

Transitivity Alternations in Luragooli¹

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1 Introduction

- The focus of this talk will be on the suffix *-Vk* (*-εk*, *-ik*, *-ok*, *-uk*) in Luragooli/Maragoli (also called Logoori, Lulogoori, Logooli (Luhya, Bantu)).²
 - We examine *-Vk* from the perspective of treating the suffix as an “anti-causative marker”.
 - *-Vk* shares many properties with the intransitive verb form of transitive/intransitive verb pairs, e.g.,
- | | | | |
|-----|----|---------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) | a. | John broke the vase | causative |
| | b. | The vase broke | anti-causative |
- However, the use of *-Vk* falls outside of a typical anti-causative characterization.
 - While it always functions to detransitivize a verb, it does not appear to contribute a uniform semantics.
 - The primary goal of the talk is descriptive adequacy.
 - **What verbs does *-Vk* appear on?**
 - **What meaning is associated with *-Vk*?**
 - Towards the end, I’ll discuss some theoretical implications.

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²Maragoli is spoken primarily in Western Kenya and Tanzanian by approximately 618,000 people (Ethnologue). All examples in this talk are from a male native speaker. Elicitation was done in English.

- Roadmap
 1. Distribution
 2. Semantic differences
 3. Transitives
 4. Towards an analysis
 5. Wrap-up

2 The distribution of *-Vk*

- The Bantu verb form suffixed with *-Vk* has variously been called a stative, middle, intransitivize, neuter-passive, quasi-passive, or anti-causative (among others) (Mchombo, 1993; Dubinsky and Simango, 1996; Seidl and Dimitriadis, 2003; Fernando, 2013).
 - For convenience, I will refer to the suffix using the neutral term “*-Vk*”.
- *-Vk* can attach to transitive verbs to form an intransitive.
- For instance, the transitive (or causative) verb *kuhana*, ‘to close’, (2), can be expressed as a non-passive intransitive (or anti-causative) in two ways (3).³

³The following abbreviations are used in this talk.

CAUS = causative
 DEM = demonstrative
 FV = final vowel

NEG = negative
 PASS = passive
 PRACT = plural act

PROG = progressive
 PRT = particle

Noun classes, of which there are 20, are marked as numerals at the beginning of nouns and verbs. Please note that I’ve greatly simplified (read: ignored) the tense/aspect system, as well as tones.

(2) **causative**

Sira a-han-i muriango
 1Sira 1-close-FV 3door

‘Sira closed the door’

(3) **anti-causative**

a. *muriango gu-han-i*
 3door 3-close-FV

‘The door closed’

b. *muriango gu-han-ik-i*
 3door 3-close-VK-FV

‘The door closed’

- While (3a) is consistently translated as ‘The door closed,’ (3b) has the additional meaning like ‘The door was closed.’ Although note that the passive suffix *-w* is not present in (3b).
- Anti-causative alternations are cross-linguistically interesting as they generally seem to apply to the same lexical items across languages.
 - For instance, it is generally true that verbs like *break* have both a causative and anti-causative form.
 - Likewise, it is generally true that verbs like *bloom* tend not to have a (simple) causative counterpart.
- It is a matter of on-going research what allows a certain verb to have an (anti-)causative counterpart (Smith, 1970; Haspelmath, 1993; Levin and Rappaport-Hovav, 1995; Reinhart, 1996; Folli, 2002; Folli and Harley, 2005; Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 2006; Schäfer, 2008) among many others
- However, it’s reported that languages tend to differentiate three classes of anti-causative verbs (Haspelmath, 1993; Schäfer, 2008).
 1. Some intransitive forms need a special anti-causative marker
 2. Some intransitive forms cannot have the marker
 3. Some intransitive forms can optionally have the marker
- Such a partitioning seems to be present in Maragoli.

Class I: Verbs that require *-Vk* to form an intransitive.

Class II: Verbs that cannot occur with *-Vk* in the intransitive

Class III: Verbs that optionally occur with *-Vk* in the intransitive.

Table 1: Intransitive verb classes in Maragoli. (*ku-* is the infinitival prefix)

Class I only with -Vk	Class II only without -Vk	Class III with or without -Vk
<i>kwoneka</i> , 'to de bestroyed' <i>kubameka</i> , 'to be flattened' <i>kuzuganyika</i> , 'to be mixed' <i>kuharagateka</i> , 'to be scraped' <i>kusundeka</i> , 'to spill' <i>kukingika</i> , 'to cover' <i>kurombika</i> , 'to fix' <i>kuvuneka</i> , 'to break' <i>kukunoreka</i> , 'to open' <i>kumegeka</i> , 'to break off' <i>kujerika</i> , 'to grow tall and thin' <i>kumwameka</i> , 'to blacken' <i>kufutika</i> , 'to inflate' <i>kufayiyika</i> , 'to be obliterated' <i>kurandol(ol)oka</i> , 'to peel' <i>kusalaluka</i> , 'to melt/dissolve' <i>kutanduka</i> , 'to tear' <i>kukunyeka</i> , 'to wrinkle' <i>kusiitika</i> , 'to twist' ...	<i>kwigora</i> , 'to open' <i>kumeeda</i> , 'to increase' <i>kugomagoma</i> , 'to roll' <i>kumera</i> , 'to grow' <i>kuriduha</i> , 'to become heavy' <i>kusarana</i> , 'to spread out' <i>kugeha</i> , 'to decrease/reduce' <i>kuruha</i> , 'to tire' <i>kugeha</i> , 'to shrink/decrease' <i>kujeleha</i> , 'to lengthen' <i>kwakana</i> , 'to redden' <i>kwama</i> , 'to bloom' <i>kusima</i> , 'to be (shut) off' <i>kuchirijana</i> , 'to be quiet' <i>kuneneha</i> , 'to grow' <i>kwelera</i> , 'to swing' ...	<i>kuhana</i> , 'to close' <i>kwiina</i> , 'to sink' <i>kwoma</i> , 'to dry' <i>kuzurula</i> , 'to wilt' <i>kwiisunda</i> , 'to move (self)' <i>kwelela</i> , 'to hang' <i>kusaala</i> , 'to be/get sick/injured' <i>kukomera</i> , 'to fatten/mature' <i>kwajuha</i> , 'to thin, lighten' <i>kwarama</i> , 'to open' <i>kuchama</i> , 'to become crooked' <i>kudinya</i> , 'to harden' <i>kwogeha</i> , 'to sharpen' <i>kutoonya</i> , 'to drop' <i>kukara</i> , 'to cut' <i>kuzura</i> , 'to decay' <i>kuzila</i> , 'to get wet' <i>kurava</i> , 'to whiten, clean' ...

- There have been various reasons given for the three-way division in anti-causative alternations, and I'm happy to discuss some possibilities later.⁴
- Nonetheless, at first sight, the distribution of *-Vk* seems to pattern as we might expect for an anti-causative marker.
- However, classifying *-Vk* as the anti-causative marker raises an issue in that it can also show up on verbs which are not normally grouped together with anti-causatives.
- I divide up Table 2 into two sections:⁵

Class IV: Verbs which (loosely) denote some sort of epistemic state.

Class V: Verbs which have some sort of “affected” argument.⁶

- By “epistemic state”, I mean that the verbs in Class IV seem to involve some sort of (mental) Experiencer argument.
- I return to what I mean by “affected” argument in a minute.

⁴The three-way classification is reported to reflect a scale of “spontaneity” or, how likely it is that the event is perceived as needing an external force to bring it about (Haspelmath, 1993). Verbs with the marker are expected to be less likely to require an external effort, while verbs with the marker are perceived as requiring some external force to make the event come about. The columns in Table 1 don't line up exactly with what we'd expect, but I think there are good reasons for some of the anomalies.

⁵Note that these verbs are all verbs which can only form non-passive intransitives with *-Vk*, and so technically fall under Class I. The classification here is entirely subjective, based on what I think are “traditional” anti-causative verbs, and what I think aren't.

⁶As far as I know, there is one exceptional verb, *kunwa*, ‘to drink’, which preferably forms its *passive* with the form *kunwahuka*, ‘to be drunk’. I think this must be listed as an idiosyncratic verb.

Table 2: Transitivity alternations outside of anti-causatives. *Ku-* is the infinitival prefix; *w-* is the passive suffix. *Kunyara*, ‘to be possible’, does not have passive form.

	Transitive	Intransitive	Passive
Class IV	<i>kuhola</i> , ‘to hear’ <i>kurora</i> , ‘to see’ <i>kudiira</i> , ‘to touch’ <i>kumena</i> , ‘to taste/lick’ <i>kwenya</i> , ‘to want’ <i>kusura</i> , ‘to hate’ <i>kuyanza</i> , ‘to like/admire’ <i>kusuvera</i> , ‘to believe’ <i>kumanya</i> , ‘to know’ <i>kuvuura</i> , ‘to discover’ <i>kuvoora</i> , ‘to say’ <i>kugan(agan)a</i> , ‘to think’ <i>kwizuriza</i> , ‘to remember’ <i>kwivela</i> , ‘to forget’ <i>kutooroma</i> , ‘to realize’ <i>kumoonya</i> , ‘to gossip’ <i>kukominya</i> , ‘to declare’ <i>kunyara</i> , ‘to be able’ <i>kuhenzelela</i> , ‘to expect’ <i>kunyoora</i> ‘to find’ <i>kuromesi</i> , ‘to whisper’ ...	<i>kuholeka</i> ‘to be heard’ <i>kuroreka</i> ‘to be seen’ <i>kudiirika</i> ‘to be touched’ <i>kumeneka</i> ‘to be tasted/licked’ <i>kwenyeka</i> , ‘to be wanted/desired’, “ought” <i>kusureka</i> , ‘to be hated/refused’ <i>kuyanzeka</i> , ‘to be liked/admired’ <i>kusuvereka</i> , ‘to be believed’ <i>kumanyeka</i> , ‘to be known’ <i>kuvuureka</i> , ‘to be discovered/ found out’ <i>kuvooreka</i> , ‘to be said’ <i>kugan(agan)eka</i> , ‘to be thought’ <i>kwizurizeka</i> , ‘to be remembered’ <i>kwivelika</i> , ‘to be forgotten’ <i>kutooromika</i> , ‘to be realized’ <i>kumoonyika</i> , ‘to be gossiped’ <i>kukominyika</i> , ‘to be declared’ <i>kunyareka</i> , ‘to be possible’ <i>kuhenzeleleka</i> , ‘to be expected’ <i>kunyooreka</i> ‘to be found’ <i>kuromesiki</i> , ‘to be whispered’ ...	<i>kuholwa</i> ‘to be heard’ <i>kurorwa</i> ‘to be seen’ <i>kudiirwa</i> ‘to be touched’ <i>kumenwa</i> ‘to be tasted/licked’ <i>kwenywa</i> , ‘to be wanted’ <i>kusurwa</i> , ‘to be hated’ <i>kuyanzwa</i> , ‘to be liked/admired’ <i>kusuverwa</i> , ‘to be believed’ <i>kumanywa</i> ‘to be known’ <i>kuvuurwa</i> , ‘to be discovered’ <i>kuvoorwa</i> , ‘to be said’ <i>kugan(agan)wa</i> , ‘to be thought’ <i>kwizurizwa</i> , ‘to be remembered’ <i>kwivelwa</i> , ‘to be forgotten’ <i>kutooromwa</i> , ‘to be realized’ <i>kumoonywa</i> , ‘to be gossiped’ <i>kukominywa</i> , ‘to be declared’ – <i>kuhenzelelwa</i> , ‘to be expected’ <i>kunyoorwa</i> ‘to be found’ <i>kuromeswi</i> ‘to be whispered’ ...
Class V	<i>kuhola</i> ‘to punch’ <i>kurasa</i> , ‘to throw’ <i>kuroomba</i> , ‘to make’ <i>kulia</i> , ‘to eat’ <i>kunyanya</i> , ‘to chew’ ...	<i>kuholeka</i> ‘to be punched’ <i>kurasika</i> , ‘to be thrown’ <i>kuroombika</i> ‘to get made’ <i>kuliika</i> , ‘to be eaten’ <i>kunyanyeka</i> , ‘to be chewed’ ...	<i>kuholwa</i> ‘to be punched’ <i>kuraswa</i> , ‘to be thrown’ <i>kuoombwa</i> , ‘to be made’ <i>kuliwa</i> , ‘to be eaten’ <i>kunyanywa</i> , ‘to be chewed’ ...

- The verbs of Class V are perhaps the most troubling.
 - The only commonality that I can find is precisely what I said earlier: that the verbs of Class V all involve an “affected” argument, namely the object.⁷
 - For instance, *kwomba*, ‘to sing’, does not have a form with *-Vk*, (**kwombeka*).
 - The Class V verbs might all be classified as Change-of-State verbs,⁸ although it requires us to loosen the definition of Change-of-State considerably.
- In summary, I’ve shown that *-Vk* has a wide distribution.
 - While coinciding nicely with what we expect from an anti-causative marker, we also saw that *-Vk*’s range extends beyond what are canonically seen as anti-causative contexts.
 - In particular, we saw that it can seemingly productively attach to verbs that express something like an “epistemic” state (Class IV).
 - More puzzling though, are the verbs of Class V, which are more difficult put into a natural class.⁹

3 Differences

- In this section, I’ll outline some of the differences and similarities that the *-Vk*-form has with i) the passive, and ii) the plain intransitive.
 - The general conclusion is that, with respect to (oblique) θ -roles and interaction with event structure, the *-Vk*-form patterns similarly to what is reported for anti-causatives cross-linguistically.

⁷Note that Dubinsky and Simango (1996) make a similar claim for *-Vk* in Chichewa.

⁸See Dubinsky and Simango (1996) for discussion of Change-of-State and *-Vk* in Chichewa.

⁹I note briefly that in terms of meaning, we have generally not found an “ability”-reading of the *-Vk* form. *-Vk* forms in other Bantu languages have been reported to mean “V-able”. This reading does not seem to be present in Maragoli with *-Vk*, although further investigation is required to settle the matter.

3.1 Agent θ -roles

- The clearest difference between the passive and the other two intransitive forms is that only the passive permits an Agentive by-phrase.

- (4) a. **Passive**
muriango gu-han-w-i (na Sira)
 3door 3-close-PASS-FV by Sira
 ‘The door was closed (by Sira)’
- b. **Plain intransitive**
mu-riango gu-han-i (*na Sira)
 3door 3-close-FV by Sira
 ‘The door closed (*by Sira)’
- c. **-Vk intransitive**
mu-riango gu-han-ik-i (*na Sira)
 3door 3-close-VK-FV by Sira
 ‘The door closed (*by Sira)’

- The feeling that someone has to be in charge, or intentionally bringing about the event of the passive verb – but not the -Vk verb – can be seen more clearly with other verbs.

- (5) [Context: Someone told Sira about a great book that he should read. Sira went to the store and found the book.]

- a. *kitabu ki-nyor-w-i*
 7book 7-find-PASS-FV
 ‘The book was found’
- b. *#kitabu ki-nyor-ik-i*
 7book 7-find-VK-FV
 ‘The book was found’

- Out consultant suggests that (5b) could only really be used in a situation where someone finds something unexpectedly, or there is level of “surprise” involved in the finding. What the context in (5) is targeting is intentional “finding.”

3.2 Causer θ -roles

- An oblique Causer θ -role is licensed with either the plain form or the -Vk intransitive, but not the passive.

- (6) a. **Passive**
**muriango gu-araminy-w-i kutorona na imboza*
 3door 3-open-PASS-FV from PRT wind
 ‘*The door was opened because of the wind’
- b. **Plain intransitive**
muriango gu-aram-i kutorona na imboza
 3door 3-open-FV from PRT wind
 ‘The door opened because of/from the wind’
- c. **-Vk intransitive**
muriango gu-aram-ik-i kutorona na imboza
 3door 3-open-VK-FV from PRT wind
 ‘The door opened because/from the wind’

3.3 Instrument θ -roles

- An oblique instrument is compatible only with the passive.
 - Note that in general, instrumental subjects are actually not permitted.

- (7) a. **Passive**
imbwa y-um-iny-w-i na itahoro
 3dog 3-dry-PLACT?-PASS-FV PRT 3towel
 ‘The dog was dried with a towel’
- b. **Plain-intransitive**
*imbwa y-um-i (*na itahoro)*
 3dog 3-dry-FV PRT 3towel
 ‘The dog dried (*with a towel)
- c. **-Vk intransitive**
*imbwa y-um-ik-i (*na itahoro)*
 3dog 3-dry-VK-FV PRT 3towel
 ‘The dog dried (*with a towel)

- Thus, in terms of (oblique) θ -roles, the plain-intransitive and -Vk intransitive pattern similarly, and are differentiated from the passive.

Table 3: θ -role properties of the intransitive verbs

	<i>passive</i>	<i>plain intrans</i>	<i>-VK intrans</i>
<i>Oblique Agent</i>	✓	✗	✗
<i>Oblique Causer</i>	✗	✓	✓
<i>Oblique Instrument</i>	✓	✗	✗

- This alignment tracks anti-causative alternations in other languages, where the non-passive form(s) generally do not permit Agentive by-phrases or Instruments, but do license Causers (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav, 1995; Schäfer, 2008).

3.4 Lexical Aspect

- We've also discovered that -Vk sometimes interacts with event structure, leading us to the generalization in (8):

(8) **Telicity Restriction**

-Vk only attaches to telic predicates

- In the next sections I'll review some of the diagnostics that support (8), and then also review some evidence that (8) is too strong of a generalization.

3.4.1 Negation

- Negation can target different points of the event depending on the form of the verb:

(9) [Context: The door hasn't moved at all.]

a. **Passive**

muriango gu-han-w-i daave
3door 3-close-PASS-FV NEG

'The door wasn't closed'

b. **Plain intransitive**

muriango gu-han-i daave
3door 3-close-FV NEG

‘The door didn’t close’

c. **-Vk intransitive**

#*muriango gu-han-ek-i daave*

3door 3-close-VK-FV NEG

‘The door didn’t close’

- With the passive and plain-form, the start of the event can be targeted by negation, so that the event of closing doesn’t even begin.

– ≈ “the event of door being closed didn’t happen”

- The -Vk form, (9c), is only compatible with a scenario where the door moved, but didn’t get all the way closed. Only the end (result state) can be targeted by negation.¹⁰

– ≈ “the state of the door being closed didn’t happen”

3.4.2 Complements of ‘want’

- There’s also a contrast when embedding under a verb like *kwenya*, ‘to want’.¹¹

(10) [Context: The door is closed.]

a. **Passive**

#*n-eny-a muriango gu-han-w-ε*

1sg-want-FV 3door 3-close-PASS-FV

‘I want the door to be closed’

b. **Plain intransitive**

#*n-eny-a muriango gu-han-ε*

1sg-want-FV 3door 3-close-FV

‘I want the door to close’

c. **-Vk intransitive**

n-eny-a muriango gu-han-ek-ε

1sg-want-FV 3door 3-close-VK-FV

¹⁰This reading is also compatible with the passive and plain-forms. This is different than what Dubinsky and Simango (1996) report for Chichewa.

¹¹The form of the verb in this context is likely a subjunctive, indicated by the -ε final vowel.

‘I want the door closed’

- Again, the plain-form and passive pattern similarly, where the object of wanting is the movement of the door (cannot be the result state):
 - \approx “I want the event of door-closing”
- In contrast, in (10c), the object of wanting can be the result-state:
 - \approx “I want state of the door to be closed”
- The two previous diagnostics might be taken to indicate that the *-Vk* form is a stative, as argued in Dubinsky and Simango (1996).
 - However, note that (10c) can have the same reading as (10b), that is, the object of wanting *can* be the event of closing.
 - Furthermore, recall that both intransitive forms can licensed causers θ -roles, which should be impossible with a stative verb.¹²

3.4.3 Progressive aspect

- There is also interaction with progressive aspect. Putting the *-Vk*-form into the progressive results in ungrammaticality, (11c).¹³

- (11) a. **Passive**
mpira gu-toony-w-a
 3ball 3-drop-PASS-PROG
 ‘The ball was being dropped’
- b. **Plain intransitive**
mpira gu-toony-a
 3ball 3-drop-PROG
 ‘The ball is dropping’
- c. ***-Vk* intransitive**
 **mpira gu-toony-ik-a*
 3ball 3-drop-VK-PROG

¹²I’ll also point out that a deverbal adjectival form would trigger a different set of agreement (concord) markers than verbal agreement.

¹³I probably haven’t parsed the morphology correctly, but I’m reporting the correct interpretations.

- The ungrammaticality of (11c) might follow if *-Vk* requires that the event culminate – that is, if *-Vk* requires a telic predicate.

3.4.4 Continuations

- Lastly, certain continuations are infelicitous if they deny the end state, (12).

(12) a. **Passive**

maguta ga-diny-iz-w-i netare ga-ker-e ma-doto
 6butter 6-harden-CAUS-PASS-FV but 6-be.still?-FV 6-soft
 ‘The butter was hardened but it’s still soft’

b. **Plain intransitive**

maguta ga-diny-i netare ga-ker-e ma-doto
 6butter 6-harden-FV but 6-be.still?-FV 6-soft
 ‘The butter hardened but it’s still soft’

c. **-Vk intransitive**

maguta ga-diny-ik-i (#netare ga-ker-e ma-doto)
 6butter 6-harden-VK-FV but 6-be.still?-. FV 6-soft
 ‘The butter hardened (but it’s still soft)’

- (12c) is infelicitous when it is later asserted that the butter hasn’t completed its “hardening”, as opposed to (12b), where we can get a reading in which the butter hasn’t become entirely hard.
- Thus, for contexts targeting lexical aspect, the *-Vk*-form patterns distinctly from the passive and plain forms, suggesting that *-Vk* requires some culminating event of the verb.

Table 4: Lexical aspect properties of intransitive verbs

	<i>passive</i>	<i>plain intrans</i>	<i>-Vk intrans</i>
<i>negation</i>	entire event	entire event	result state
<i>‘want’</i>	entire event	entire event	result state
<i>progressive</i>	✓	✓	✗
<i>continuations</i>	✓	✓	✗

- We should note this difference in (in)completion of the event has been argued for anti-causative alternations in other languages, e.g., Greek (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 2004) and Italian (Folli, 2002), where the presence of the anti-causative marker entails a telic reading of the predicate.
 - This then would support an analysis of *-Vk* as the Maragoli equivalent to the anti-causative marker.
- However, there are a number of counterexamples to the generalization in (8). **Not all verbs pattern similarly with respect to the tests above.**
- For instance, *kwoma*, ‘to dry’ fails the four diagnostics discussed above.

(13) a. **Negation***imbwa y-um-ek-i daave*

3dog 3-dry-VK-FV NEG

‘The dog didn’t dry’

[Ok if dog doesn’t dry at all, or only dries halfway]

b. **Complement of ‘want’***n-eny-a imbwa y-um-ik-ε*

1sg-want-FV 3dog 3-dry-VK-FV

‘I want the dog to dry’

[Strange if the dog is already dry]

c. **Progressive***imbwa y-um-ek-a*

3dog 3-dry-VK-FV

‘The dog is drying’

d. **Continuation***imbwa y-um-ik-i netare e-ker-e i-nzilu hadi*

3dog 3-dry-VK-FV but 3-be.still-FV 3-wet a.little

‘The dog dried but it’s still a little wet’

- In fact, rather than argue against a treatment of *-Vk* as an anti-causative marker, I think these seemingly contradictory results with respect to telicity is an argument *for* such an analysis.

- Schäfer (2008) argues convincingly that the telicity restrictions for the languages cited above fail for a number of lexical items, and are not consistent across languages.
- Thus, there may be an tendency for an anti-causative marker in a language to co-occur with a telic reading of the predicate, however telicity is not an absolute requirement.
- Nonetheless, we feel that there can be a discernible semantic effect when *-Vk* appears on the verb. It is still an open question as to why some diagnostics fail with certain verbs.
- Moreover, tests involving θ -roles and telicity correlate strongly with tests for anti-causativity in other languages.
 - The hypothesis is that there is something inherent about the semantics of the verb root itself that should lead to the failure of a particular diagnostic.

4 Transitives

- In this section, we'll look briefly at some generalizations about the transitive forms of the verbs listed in Table 1.
- In general, the transitives appear in one of three forms. (Note that *-Vk* can never appear on a transitive verb.)
 - **Plain** (minus *-Vk* and without additional morphology)
 - ***-Vny*** (minus *-Vk* and plus *-Vny*)
 - ***-iz*** (minus *-Vk* and plus *-iz*)

Table 5: Transitive forms of the intransitives from Table 1. *Items have /ny/ in both transitive and intransitive forms. %*kwatanya* is a suppletive form of the transitive *kwadeka*, 'to break'. *Kwama*, 'to bloom' and *kuneneha*, 'to grow' do not have transitive forms.

	Plain	-Vny	-iz
Class I only with -Vk	<i>kuharagata</i> , 'to scrape' <i>kutandora</i> 'to tear' <i>kusundora</i> , 'to spill' <i>kukiŋga</i> , 'to cover' <i>kuromba</i> , 'to fix' <i>kukunora</i> , 'to open' <i>kumega</i> , 'to break off' <i>kufuta</i> , 'to inflate' <i>kufayiya</i> , 'to obliterate' <i>kurandol(ol)a</i> , 'to peel' <i>kuchiriŋana</i> , 'to be quiet' <i>kwona</i> , 'to destroy' <i>kusiita</i> , 'to twist'	<i>kwononya</i> , 'to destroy' <i>kubaminya</i> , 'to flatten' <i>kuzuganya</i> *, 'to mix' <i>kunyanya</i> *, 'to chew' <i>kwatanya</i> *%, 'to break' <i>kumwaminya</i> , 'to blacken' <i>kukunya</i> 'to wrinkle'	<i>kuŋerihiza</i> , 'to stretch/grow'
Class II only without -Vk	<i>kwigora</i> , 'to open' <i>kumeeda</i> , 'to increase'	<i>kugomagominya</i> , 'to roll' <i>kusaranya</i> , 'to spread (out) <i>kwakanya</i> , 'to redden' <i>kusiminya</i> , 'to be (shut) off' <i>kuchiriŋanya</i> , 'to quiet'	<i>kumeriza</i> , 'to grow' <i>kuriguhiza</i> , 'to make heavy' <i>kuziliza</i> , 'to wet' <i>kuruhiza</i> , 'to tire' <i>kugehiza</i> , 'to decrease, reduce, shorten' <i>kuŋelehiza</i> , 'to lengthen' <i>kweleriza</i> , 'to swing'
Class III with or without -Vk	<i>kuhana</i> , 'to close' <i>kwiina</i> , 'to sink' <i>kusunda</i> , 'to move' <i>kukara</i> , 'to cut' <i>kuzura</i> 'to decay'	<i>kutoonya</i> , 'to drop' <i>kwominya</i> , 'to dry' <i>kwaraminya</i> , 'to open' <i>kuchaminya</i> , 'to be crooked' <i>kuchaminya</i> , 'to bend, crook' <i>kudinya</i> *, 'to harden'	<i>kuzuruliza</i> , 'to wilt' <i>kweleliza</i> , 'to hang' <i>kusaaliza</i> , 'to injure, make sick' <i>kukomeriza</i> , 'to fatten' <i>kwauhiza</i> , 'to make thin' <i>kwogehiza</i> , 'to make sharp' <i>kwauhiza</i> , 'to lighten' <i>kuraviza</i> , 'to whiten, clean'

- There are few things to note about the patterns in Table 5.

First, *-Vny* appears elsewhere to mark pluractionality, i.e., repeated events:

- (14) a. *Sira a-hol-i iroli*
 1Sira 1-punch-FV 9truck
 ‘Sira punched the truck’
- b. *Sira a-hol-any-i iroli*
 1Sira 1-punch-PLACT-FV 9truck
 ‘Sira punched the truck (repeatedly)’

- While I think the concept of pluractionality can be coerced into the meaning of most if not all of the items in column 2 (e.g., *dry* = “dry over and over”; *mix* = “mix over and over”), it’s unclear why some verbs are left out of this column.
- That is, why doesn’t *kumeeda* ‘to increase’ form a transitive with *-Vny*?

Second, *-iz* is the general causative suffix, with many cognates across Bantu.

kurera, ‘to cry’ → *kureriza*, ‘to cause to cry/to make cry’

- Why isn’t it used to form the transitive counterparts for every verb? In other words, what is so special about the verbs in column 3?

Third, At least two sub-regularities emerge:

1. With only one exception, verbs which obligatorily form *-Vk* intransitives do not form causatives with *-iz*.
2. Any intransitive verb ending in *(u)h* only forms a transitive with *-iz*.
 - * This *-h* is very interesting. Briefly, it appears that the majority of the verbs which take *-h* are formed from underlying abstract nouns.
 - *vwan̄gu*, ‘lightness’ → *kwanḡuha*, ‘to lighten’
 - *vwōgɛ*, ‘sharpness’ → *kwoḡɛha*, ‘to sharpen’
 - * It’s possible that *-h* is some sort of verbalizer.

- I’ll note briefly that the distinctions in Table 5 are not categorical.
 - For some verbs, different contexts can affect which transitive suffix (if any) is used.
- I have less to say about the transitive forms than the intransitive forms, but clearly there are patterns here which may inform how we divide the verbs into classes.

- Again, the hypothesis is that a verb’s appearance in one of the columns is not random. Rather, it is predictable from some inherent meaning of the root.

5 Towards an analysis

- There have traditionally been two strategies for dealing with (anti-)causative alternations: either “detransitivization” and “transitivization”
 - **Detransitivization** (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav, 1995; Reinhart, 1996), a.o. The underlying form of the verb is transitive, and something “suppresses” the subject, resulting in an intransitive.
 - **Transitivization** (Williams, 1981; Pesetsky, 1995), a.o. The underlying form of the verb is intransitive, and something adds an argument to form the transitive.
- A third option has emerged recently, in which neither the transitive nor the intransitive variant is the base form. Rather, lexical items consist of category-less roots, and then (some of) the syntactic and selectional processes are the results of what the root combines with (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou, 2004; Schäfer, 2008; Alexiadou et al., 2006).
 - Both the transitive and intransitive are derived from a single shared root form.
- Does Maragoli differentiate between these proposals?
 - **Detransitivization:**¹⁴
 - * Since *-Vk* seems to apply to a large class of verbs to form an intransitive, this conforms well with the idea that *-Vk* simply takes away an argument
 - * However, it doesn’t easily explain the different forms of transitive suffixes.
 - * Furthermore, it fails to predict why semantic effects can be *added* (e.g., the Telicity Restriction).
 - * Lastly, its unclear how to differentiate this from a true passive – given that passives are simply the restriction of the external argument (Bruening, 2013).

¹⁴See Dubinsky and Simango (1996); Seidl and Dimitriadis (2003) for this sort of analysis in Chichewa and Swahili respectively.

– **Transitivization:**

- * This is possible for getting the transitive form from Class II verbs, but it's incompatible with Class I verbs, where the transitive form is not built off of the *-Vk* base.

– **Root derivation**¹⁵

- * Probably the most compatible, since plain-forms, *-Vk*-forms, and the transitive counterparts all share a common base.¹⁶
- * Furthermore, we can derive many of the different properties (telicity, choice of transitive suffix, etc) by appealing to the inherent semantics of the root.

6 Discussion and directions

- I think there's a good amount of evidence in favor of treating *-Vk* like an “anti-causative marker” – although clearly it does not solely have this function.
 - Note, of course, that even in Romance/Germanic, the “anti-causative marker” does not solely mark anti-causatives; it's the reflexive morpheme.
- However, the investigation in Maragoli suggests that the Western view of “anti-causative alternation” is merely a subset of possible transitivity alternations.
- So far, the only factor that unifies every use of *-Vk* is that it's a valency decreaser.
 - That said, we have found nothing else that unifies that verbs that it can apply to.
- The work presented here a first step, and we hope to investigate each of the issues discussed above more thoroughly.

Thank you!

¹⁵See Fernando (2013) for this sort of analysis in Kikongo.

¹⁶*Modulo* a few suppletive roots.

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