 7 C: You're lying.
 ...
 8 C: You're disgraceful, a girl of bad omen
 9 J: Your pregnancy is growing. Please, when it is time to deliver, do not kill the
 10 baby, as it has been a trend for girls like you.
 11 C: So, will you come and assist me while delivering?
 12 J: You people killing babies, dumping their bodies in plastic bags in the bush.
 13 C: Can you show those I have dumped there?
 ...
 14 C: Now things change ...I'm going to beat you seriously.
 ...
 15 J: You could beat me since you would be *two people* fighting against me.
 → 16 C: *May you have foam and saliva flowing out of your mouth.*

In lines 1-7, Chantal (C) is accusing Jocelyne (J) that she spread the gossip that C is pregnant, while J is defending herself refuting the accusation. In lines 8-13, C and J are having a hot argument, as J has now openly claimed that C is indeed pregnant and warning her that, once she delivers, she should not strangle the new born baby and dump the body in the bush. In their argument, the two girls start provoking one another for fight (see line 14). In line 15, therefore, J says: “*Mugabo jewe erega ni vyo wonkubita; noba ndiko ndakubitwa na babiri*” ‘You could beat me since you would be two people fighting against me’.

In line 16, C makes an implicit MPC “*Urakabira ifuro mu kanwa*” ‘May foam and saliva flow out of your mouth as you fall unconscious’, in reaction to J’s claim that she would be fighting against two people, implying C and the baby in her womb. In her MPC, C tells J “*urakabira ifuro*” /u_{SC1} -ra-kaOPT -***bir***_{be.flowing.out (said of foam, water)} -aFV, IND i_{AUG}-furo_{foam}/ (‘may you have foam and saliva flowing out [of your mouth]’) to echo the pronoun “*babiri*” /ba_{NP2}-***bir***_{two}/ (‘two people’), a word which she judges inappropriate for J to say because it implies that J is confirming that C is pregnant indeed. C manipulates the sound similarity realized, in the phonological context of the

two words, as “*-bir-*” in both the pronoun “*babiri*” (‘two people’) and the verb “*urakabira*” (‘May you have foam and saliva flowing out’) used to echo (in part) that pronoun. By so doing, C expresses her disapproval of J’s claim that she is pregnant; and the soundplay has the persuasive effect regarding C’s negative evaluation of what J has said. Indeed, persuasion is one of the several functions of wordplay, as previous research has demonstrated (cf. Bauer, 2015; Mahood, 2003; Winter-Froemel, 2016); and persuasion takes place notably because wordplay captures the attention of the hearer and thus produces an emotional effect in him/her (Thaler, 2016). The MPC performed in line 16 is impolite. C expresses an evil wish that J may fall unconscious and have foam and saliva overflowing in her mouth because of a bad health condition such as having a seizure. C is explicitly attacking the face of J and thus her MPC is impolite.

With regard to the interpersonal function, the impolite MPC is used by C to exercise power. In fact, as C, the victim of the gossip that she is pregnant, is accusing J, the alleged gossipmonger, that she is the one who spread the gossip that C is pregnant, J explains herself and pleads to be innocent. In this context, J is in a position of weakness since she is the accused person.

After analyzing the strategy of manipulating the sound similarity between the imitative verb and the echoed pronoun, we now look at the strategy of coining a word that sounds like another word and which it is used to imitate.

7.10.6 Coining the echoic word from the interlocutor’s imitated word

In the following example, the speaker shows more creativity as she coins a verb, which seems to be completely uncommon in Kirundi, from a noun. It was taken from *Ninde* play “*Ntawuhisha umwotsi inzu iriko irasha*” (a Kirundi proverb) ‘You cannot hide the

smoke of a burning house'. In a family, the husband (H) has adopted the bad behavior of drunkenness and running after women. He has even started passing a night away from his home, despite his social status of being a member village council. His wife (W) is very disappointed by his misconduct.

EXCERPT 41:

- 1 W (surprised to see her husband calmly showing up in the early morning after
- 2 spending a night away without her knowing anything about it): HUUUWA!
- 3 Ewe Mukama! Hariho abantu batamaramara. Mbega=
- 4 H (greeting W calmly): =Amahoro.
- 5 W (echoing H's greeting): "UrakaMAHORwako, urakarushwa. Mbega, ubu
- 6 nk'ubu nta n'isoni wumva mu mutima wawe wewe?
- 7 H: Isoni z'iki?
- ...
- 8 W: Subira iyo waraye. Nta kuntu novyihanganira. Usigaye ... uraraguza.
- 9 Mbisa!

TT:

- 1 W (surprised to see her husband showing up calmly early in the morning, after
- 2 spending a night away without her knowing anything about it): Oh my God!
- 3 Some people have no shame.
- 4 H (calmly greets his wife): = Peace be upon you.
- 5 W (echoing H's greeting): *May you be given a seeming greeting of peace.* May
- 6 you be very poor. Don't you even feel shame in your heart?
- 7 H: Shame for what?
- ...
- 8 W: Go back where you spent the night. I cannot bear this. You have adopted
- 9 the strange behavior of...sleeping away from your home. Unbelievable!

After spending a night away from his home because of misbehavior, H comes back home early in the morning and greets his wife saying "Amahoro" 'May peace be upon you'. Reacting to this apparent greeting of peace, the wife makes the MPC "Urakamahorwako" /u_{SC1} -ra-ka_{OPT} -ma_{NP6} -horo_{peace} -u_{APPL} -a_{FV} -ko_{LOC}/ 'May you be given a seeming greeting of peace', by echoing her husband's greeting, which she evaluates as inappropriate in the context. Her expression, therefore, is an implicit MPC. She makes the latter through coining the verb "kumahorwako" /ku_{NP15} -ma_{NP6} -horo_{peace} -u_{APPL} -a_{FV} -ko_{LOC}/ 'to be given a seeming greeting of peace' from the noun "amahoro" /a_{AUG6} -ma_{NP6} -horo_{peace}/ which constitutes the husband's greeting. The wife's MPC

“*Urakamahorwako*” ‘May you be given a seeming greeting of peace’ in which she wishes evil to her husband sounds like an insult and is face-attack. The MPC is impolite.

She uses the impolite MPC to achieve a readjustment of power relations at this moment of interaction. Her husband has spent a night away from home for no known reason, if not drunkenness behavior and plausibly marital unfaithfulness. The husband would wish to make peace with his wife upon coming back (cf. the greeting “*Amahoro*” ‘May peace be upon you’), though not genuinely. However, the context gives him less credibility and puts him in a less powerful position vis-à-vis his wife at this moment of interaction because he knows he has done some offense. On the contrary, the same situation puts the wife, to whom the wrong has been done, in a more powerful position in such a way that she can even utter insult to her misbehaving husband without fear of retaliation. Indeed, the husband does not retaliate.

The wife manipulates the sound similarity between the noun imitated “*amahoro*” and the verb “*kumahorwako*” which she coins in her MPC “*urakamahorwako*”. The creativity she uses in her marked impolite MPC is likely to attract the attention of her husband. In this regard, a speaker’s marked choice in language use makes the addressee guess why the speaker is doing so (Crystal & Davy, 2013). Therefore, the wife’s MPC above can plausibly lead to persuading the husband that his greeting was contextually very inappropriate. In addition, the structure of the MPC, in which there is use of the optative mood markers *-ra-ka-* to wish him something disgraceful to also happen to him, conveys the woman’s emotions after being greeted with peace but insincerely by her husband.

7.11 Conclusion

Chapter 7 has dealt with the rhetorical devices which speakers in selected Kirundi fictional conversations used in their impolite MPCs. The analysis of the data has indicated that speakers use a range of rhetorical devices. They include: repetition and parallelism, irony, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and metonymy.

For example, in Excerpt 29, a husband uses repetition while doing parodistic mimicking of his wife's words "*Nta co ntakoze*" 'I did my best': "*NTA CO NTAKOZE*" '*I DID MY BEST*', which he repeats three times. The husband does not trust his wife about a goat missing in their household, accusing her of negligence and suspecting her of being involved in the theft of the goat. His mimicking also comes in after the wife has been rude to him. He uses repetition to reinforce his metacommunicative message that what she is saying is inappropriate. His negative evaluation is also mixed with emotions. Through his impolite MPC, the husband exercises power over his wife and repetition helps to intensify this.

The chapter also has shown that speakers employ wordplay strategies that consist in phonetic play, verbal forms shaped like onomatopoeia, and homonymy. Speakers use each rhetorical strategy to encode and emphasize both the metacommunicative message and the message concerning power relations which are being (re)defined at the time of interaction.

An example from Excerpt 40 is about wordplay in which the speaker manipulates sound similarity between the imitated word and the imitative word. Two girls, Chantal (C) and Jocelyne (J), are arguing about some rumor that C is pregnant. C is accusing J of spreading that rumor. As their argument continues and as they start frightening one another as if wanting to fight, J hints to the fact that she believes C is pregnant: "*Mugabo*

jewe erega ni vyo wonkubita; noba ndiko ndakubitwa na babiri” ‘By the way, you could beat me since you would be two people fighting against me’, implying that the two people are C herself and her baby in her womb. C reacts to this and performs an implicit MPC in line 15: “*Urakabira ifuro mu kanwa*” ‘May foam and saliva flow out of your mouth (as you fall unconscious)’. The word “*urakabira*” in the MPC by C, when she tells J “*urak**abira** ifuro*” ‘may you have foam and saliva flow out [of your mouth]’, echoes the pronoun “*babiri*” ‘two people’ used by J. The two forms have in common the rhyme *-bir-*; it plays the role of arousing the attention of the addressee J, and therefore persuading her, about the undesirable statement she has just made. Besides her negative evaluation of J’s speech, The impolite MPC by C serves to exercise power over her interlocutor J, who is the accused gossipmonger, in such a way that the one accusing (C) feels to be in a more powerful position than the one being accused (J).

The next and last chapter is about the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.0 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the use of impolite MPCs by characters in Kirundi fictional conversations and explain why particular lexical forms, grammatical structures and rhetorical devices are chosen in those MPCs. Specifically, the focus was on speakers' use of linguistic and rhetorical strategies in impolite MPCs and their functions in terms of interpersonal relationships, particularly power relations. The following research objectives, and the associated research questions, informed the important aspects of the study. Objective 1 was about the speakers' use of lexical expressions to make impolite MPCs and the interpersonal meanings of power relations which they convey in Kirundi fictional conversations. Objective 2 dealt with the speakers' use of grammatical structures in impolite MPCs and the effects which they have on the expression of power relations in Kirundi fictional conversations. Finally, objective 3 was about the speakers' use of rhetorical devices in impolite MPCs and their function in expressing power relations in Kirundi fictional conversations.

Chapter 8 presents the summary of the findings, based on the research objectives and questions, then gives the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

8.1 Summary of the Findings

The first objective of the study was to analyze the lexical expression of impolite MPCs in the selected Kirundi fictional conversations and to establish the role which such lexical choices play in conveying power relations in the ongoing interaction. The study has established that speakers make impolite MPCs using a variety of lexical choices, in which the lexical expression is chosen and used in such a way to convey their intended

messages concerning their metapragmatic evaluation of verbal behavior. At the interpersonal level, as speakers manipulate words in different ways and formulate impolite MPCs of different kinds, they exercise power by (re)defining the power relations which they have with their addressees in the conversational contexts.

For instance, as was illustrated in Excerpt 2, after being referred to by his close friend M2 as “*sha*” ‘buddy’, a term of address in Kirundi used between “good friends” and which indicates closeness and friendship, a man (M1) reacts saying “*Sha jewe?*” ‘Am I your buddy?’. M1 echoes the term of address “*sha*” ‘buddy’ with a rising tone implicating a refusal to be referred to in that way by M2, who, however, had been a good friend so far. This reaction, with an echoic mention of the term of address “*sha*”, is an implicit MPC in which M1 implicates that, in the context of their interaction, the identity of his addressee M2 ceases to be “his friend” and becomes defined as “his debtor”. The speaker is clear on this when he adds: “*Ivy’ubugenzi ubu birahava kuva uno muni*” ‘Our friendship has stopped from today’. The MPC “*Sha jewe?*” ‘Are you calling me *buddy*?’ is impolite by the fact that it brings about face loss to the addressee M2. Through impoliteness in his implicit MPC, the speaker M1 expresses a change of their power relations, proving himself to be a more powerful participant in this interaction, as he can restrict the ability of M2 to retaliate to his impolite MPC. Indeed, M2 acknowledges this and submits himself by changing how he addresses M1 and using a respectful term of address which is devoid of familiarity, that is, “*Mushingantahe*” ‘Sir’.

Moreover, speakers manipulate words and do extensions of their meanings as they formulate impolite MPCs. Thus, for example, in Excerpts 3, 5, 6 and 7, the meaning of the verb “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’ was extended to become respectively ‘to talk

(in)appropriately’, ‘to talk praising oneself’, or ‘to talk opposing the opinion of someone’, and ‘to talk boastfully’ or ‘to brag’. To illustrate the last item, where the speaker is bragging or praising himself/herself while talking, the example from Excerpt 7 shows the MPC “*Turavuga ukavuga?*” ‘How come that you talk opposing us?’. Through this MPC, Kameya voices his disapproval of the fact that his sister Somambike can dare oppose the opinion of her two brothers, that is, Kameya himself and Biyago, regarding the subject of inheritance of their late parents. In fact, the two male siblings expect their sister to say no word at all about that issue given that she is female and based on Kirundi tradition. In that MPC, the speaker uses the strategy of opposing the prefixes “*tu-*” ‘we’ in “*turavuga*” /*tu*_{SC1} -*ra*_{PRES.DISJ} -*vug*_{talk} -*a*_{FV}/ ‘we talk’ representing the males and “*u-*” ‘you’ “*ukavuga*” /*u*_{SC1} -*ka*_{SUBSEC} -*vug*_{talk} -*a*_{FV}/ ‘then, you talk’ representing the females in a way similar to the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ polarization which is common in political speeches, portraying one group positively and another group negatively (Van Dijk, 1998).

Another important aspect of lexical expression of metacommunicative messages is the use of verbs which denote various ways of speaking deemed inappropriate given the Kirundi norms of communication. Such verbs include aspects of communication like talking nonsense, talking using an aggressive and threatening tone, talking unintelligibly, talking as if one were sleep-talking, talking like a baby learning to speak. Below are a few examples of data for illustration.

For example, the verb “*guhoha*” ‘to babble’ encodes childish speech as in the example in Excerpt 8, line 12, “*Maze Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha yari umugabo akwiye gushikirizwa intahe*” ‘*If Gisumakiremuye did not babble, he would qualify for being inaugurated a wise and trustworthy man given powers to settle conflicts in his*

neighborhood according to Kirundi tradition'. The MPC "*Gisumakiremuye iyo ataba yahoha*" '*If Gisumakiremuye did not babble*' is impolite because of the face-aggravating criticism which it conveys. Moreover, speakers use MPCs built around the verb "*kuravuta*" 'to sleep talk' to mean that they are making thoughtless speech. An example from Excerpt 3, in line 13, illustrates the point: a mother reacts to her son's unapproved words addressed to her and says "*Jewe burya wibaza ko ndiko ndanezerwa n'ayo majambo uriko urandavutako?*" 'Do you think that I am pleased by your silly words while you are sleep-talking to me?'.

More examples of lexical strategies used by speakers include the use of the verb "*gutantabuka*" 'to talk aggressively with noise', as in line 18 of Excerpt 14: "*ntutantabuke nka musazawe*" 'do not talk aggressively and with noise like you brother', a meta-utterance by the old man Kimotabugabo to his granddaughter Somambike. Speakers also used the verb "*kurabagiza*" 'to chatter, to talk much moving one's tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite', as in the following MPC performed by a husband while talking to his wife: "*Iyaba wanyubaha uka...ukansonera uba uriko urarabagiza imbere yanje?*" 'If you genuinely respected me, would you be talking so much, moving your tongue in the mouth quickly like a snake ready to bite, in front of me?' (Excerpt 9, line 47).

Speakers also evaluated the speech of their co-participants in interaction as 'nonsense talk' by lexical means to convey their impolite MPCs. Thus, for example by using the verb "*kudebagura*" 'to prattle' in Excerpt 9, line 28: "*Sinshaka na rimwe udebagura imbere yanje*" 'I'm fed up with your nonsense talk in front of me', said by a husband to his wife in a context where she has been attempting to convince him by explaining, but in vain, the reason why she spent a full day away from home, whereas she was

expected to be back earlier enough during the day. In another context, a speaker used the verb “*kudedemba*” ‘to gibber/to talk gibberish’ as illustrated in line 31 of Excerpt 10: “*Ntiwumva ko uriko uradedemba wewe?* ‘Don’t you see you are talking gibberish?’, said by a man (M) to a young man called Rutahikamye (R) whom he suspects to be a crook. Indeed, R has a bad habit of begging money from passers-by, pretending to be very needy and in troublesome situation in order to try to raise sympathy from them and to take advantage of them. In this situation in Excerpt 10, M has just discovered the reality that R’s recounted story is pure lie because he says two contradictory things, first that his mother has passed on and second that she is very sick and waiting to be admitted at hospital.

What is common to the various ways of talking described above is that they are loaded with strong criticism, and have a negative connotation. As speakers use such verbs to reflect on the speech behaviors of their interlocutors, they deliberately make MPCs which are impolite because of the negative evaluation and the criticism encoded in those verbs. The purpose of speakers performing these impolite MPCs is to evaluate the speech behavior of the addressee as inappropriate, and also to exercise power. This is in line with Hübler’s (2011, p. 110) observation that some MPCs – we assume that impolite MPCs typically fit here – are used by interactants for the purpose of adjusting their identities as personal participants; and a participant does so by showing oneself as a person with a social status enabling him/her to criticize others and even make them feel uncomfortable.

Finally, the study found that participants used lexical items to encode impolite MPCs in which they drew contrasts between two situations talked about. This included contrasts such as: the speaker talking about “having a big trouble” versus the hearer

“taking it lightly”, “talking nonsense” versus “talking sense”, “choosing to be idle” versus “having the need to eat”, and “being good at saying things” versus “being practical by taking actions”. These types of contrast drawn by speakers using words in their impolite MPCs enabled them to express inappropriateness of their addressees’ speech behavior. Impoliteness in these MPCs was associated with exercise of power.

The following are examples for illustration of the observed four types of contrast respectively. First, in line 24 of Excerpt 15, a husband makes the MPC “*Wewe ndagorwa nawe uka...ukaririmba?*”. In his MPC, he contrasts two situations described in two verbs: “*kugorwa*” ‘to get into trouble, misery’ as happening to himself (see the theft of the bicycle he was using to earn a living), and “*kuririmba*” ‘to sing joyfully’ representing his wife’s attitude of not understanding him in that miserable context. This verb “*kuririmba*” brings about a strong criticism and a very negative evaluation of his wife’s attitude.

Second, in line 2 of Excerpt 17, the father strategizes in his MPC “*Dedemba uragapfa utavuze*” ‘Say your nonsense! May you never talk sense’ through the contrast drawn between the meanings of the verbs “*kudedemba*” ‘to talk gibberish/talk nonsense’ and “*kuvuga*” ‘to talk’, ‘to talk sense’ when used with a positive connotation as in the present context.

Third, in line 4 of Excerpt 18, the husband says he cannot go to do farming activities with his wife on a market day “*Jewe narakubwiye ku munsi w’isoko ko nzoja kurima?*” ‘Have I ever told you that ***I will go to cultivate*** the land on a market day?’ In line 5, in reaction to her husband’s words, the wife says, mimicking him: “NARAKUBARIYE YUKO KU MUNSI W’ISOKO ***NSHOBORA KURYA?***” ‘HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THAT ***I CAN EAT*** ON A MARKET DAY?’. Here, she intentionally replaces her husband’s words “*nzoja*

kurima” ‘I will go to cultivate’ with her own words “*nshobora kurya*” ‘I can eat’, thus drawing attention to the contrast between ‘being idle and not wanting to cultivate’ and yet ‘needing food and being able to eat’ on the controversial market days.

Fourth, in Excerpt 19, line 10, the young man and lawyer Nkundwa listens to Rutuneza threatening to chase his two nieces from his house – where he had forced them to stay for wicked plans to chase their mother from the house and land left by her late husband Semasunzu and late brother of Rutuneza. Nkundwa retaliates to Rutuneza’s threats saying: “*Ukaza akarimi ntukaza kurima*” ‘You are good at talking but you take no action’, an MPC which is intended to provoke him to take action and send the nieces back home to stay with their mother.

The MPCs in the four examples illustrate contrasts of situations realized through lexical choices. The MPCs are face-attacking and thus impolite. They are used by speakers to exercise power; and this happens as a redefinition or readjustment of power relations between the speaker and addressee depending on the context, particularly where impoliteness in the MPC is intensified through speaker’s choices. This is the case of power relations redefined in an impolite MPC in Excerpt 18, through role relations brought to the fore. In this example, a hardworking woman mimicking her idle husband in her MPC substitutes the verb “*kurya*” ‘to eat’ for the verb “*kurima*” ‘to cultivate’; and this lexical choice enables her to challenge her husband’s role in the household by depicting him as dependent upon her efforts in the farming activities as far as eating is concerned.

In short, the lexical expression of impolite MPCs in our data was realized in many ways; speakers selected the words which were most suitable for conveying their metacommunicative message and for exercising power. Power relations were

readjusted depending on the context, particularly when the speaker using an impolite MPC was challenging the existing power relations and was negotiating new relations. This is in line with the view that relationships are not static but are readjusted or redefined during interaction as participants (re)negotiate them (Bousfield & Locher, 2008).

The second objective of the study concerned grammatical choices used by speakers in impolite MPCs and meanings of power relations the MPCs convey. I had to answer two questions about (i) “what” grammatical constructions were used by interactants to shape their impolite MPCs and (ii) “how” those grammatical aspects affected the negotiated interpersonal meanings. We found that speakers in the analyzed fictional conversations used a variety of grammatical structures.

First, morphological and morpho-syntactic strategies were used to emphasize the negative metapragmatic evaluation and the exercise of power. Such strategies included the use of affixation, namely the augmentative and diminutive affixes. The following example from Excerpt 3 captures these aspects. In this Excerpt, a young man has just come back home after staying away for a few days without informing his mother. He comes back with a strange girl, whom he calls his wife. Upon saying this, he laughs and the mother reacts by performing the MPC “*Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo*” ‘What is disgusting is that you expose your ugly big teeth’ (Excerpt 3, line 11). The augmentative prefix *-bi-* in the noun “*ivyinyo*” /i_{AUG8} - bi_{NP8, AUGV} - inyo_{tooth}/ ‘ugly big teeth’, which becomes *-vyi-* in the word “*ivyinyo*” regarding its spelling, adds the meaning of ‘ugliness’ and ‘hugeness’ and contributes for emphasis of the negative evaluation of the son’s speech behavior. At the same time, the same augmentative prefix intensifies the mother’s exercise of power, as more impoliteness is conveyed through the use of

that prefix. This implies the mother's readjustment of the power relation between her and her son, which is useful at this time when her son seems to be dishonoring her and showing her no respect at all by his deeds. In fact, the son has been spending two days away from home without notice to his mother. Then, suddenly he comes back home in the evening in company of a girl whom he dares introduce to his mother as being 'his wife'. The mother suspects that her son has been illegally staying with the strange girl and having an affair with her, which is against Kirundi cultural norms for a well-brought up son.

Another morphological strategy used was coinage of a word to express an MPC. In Excerpt 21, line 4, a wife says "*Urakamahorwako*" /u_{SC1}-ra-ka_{OPT}-ma_{NP6}-ho_o_{peace}-u_{APPL}-a_{FV}-ko_{LOC}/ 'May you be given an insincere greeting of peace' as a reply to his husband's greeting "*Amahoro!*" 'Peace be upon you!' in line 3. The MPC which she performs is a result of her coining of the verb "*kumahorwako*" /ku_{INF}-mahor(o)_{peace}-u_{APPL}-a_{FV}-ko_{LOC}/ 'to be given an insincere greeting of peace', which is derived from the Kirundi greeting "*Amahoro!*" 'Peace be upon you!'. The man gives her the seeming greeting of peace early in the morning when he comes back home after spending the night away, without the wife being informed about anything. The husband has had a habit of drunkenness and running after women, his wife is aware of this and is unhappy about it. The wife understands that his greeting is simply an attempt to cover up his misconduct; she judges this as improper and unbearable.

The woman's MPC "*Urakamahorwako*" 'May you be given an insincere greeting of peace' is impolite because, as a response to her husband's greeting, it attacks directly his face, through her use of the optative mood markers '*-ra-ka-*' which encode an insult here and her refusal to be greeted by him with an insincere wish of peace to her. Her

morphological choices in her response to her husband's greeting "*Amahoro*" 'Peace be upon you' exacerbates impoliteness in her MPC. Indeed, there are alternative ways in which the wife could use the same word of greeting to reflect upon her husband's ironical greeting; one of them could be to mimic him and say for example, with a rising tone and in a questioning and criticizing manner "*Amahoro?*" 'Peace be upon me?'. This would also be an impolite MPC because a greeting is expected to be met with an answer which is the corresponding greeting (in this case "*Amahoro*" 'Peace be upon you', said with a falling intonation). Between the two alternatives of reflecting upon the man's greeting of peace, the first one, that is, the woman's utterance "*Urakamahorwako*" is more aggressive to the 'face' of her husband.

By using this marked impolite MPC, the wife addresses her relationship with her husband, which she redefines or readjusts. In fact, there is interpersonal meaning in the wife's refusal to greet back her husband and in her choice to confront him by criticizing him severely concerning his dishonest greeting and by insulting and cursing him through the meta-utterance "*Urakamahorwako, urakarushwa*" 'May you be given an insincere greeting of peace; may you be extremely poor'. The wife dares confront her husband and insults him and, by so doing, she exercises power in the sense of readjusting the power relations between her and him. The momentary powerful position which she is occupying in this interaction enables her to tell her husband impolite comments and to insult him, without any retaliation from him because of his feeling of guilt for his unfaithful behavior.

Second, syntactical choices were also used by speakers. They included the use of a nominalized form to encode an MPC, the manipulation of modality, lexical substitution and clause substitution, elliptical constructions, and evidential constructions in MPCs.

Thus, for example, in Excerpt 24, we have seen a case of syntactic substitution at the level of the clause in line 6 of this excerpt: “None jewe uriko urambarira uko ngo...*ngo ngw’ iki ngo na ngw’ iki?*” ‘So, are you telling me your stories... *saying this and saying that?*’.

This is an MPC, a response by a girl (G) to a man (M) who owes her money and whom she has come to see at his home. A bit of co-text helps to understand what is going on in that line. In line 3, G requests politely to be paid the money which M owes her for beer which he took without paying cash at the bar where she is a bartender. In line 4, M says “*Amahera tuyakura hehe?*” ‘Where will we get your money?’. In line 5, M criticizes or mocks G’s request by mimicking her words. In line 6, G reacts and retaliates to M’s impoliteness with impoliteness as she performs the MPC given above “None jewe uriko urambarira uko ngo...*ngo ngw’ iki ngo na ngw’ iki?*” ‘So, are you telling me your stories... *saying this and saying that?*’.

In this meta-utterance, G substitutes the words which M said in lines 4 and 5, replacing them with the forms “*ngo ngw’iki*” ‘saying this’ and “*ngo na ngw’iki*” ‘and saying that’ whose reference in terms of what is said is rather indefinite. The fact that G can retaliate to M’s impoliteness with impoliteness – and yet M is a male person who is older than her, and a married man owner of the home where the conversation is taking place – suggests that G feels she also has power over him. This is nothing else than the power she obtains from being his creditor, as he owes her money.

Through her impolite MPC, therefore, G redefines her role relations with M and thus her power relations with him. Indeed, in that MPC, she makes explicit reference to herself and him, respectively in “*jewe*” ‘me’ and “*uriko urambwira...?*” /*u*_{SC1} - *riko*_{be.PRES.CONT.} *u*_{SC1} -*ra*_{PRES.DISJ} -*n*_{OC1} -*bwir*_{tell} -*a*_{FV.PRES}/ ‘are you telling me...?’.

Some of the grammatical strategies used by speakers had the effect of intensifying the impoliteness in the MPCs in which they were employed. Indeed, interactants who want to intensify the face attack against their addressees have linguistic strategies as one of the possible tools to use in order to achieve their goal (Culpeper, 1998, p. 85). Thus, for example, in Excerpt 23, a son coming back home in the evening is bragging, in the presence of his parents, saying “**Burayonga** ndatashe” ‘Me **Burayonga**, here I’m back home’; then his mother in response performs the parodistic mimicking “**UMWAMI** NDATASHE” ‘ME **THE KING**, HERE I’M BACK HOME’. In her mimicking, she replaces the word “Burayonga” used by her son, which is his name, with the word “umwami” ‘king’. Her choice of substitution has an effect of intensifying both her negative evaluation of her son’s bragging and her impoliteness. With this intensification of impoliteness or the increase of its markedness, the mother challenges her son’s power in this home setting, implicitly telling him that he is not the person invested with authority in their home, that he should give due respect to his father and his mother as well by obeying the rules of the house as defined by his parents.

With respect to the interpersonal function, the impolite MPCs marked with grammatical constructions as described above were used to achieve the exercise of power. In specific cases of MPCs with intensified impoliteness or whose impoliteness has a higher degree of markedness, they are used for a readjustment or redefinition of power relations between the participants at the moment of interaction.

Thus, for example, the use of diminutive and augmentative prefixes served to strengthen impoliteness. The target of the impolite MPC in which this affixation was strategically used saw their face damage increased by being associated with ugliness through the MPCs which read as insults. This is the case when a man commenting on

his wife's verbal and non-verbal behavior in their argument says “*Ingene gakanaguza ubuso!*”, /*u*_{AUG14} -*bu*_{NP14}. DIM - *so*_{eye}/ ‘small and unpleasant eyes’), ‘See how this small woman is blinking her small and unpleasant eyes!’ in line 25 of Excerpt 15. It is also illustrated in the instance when a mother tells her son “*Ni uko wanikira ivyinyo*” /*i*_{AUG8} – *bi*_{NP8}. AUGV - *inyo*_{tooth}/ ‘ugly big teeth’ ‘It is disgusting how you expose your ugly big teeth’). The affixation brings about the effect of intensification of impoliteness and, therefore, strengthened expression of power in the concerned impolite MPCs.

The third objective of this study was to examine how rhetorical devices are used by participants in Kirundi fictional conversations when making impolite MPCs. This study has found that interactants use rhetorical strategies to exacerbate face-threat against their interlocutor, thus increasing impoliteness. This corroborates the findings of Ardila's (2015) study on political debates in the Spanish parliament, in which it was found that exacerbated impoliteness serves to heighten face-threats.

An example of strategy used to intensify impoliteness in our study is the use of rhetorical devices like repetition and parallelism as noticed in several examples from our data. Thus, in Excerpt 30, two brothers Kameya and Biyago are imposing their elder sister Somambike to tell them where the money, left as inheritance by their late parents, is. The two young men use repetition in order to intensify the imposition on their sister when they perform the MPCs “*uyage uca*” ‘be brief’ (said by Kameya, line 1) and “*ntundaze*” ‘don’t delay me as you talk’ (said by Biyago, line 2). Both insist that she must tell them about their inheritance and insist that she must be brief. They are in fact giving her an order, given their use of the imperative mood in both MPCs “*uyage uca*” /*u*_{SC1} -*yag*_{talk-eFV.IMP} *u*_{SC1} -*ci*_{cut-aFV.IND}/ (lit. ‘as you talk, cut your talk short’) ‘be brief’ and “*ntundaze*” /*nti*_{NEG} -*u*_{SC1} -*no*_{C1} -*ra*_{ispend.a.night} -*i*_{APPL} -*eFV.IMP*/ (lit. ‘[as you talk,] don’t

make me spend a night') 'don't delay me as you talk'. The effect of emphasis is brought about by the rhetorical tool of 'repetition' which they are using.

The result of this study about the use of repetition and parallelism for emphasis in impoliteness corroborates Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann's (2003, p. 1561) finding that repetition in impoliteness plays an emphatic role regarding the speaker's negative attitude towards the target; repetition intensifies impoliteness.

Another rhetorical strategy is the use of wordplay, such as marked parodistic mimicking where speakers play on the sounds of words and, thus, intentionally ridicule their co-communicators. For example, in Excerpt 35, a wife (W) is requesting her husband (H) to buy for her some beautiful new clothes like those which a neighbor called Ntamenya has recently bought for his wife. She expresses her wish that, on the day of an upcoming ceremony in Ntamenya's family, W and H will be looking smart, together with the host couple, i.e. Ntamenya and his wife. W proposes that on the day of the forthcoming function at the Ntamenya's, they will join that family, will go out together with them, and will enjoy good time with them: "Tuzoce duhitana Ntamenya n'umugore **duce tuja gupinda** duce tuja n'ugusorora mu kabare" 'Together with Ntamenya and his wife, we shall go out to eat and drink in a bar and **we shall boast while posing in our smart dresses**'. H reacts by mimicking W's words "**duce tuja gupinda**" saying "YEⁿYEⁿ YIⁿYAⁿ YUⁿYIⁿJAⁿ", transcribed phonetically as /jeⁿjeⁿ jiⁿjaⁿ juⁿjiⁿjaⁿ/ and meaning implicitly 'You're talking nonsense'. H plays on the sounds of the three Kirundi words "duce", "tuja" and "gupinda" by distorting them and deviating from the normal way of pronouncing them. This is H's expression of his disapproval of what his wife is saying, particularly her idea of going out with the Ntamenya's couple so that they may *look smart together* with them on the day of the couple's party. By ridiculing his wife (cf.

the interpersonal meaning of mimicking itself), H is performing impoliteness, through which he exercises power over his wife by reinforcing their existing relationship of ‘husband as head of family’ and ‘wife’ in the Kirundi cultural context.

8.2 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate impolite MPCs in Kirundi fictional conversations in order to understand the linguistic (i.e. lexical and grammatical) and rhetorical strategies employed by participants and the relational meanings, specifically those of power relations, which they expressed through those choices. The study concluded that the linguistic and rhetorical choices made by participants in conversations contributed significantly to the definition of their interpersonal relations particularly power relations between them, in accord with the findings of previous studies (e.g. Agha, 2007; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003). It was found in the study that impoliteness is closely associated with exercise of power, in line with some other studies (Bousfield, 2008b; Culpeper, 1996, 2008, 2011; Culpeper & Terkourafi, 2017; Limberg, 2009; Locher & Bousfield, 2008; Locher & Watts, 2008; Mostoufia, 2014; Mullany 2008; Sani & Suhandoko, 2020).

Not common in the findings of previous works that were available to us, and which we reviewed, is the finding about intensification of impoliteness of MPCs or amplification of their negative markedness. This finding supports the assumption that impoliteness is achieved on a continuum of intensity from low to high (Kienpointner, 1997, p. 257) depending on the degree to which face is attacked in interaction (Culpeper, 1996). However, the two studies referred to here did not provide a language-based account of such intensification.

The analysis of the different linguistic expressions of MPCs in this study suggested that impoliteness occurs only in context. This is consistent with the observation (e.g. Pleyer, 2018) that impoliteness of an utterance is determined by both context and linguistic expressions.

Linguistic strategies enabled speakers to intensify impoliteness, as was also concluded by Culpeper (2011) and Culpeper, Bousfield & Wichmann (2003). Choices to exacerbate impoliteness using linguistic means and rhetorical devices allowed participants to emphasize their negative evaluations of the speech behaviors of their interlocutors and to challenge and redefine their power relations with them in ongoing conversations.

Whereas it has been found in studies (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984) that there is a tendency to avoid conflict in interaction by adopting a number of strategies for example using hedges and mitigations in order to soften disagreements in case they arise, speakers also choose to do the opposite by intensifying face-threat as shown in this study. The reason for their choices is their communicative goal of contesting relationships.

As its major contribution, the study found that speakers use some impolite MPCs in order to *redefine power relations* with their interlocutors. With this finding, the researcher attempted to answer the question “How is *redefinition of power relations verbally encoded* in interaction?”. Before this research, this question seemed to have had little answer, particularly in terms of supporting arguments with linguistic data.

Moreover, the study found that the more marked an impolite MPC is, the more it conveys a readjustment or redefinition of power relations. Redefined power relations between communicators via impolite MPCs included role relations as interactants

negotiated their social positions vis-à-vis each other at the moment of interaction (Bousfield & Locher, 2008, p. 5).

8.3 Recommendations

As mentioned earlier, this study focused on the use of impolite MPCs in interaction and using data which are fictional conversations. Future studies on the current topic, that could use naturally-occurring conversations, are recommended in order to compare results.

Moreover, this study looked into linguistic and rhetorical aspects of impolite MPCs and used intonation as a clue in the analysis of the language being used. However, the study did not focus on other non-verbal aspects of interpersonal communication such as the use of gestures and facial expression. It is therefore recommended to further studies to investigate the use of such non-verbal cues by interactants performing impolite MPCs.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Authorisation



Bujumbura, le 22/08/2022

A Monsieur Jean Bosco GATABAZI,
en formation doctorale à Moi University

A Bujumbura

N/Réf. N° 504/2022/04/479/02

Objet : **Votre demande d'accès aux archives audio
de l'émission-fiction « NI NDE ? » de la RTNB**

Monsieur,

Faisant suite à votre lettre du 09 août 2022 par laquelle vous demandez une autorisation d'accès aux archives audio de l'émission-fiction « NI NDE ? » de la RTNB dans le cadre de la collecte de données pour votre thèse doctorale en linguistique, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer que je marque mon accord pour une durée d'un mois à dater du mardi 16 août 2022.

Cependant, il vous est annoncé que la consultation de ces archives se fera sur place par écoute d'éléments sonores qui seront mis à votre disposition. Il vous est donc strictement interdit d'enregistrer ou de copier un quelconque élément sonore que vous aurez à consulter dans ce cadre.

Le Directeur de la Radio Nationale qui me lit en copie est prié de vous faciliter la tâche.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de ma considération distinguée.

LE DIRECTEUR GENERAL DE LA RTNB

Eric NSHIMIRIMANA

C.P.I. à:

-Monsieur le Directeur de la Radio Nationale ;

A BUJUMBURA.-



Appendix II: Plagiarism Awareness Certificate



SR730

ISO 9001:2019 Certified Institution

THESIS WRITING COURSE

PLAGIARISM AWARENESS CERTIFICATE

This certificate is awarded to

GATABAZI, JEAN BOSCO

SASS/DPHIL/LIN/05/14

In recognition for passing the University's plagiarism

Awareness test for thesis entitled: **VERBAL STRATEGIES AND INTERPERSONAL MEANINGS OF IMPOLITE METAPRAGMATIC COMMENTS IN KIRUNDI FICTIONAL CONVERSATIONS** with similarity index of 0% and striving to maintain academic integrity.

Word count:102050

Awarded by

Prof. Anne Syomwene Kisilu

CERM-ESA Project Leader Date: 19/10/2024