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# Anglicising local media: how the homogenising influence of western news discourse endangers Runyankore-Rukiga

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## Résumé

Because of relative press freedom and liberalization of airwaves and print media in Uganda since mid-1980s, there has been a proliferation of radio and TV stations and newspaper outlets in English and local languages. The indigenous language media houses have not only been vibrant in covering socio-economic news events and political issues, they have also served to enhance, revitalize and entrench the quotidian use of local languages in the respective areas where the media outlets operate. For example, Runyankore-Rukiga, an agglutinating Bantu language widely spoken in south-western Uganda and understood in north-western Tanzania and in the eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, has been the medium of communication across the media houses in south-western Uganda. However, the homogenizing influence of the Western media and the English-medium (local media) houses continue to promote western linguistic practices while threatening the use of Runyankore-Rukiga across electronic and print media in Uganda. Drawing examples from FM radio stations, newspapers, social media and a TV station operating in south-western Uganda, this paper will demonstrate how the ‘English-speaking culture’ has impacted not only the reporting of news stories, but also the use of linguistic resources on radio and TV programmes, which pose a challenge and threat to the use and practice of Runyankore-Rukiga. Drawing examples from press briefs, sports news and popular culture chats, the paper exemplifies how local media (FM radio presenters) in Runyankore-Rukiga employ English. It will demonstrate how most radio discourses and programmes entail texts replete with chunks of English language expressions, yet Runyankore-Rukiga possesses equivalent resources and nomenclature to describe them. Although most of these media houses adopt western linguistic styles, to wit English, that appeal to the young audience, the paper will argue that the increasing use of Anglo-American modes of journalistic culture and language will further dominate and supplant the local language texts and styles. Thus, this linguistic phenomenon has profound consequences on the current generation of Runyankore-Rukiga speakers who will grow up into a discourse community that uses more of the English phrases, but less of Runyankore-Rukiga.

**Mots-Clés:** Runyankore, Rukiga, local media, translanguaging, news discourse, language endangerment

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