A Comprehensive Guide to

Rufumbira Grammar

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assisted by
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As well, Doris hosted writer training workshops, editing and publishing the Krahn books produced at these workshops. She wrote a Krahn-English, English-Krahn dictionary and a Krahn grammar book, the latter not quite completed due to war in Ivory Coast which forced her to leave in 2003.

In 2007 Doris transferred to Kisoro, Uganda to begin an adult literacy programme in Rufumbira.

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Preface

It was never my intention to write a grammar book on the Rufumbira language. However, since I needed to discover the grammatical rules myself before doing any writing of Rufumbira primers and other material, my notes and data eventually evolved into the present book.

I want to thank my language helper, Rev. Canon Esau Muruta, who translated all the illustrative sentences into Rufumbira. This book would not have been possible without him. I also want to acknowledge my indebtedness to authors C.M. Overdulve and I. Jacob who wrote "Twige Ikinyarwanda". Their book was a great help to me.

I wish to also give my heartfelt thanks to each of the following people who separately reviewed the book and then met together several times to make comments and corrections.

Charles Benda
Emmanuel Nkunda Hategа
Anna Mikekemo
Peter Samvura
Bishop Ernest Shalita

One change that the above reviewers wanted was to have double vowels written throughout. In keeping with what I had thought was the accepted rule, I had been writing only a single vowel before an n or m followed by a consonant, and after a consonant followed by a w or y. I think the reviewers' idea is valid. Words should be written as they sound. Although nasal consonants followed by another consonant always cause a double vowel, there is no reason why this double vowel should not be written. Neither is there any valid reason for not writing a double vowel after a consonant + y or w. A double vowel is said and therefore a double vowel should be written. It makes it much easier for people to write their language correctly.

Another problem for readers is created by not writing tone. It is not necessary to write tone throughout but only where a problem occurs in understanding. This is especially true for the recent past and distant past where tone might be the only thing that differentiates the two tenses. Since tone is not written, it causes the reader to read and then go back and reread a sentence to get the right meaning. If the distant past was marked by a high tone, this would solve many problems in reading.

I have no doubt that some grammatical points may have unintentionally been omitted. Any future edition hopefully will cover them. I would be very grateful if you sent me your comments/corrections/additions which could then be incorporated in a later edition. They can be sent to my post office box or emailed to me at dsauder@paoc.org.

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