

MAKERERE



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**PERFORMING CULTURE:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF CONTEMPORARY
OKUHINGIRA CEREMONY AMONG THE BANYANKORE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The research set out to investigate the effectiveness of the language used in the performance of the *Okuhingira* ceremony among the Banyankore. In the study, emphasis was put on the contemporary ceremony of okuhingira and how it uses its linguistic and paralinguistic features to enhance performance.

Furthermore, the research was carried out in the areas of Bushenyi and Mbarara Districts both of which are found in south western Uganda on the assumption that the majority of Banyankore Bantu ethnic group settled there. During the collection of data, personal interviews with the performers were undertaken, as well as recording of the performances using video and radio recorders. The material such as songs, praise poetry and dramas were translated and transcribed. It should be noted however, that due to the constraint of time and because the research focused on the language of *Okuhingira* rather than the actual Performance, no transcription was incorporated in the actual research.

In the analysis of the data collection and in writing the research, the performance theory as advanced by Baumann with its key principles such as archaic language, figurative language, special paralinguistics and formulae were studied in relation to *okuhingira* and how they enrich the performance of the *okuhingira* ceremony.

Though the research discovered that there were some variations in the performance of *Okuhingira* from one area to another, as a result of borrowing from other cultures, modern influences on the traditional customs and the place where the performance was carried out that

is; towns as opposed to the villages and hotels as opposed to the homes of the performers of the *Okuhingira*, the central aspects of the okuhingira ceremony remained the same: The movements and the structures of the ceremony as ritual were the same and some symbolic performance tools such as the omugamba, the place and significance of the bride and the serving of entachweeka were all significant in the okuhingira..

This research found that the *Okuhingira* ceremony as a cultural performance is the marriage ceremony of the banyankore, and in doing the okuhingira, the Banyankore are actually doing the marriage, in measured and deliberate movements that will transform a girl into a woman, a bride into a wife.

However, while this research focused on the literally and performance aspects of *Okuhingira* taking into consideration the culture values and performative dynamics as affected by the context under which it is performed, there is a need for further research in the areas that look at and analyse the importance of the *Okuhingira* from an anthropological point of view. This is because while language is important in understanding the aesthetics and didactics of *Okuhingira*, the society needs to appreciate the socio-cultural significance of the cultural performance to the peoples of Ankole.