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Documenting Luyia Together: the Ganda Talking Wordlist

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Through its *Luyia-Soga Talking Wordlists* project, the ASH scholars team *Documenting Luyia Together* aims to document and analyze Bantu languages spoken in Kenya and Uganda and to understand the historical relationships between these languages. My research on the team has focused on the analysis of linguistic data on the Ganda language.

Ganda is the most widely spoken language in Uganda; it is the first or second language of approximately 8.5 million people, or 20% of the country's population. Ganda is relatively well-studied compared to most other languages in the region. A list of more than 300 references indexed to Ganda are listed on the *Glottolog* (Hammarström et al. 2020). Despite the comparatively well-documented status of Ganda, it lacks some basic documentation such as a talking dictionary. Our project aims to compare languages using a standard talking wordlist, so we collected new data from a Ganda speaker in 2019.

Our data consist of a 600-item wordlist and accompanying audio recordings. Fellow MU student Sophie Kennedy processed the original interview recordings in spring 2020, creating an archive of audio files with individual sound files of pronunciations of each word in the list. My main research task has been to transcribe the words in the list using the International Phonetic Alphabet. I will later use the transcribed wordlist data to develop a report describing the Ganda sound system and noun class system. My paper will identify the consonants and vowels of the language and the prefixes that are used to mark singular, plural, and gender differences. Later, I will integrate the vocabulary from the Ganda wordlist into a larger database that will allow our research team to compare the Ganda vocabulary and sound system against other languages in the database to develop a new classification of languages in the region.

References

Hammarström, Harald, Robert Forkel, Martin Haspelmath, & Sebastian Bank. 2020. Glottolog 4.3. Jena: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History. (Available online at http://glottolog.org, accessed on 2020-11-17.)