

Difficulty in Identifying the Adjectival Noun "Izina Ntera" in Kinyarwanda Sentences

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ABSTRACT

Kinyarwanda grammar, particularly its parts of speech, includes modifiers of nouns among which "Adjectival noun (Izina ntera)" plays a crucial role. This category, a combination of a noun and an adjective of quality, has been a source of confusion among students due to ambiguous explanations by Kinyarwanda grammarians. Two distinct structures have been adopted for this grammatical category; however, the confirmed structure does not fully meet the necessary criteria, while the appropriate structure has not been widely accepted. This study addresses the discrepancies surrounding the "izina ntera" category in secondary schools and proposes a clearer explanation for its definition in Kinyarwanda grammar. Employing a mixed-method approach blending qualitative and quantitative methods, and drawing on critical and structuralism theories, the research involved 58 upper-level secondary school students and 30 Kinyarwanda teachers purposively selected from three schools in Gicumbi district. Data collection utilized both hard and soft questionnaires, and analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The research proposed an updated definition of Kinyarwanda adjectival noun, supplemented with examples, to alleviate ambiguity in its usage and enhance student understanding of this grammatical category. The findings indicate that current textbooks perpetuate confusion by presenting conflicting definitions and structures for "izina ntera." Recommendations include the standardization of educational materials to reflect a single structure, acceptance of the revised definition by grammarians and educators, and the organization of seminars and training to facilitate the adoption of these changes. Continued research on Kinyarwanda grammar is encouraged to further refine and innovate the teaching of parts of speech.

Keywords: Adjectival Noun (Izina Ntera), Kinyarwanda Grammar, Parts of Speech, Word Category, Word Class

I. INTRODUCTION

An adjectival noun is a noun that was used as an adjective, or an adjective that was used as a noun. (Nicoladis, 2006). Kinyarwanda adjectival noun (Izina ntera) doesn't have its corresponding part of speech in English, as Nsanzabiga, (2012) argues that each language has its own structure. The Kinyarwanda adjectival noun, known as "Izina ntera," lacks a direct counterpart in English, reflecting Nsanzabiga's (2012) assertion that each language possesses a unique structural framework. In Kinyarwanda, an adjectival noun is a synthesis of a noun (izina) and an adjective of quality (ntera). Structurally, this construct mirrors a noun due to its incorporation of an augment, a noun class marker, and a root. Scholars frequently fail to delineate the precise structure of this part of speech with clarity. Additionally, while the noun is introduced by an augment sometimes omitted depending on sentence usage the adjective of quality lacks this feature (Zorc & Nibagwire, 2007).

A textbook designed for senior one, according to Murera et al. (2017), describes the adjectival noun as an adjective of quality that has acquired an augment. This characterization represents the initial structural interpretation of the Kinyarwanda adjectival noun. However, this definition has faced opposition. Critics argue that once the adjective assumes an augment, it functions as a noun rather than as an adjective, thereby replacing rather than modifying the noun (Bizimana, 1998; Kabayiza et al., 2010; Zorc & Nibagwire, 2007).

Conversely, other scholars have proposed an alternative structure for this grammatical category, wherein a noun modifies another noun. This modifying noun is linked to the noun it modifies through an associative, conferring attributes such as nationality, color, region of origin, size, or shape, and is connected to the modified noun by a possessive adjective (an associative), and used attributively (Bizimana, 1998; Kabayiza et al., 2010; Zorc & Nibagwire, 2007; Nsanzabiga & Twilingiyimana, 2015; Regional Assistance Licensing Centers [RALC], 2019).

Another textbook intended for senior four students Kimenyi and Hakorimana (2016) elucidates the "adjectival noun" similarly to the senior one textbook (the first structure) and incorporates the additional insights provided by researchers (the second structure). This dual-structural approach in Kinyarwanda grammar implies that the adjectival noun has two distinct frameworks but different applications within sentences. This dichotomy leads to ambiguity in both teaching and learning contexts. Research indicates that students predominantly recognize the first structure,

where an adjective has assumed an augment, suggesting that the second structure is less familiar as an "adjectival noun."

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite linguistic research establishing that only the structure where a noun modifies another noun by attributing characteristics qualifies as "izina ntera," educational textbooks in Kinyarwanda grammar often present conflicting definitions and structural interpretations. This inconsistency leads to significant misunderstandings and ambiguities among learners, at the extent that they confuse its two structures namely "an adjective which has taken an augment (ntera yafashe indomo) and a noun modifying another noun connected to it with an associative or possessive adjective". Teachers do not teach the same definition, according to the book they refer to or conservatism, which leads students to not identify "izina ntera" in a sentence. This problem highlights the urgent need for educational reform to establish a unified definition and instructional approach to "izina ntera" in Kinyarwanda textbooks.

1.2 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to address the confusion arising from existing Kinyarwanda textbooks and to establish a definitive explanation of the adjectival noun. This goal is delineated into the following specific objectives:

- i. To identify and analyze the ambiguities presented in Kinyarwanda textbooks regarding the adjectival noun;
- ii. To formulate and provide a clear, precise definition of the adjectival noun to eliminate these ambiguities.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. Which structure accurately represents the "adjectival noun" in Kinyarwanda between an adjective of quality that has taken an augment or a noun modifying another noun linked by an associative?
- ii. What methods can be employed to refine and update the definition of "adjectival noun" to ensure it is well understood by learners and educators?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

In this research, we have applied two prominent language theories: critical theory and structuralism theory.

2.1.1 Critical Theory

This theory was presented by scholars in the associated Frankfurt School, a group of thinkers who emerged in Germany in the early 20th century. It is a theoretical and philosophical approach that aims at critiquing and analyzing society and culture, in order to understand challenging power and structures that contribute to inequality and oppression (Devetak, 2013). This theory guided our decision to undertake this study upon recognizing the inadequate explanation of "an adjectival noun" in Kinyarwanda grammar. We observed omissions by previous researchers, inconsistencies in their definitions, and discrepancies in the examples provided. This prompted us to conduct a rigorous investigation to explore how adjectival nouns are interpreted by students and how they are comprehended in practice, and to propose the updated structure as the language could not stay in traditional perspective (Kellner, 2003).

2.1.2. Structuralism Theory

This theory was founded by Wilhelm Wundt in the second half of the 20th century with the focus of understanding structure and phenomena of interrelated elements, with the emphasis on underlying rules and patterns that govern these structures, and relationships between elements rather than their individual properties (Lejano, 2021). With this theory, we conducted a comprehensive review of the morphemes comprising this word category and analysed their role in categorizing words accordingly. Our goal was to elucidate the systematic framework governing the classification of adjectival nouns, emphasizing clarity in explanation and providing illustrative examples that facilitate a thorough understanding for students. By integrating critical theory and structuralism theory into our research methodology, we aimed to address the gaps in understanding and provide a cohesive framework for comprehending adjectival nouns in Kinyarwanda grammar (Bichwa, 2022).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 What is Adjectival Noun "Izina Ntera" in Kinyarwanda Grammar?

Definitions typically focus on the common characteristics that all members of a class should possess, but they neglect the implications that arise when certain classes of words are extended (Lagarde, 1988). This issue is exemplified by the adjectival noun in Kinyarwanda. The primary morphological distinction between an adjective of

quality (ntera) and a noun (izina) lies in the fact that an adjective of quality never includes the augment. Once the augment is added, the adjective functions as a noun (Bizimana, 1998; Kabayiza et al., 2010; Zorc & Nibagwire, 2007; Nsanzabiga & Twilingiyimana, 2015; RALC, 2019). It is widely recognized that not every language possesses a distinct class of adjectives (Mouton, 2000), which might be applicable to Kinyarwanda.

In Kinyarwanda grammar, the adjectival noun represents a part of speech that amalgamates two English parts of speech: the noun and the adjective of quality. The function of this combined category parallels that of an adjective of quality, while its morphological properties align with those of a noun. In categorizing this term, we can consider the assertion of Shopen and Schachter (2007), which states: "...the assignment of words to parts-of-speech classes is based on properties that are grammatical rather than semantic, and often language-particular rather than universal..." This perspective underscores the unique characteristics of the Kinyarwanda language.

Sometimes, the classification of word classes is influenced by semantic considerations (Nadeau, 1996). In Kinyarwanda, words are categorized based on their structure and function within a sentence (Bizimana, 1998). Adjectives of quality modify nouns by attributing specific qualities to them. Unlike nouns, adjectives of quality in Kinyarwanda do not possess an augment.

Here are some examples:

Abantu **beza** barakundwa.

People (N) good (Adj) are loved

(Good people are loved)

Umugore **munini** aritonda.

A wife (N) big (Adj) is humble

(A big wife is humble)

Muge mwumva inama z'abantu **bakuru**.

Do hear advices of people (N) old (Adj)

(Always respect advices of old people)

Concerning the grammatical category of the adjectival noun in Kinyarwanda grammar, it encompasses two primary structures. The first structure involves an adjective of quality that has taken an augment. The second structure comprises a noun that modifies another noun. Within the second structure, there are additional sub-structures. The first structure is presented in textbooks for Primary Five (REB, 2019) and Senior One (Murera et al., 2017). These textbooks do not address the second structure. Conversely, textbooks for Senior Four (Kimenyi & Hakorimana, 2016; REB, 2019) include explanations of both structures.

Examples:

First structure

Abeza baraje.

The good ones (Noun+augment) are coming

(The good ones are coming)

Umunini aritonda.

The big one (adj+augment) is humble

(The big one is humble)

Muzage mwumvwa inama z'**abakurû**.

Do always hear advices of old ones (adj+augment)

(Always respect advices from old ones)

Second structure

Umukobwa w'**indaya** araje.

A daughter of a prostitute (noun modifying a child) is coming.

(A daughter of a prostitute/a prostitute girl is coming)

Ingoma z'**indundi** ni nziza.

Drums of Burundi (noun modifying drums) are good

(Burundian drums are good)

Mbonye umugabo w'inyangamugayo.

I see a man of honest (noun modifying a man)

*(I see a **honest** man)*

In the Kinyarwanda language, the second structure of the adjectival noun can sometimes lead to semantic ambiguity. For instance, when we say "Umwana w'umugoyi," it can mean either a child (umwana) from Bugoyi or a son/daughter (umwana) of someone from Bugoyi. Similarly, "Umwana w'umukozi" can refer to either a son/daughter (umwana) of (wa) a worker (umukozi) or a working child. In cases where "umwana" denotes the one from Bugoyi or the one who is working, the word "umugoyi" functions as an adjectival noun because it provides a characteristic of "umwana." However, if "umukobwa" refers to "the child of", then "indaya" is a common noun, however, if it refers to "a girl who is a prostitute", now "indaya" is an adjectival noun.

This illustrates how the context of the sentence determines whether "indaya" is an adjectival noun or a common noun, highlighting the potential for semantic ambiguity in the second structure of adjectival nouns in Kinyarwanda.

The associative in the second structure of an adjectival noun plays a very important role. When it is omitted, the noun phrase will not have a meaning, and it will bring an ungrammatical structure of Kinyarwanda sentence construction.

Example:

Umukobwa w'indaya (a daughter of a prostitute/ a prostitute girl). This noun phrase is meaningful and it is grammatically correct in Kinyarwanda.

However

Umukobwa indaya (A girl, a prostitute). This noun phrase is not meaningful and it is not grammatically correct.

According to researchers, an associative serves the function of linking the possessed to the possessor. In this construction, the possessed noun precedes the associative, while the possessor follows it. The class of the associative is determined by the class of the possessed noun (Bizimana, 1998; Kabayiza et al., 2010; Nsanabigwa & Twilingiyimana, 2015).

Here are some examples:

Umwana wa Kalisa

(Kalisa's son/daughter)

Igiti cya Kalisa

(Kalisa's tree)

Umurizo w'ingurube

(A pig's tail)

Umwana w'Imana

(A son of God)

Urugo rw'inyangamugayo

(A honest person's home)

In their researches, Kinyarwanda grammarians did not say that the associative can also play a role of linking a noun to an adjectival noun. This also became a challenge to adjectival nouns.

2.2.2 The Ambiguity in Defining the Adjectival Noun

The concept of adjectival nouns in Kinyarwanda emerged in 1975 with Overdulse's research, defining it as an adjective that has acquired an augment (the first structure of izina ntera). Subsequently, in 1998, Bizimana Simon introduced a new perspective, proposing that adjectival nouns are words that modify a noun by indicating the tribe, district, area, or country from which the modified noun originates (the second structure of izina ntera). This introduced two alternative structures for the adjectival noun. Kabayiza et al. (2010) endorsed both structures, acknowledging their

validity. However, Bizimana (1998) and Nsanzabiga and Twilingiyimana (2015) exclusively support the second structure. As they provided examples, numerous forms of adjectival nouns (second structure) emerged, some conforming to the class and number of the modified noun while others did not. This divergence in forms underscores the complexity and variability within the adjectival noun category in Kinyarwanda grammar, reflecting ongoing debates and differing interpretations among scholars regarding its precise definition and usage.

2.2.3 In the First Structure We Have Only One Form

The adjective of quality that has taken an augment. It doesn't modify a noun, but the augment on it seems to have replaced a noun it should be modifying.

If the adjective of quality modifies a noun, the described noun is present and confirms the class and number of the adjective of quality.

Here are examples:

Ikintu kibi tucyamagane.

A thing (N) bad (Adj) let us fight
(*Let us fight against the bad thing*)

Ibintu binini biri imbere.

Things (N) big (Adj) are ahead
(*Big things are ahead*)

Abakobwa beza ntibaravuka

Girls (N) beautiful (Adj) are not yet born
(*Beautiful girls are not yet born*)

Abanyeshuri bagufi imbere, **abanyeshuri barebare** inyuma

Students (N) short (Adj) in front, students (N) tall (Adj) behind
(*Short students in front, tall students behind*)

When the adjective of quality has taken an augment, the modified noun is not present, to say that the augment has replaced it. Here are examples:

Ikibi tucyamagane.

The bad (adj+augment) let us fight
(*Let us fight against **the bad***)

Ibinini biri imbere.

Big ones (adj+augment) are ahead
(***Big ones** are ahead*)

Abeza ntibaravuka.

Beautiful ones (adj+augment) are not yet born
(***Beautiful ones** are not yet born*)

Abagufi imbere, **abarebare** inyuma.

Short ones (adj+augment) in front, tall ones (adj+augment) behind
(***Short ones** in front, **tall ones** behind*)

At this juncture, the original function of modifying a noun becomes obscured, and instead of modifying a noun, the adjectival noun begins to replace it; a departure from its intended role. According to Bizimana (1998), Kabayiza et al. (2010), Zorc and Nibagwire (2007), and Nsanzabiga and Twilingiyimana (2015), this transformation signifies that the adjectival noun ceases to function as a modifier in the absence of the noun it should modify. Consequently, it defaults to being considered a common noun. This shift undermines the fundamental purpose of adjectival nouns, which is to modify and characterize nouns rather than supplanting them.

2.2.4 In the Second Structure, there are Many Sub Structures of Adjectival Noun

Those which assign quality, region or tribe to a noun they modify. In this form, they follow and agree with the nouns they modify using prefixes specific to each noun class.

Umugabo w'**umusindi**.

A man of (associative) sindi tribe (adjectival noun)
(A *man from sindi tribe*)

Abana b'**abagande**.

Children of (associative) Uganda (adjectival noun)
(*Ugandan children*)

Terefoni y'**inshinwa**.

A phone of (associative) China (adjectival noun)
(A *Chinese phone*)

Isaha y'**imbirigi**.

A watch of (associative) Belgium (adjectival noun)
(A *Belgian watch*)

Those which assign quality or state of being on a noun they modify. In this form, they don't follow and don't agree with the nouns they modify using prefixes specific to each noun class.

Umwana w'**inkubaganyi**.

A child of (associative) sturbon (adjectival noun)
(A *sturbon child*)

Umukobwa w'**indaya**.

A girl of (associative) prostitution (adjectival noun)
(A *prostitute girl*)

Umushyitsi w'**imena**.

A visitor of (associative) very importance (adjectival noun)
(A *very important visitor*)

Abagabo b'**impunzi**.

Men of (associative) refuge (adjectival noun)
(*Refugee men*)

This form is composed of compound adjectival nouns, not single as seen above.

Umukecuru w'**inkaandagirabitabo**.

An old woman of (associative) stepping on books (compound adjectival Noun)
(An *illiterate old woman*)

Inzu y'**imbêerabyôombî**.

A house of (associative) fitting in all (compound adjectival Noun)
(A *multipurpose house*)

Imodoka y'**imbaangukiragutabaara**.

A car of (associative) saving quickly (compound adjectival Noun)
(An *ambulance car*)

Umuhungu w'**inyâryeenge**.

A boy of (associative) having tricks (compound adjectival Noun)
(A *tricky boy*)

In this form, there are those which assign colors to nouns they modify.

Ishati y'**umutuku**.

A shirt of (associative) red color (adjectival noun of color)
(A **red** shirt)

Ikanzu y'**igitare/y'umweru**.

A dress of (associative) white color (adjectival noun of color)
(A **white** dress)

Inkweto z'**icyatsi**.

Shoes of (associative) green color (adjectival noun of color)
(**Green** shoes)

Itara ry'**umuhondo**.

A bulb of (associative) yellow color (adjectival noun of color)
(A **yellow** bulb)

In this form, there are those which don't have an article or pre-fix as other nouns, but functioning as adjectival nouns.

Umuhanda wa **kaburimbo**.

A road of (associative) tarmac (adjectival noun)
(A **tarmac** road)

Igikombe cya **zahabu**.

A cup of (associative) gold (adjectival noun)
(A **golden** cup)

Umujura wa **ruharwa**.

A thief of (associative) notoriousness (adjectival noun)
(A **notorious** thief)

At this level, it is not still a noun describing another noun, but another word category which is made up of a combination of an emphasizing word plus a pronoun or verb (Mathilde, 2005). This combination assigns to a noun it modifies the state of being real or fake.

Umushumba wa **nyawe**.

A shepherd of (associative) reality (adjectival noun)
(A **real** shepherd)

Umukinnyi wa **ntakigenda**.

A player of (associative) fake (adjectival noun)
(An **unreal** player)

Umupasitori wa **ntakigenda**.

A priest of (associative) fake (adjectival noun)
(A **fake** pastor)

Ifarini ya **nyayo**.

A wheat flour of (associative) reality (adjectival noun)
(A **real** wheat flour)

All the above forms of this kind of noun modifier are not well explained in Kinyarwanda textbooks, and it causes ambiguity while studying in details what an adjectival noun is, and how it modifies a noun. Here, we are referring to why one-word class (izina ntera) has got different structures which do not even have the same function and use in a sentence, and they are put in one grammatical category.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

The significance of research lies in its quality and quantity, the reason why we used qualitative and quantitative methods. (Kothari, 2004) Research is a systematic investigation or activity to gain new knowledge of the already existing facts. (Pandey, & Mishra, 2015) The questions of the research were asked in order to generate the use of adjectival noun in its natural state and use. As it was a focus on students, field notes (answers from students) were taken, coded and analyzed. A conclusion was made according to the findings, to confirm the importance of quantitative approach.

3.2 Population and Sampling Techniques

In this study, simple random sampling technique was used, to give an equal chance to all secondary schools found in Gicumbi district. While choosing schools, purposive sampling was used, focusing on school location and accessibility. Hence, two Twelve Years Basic Education (12YBE) schools and one boarding school were selected as a case study. This made it possible to generalize the results for all secondary schools of Gicumbi. Two combinations and classes were selected purposively, in order to ensure the accurateness and reliability of data collected.

In the selected sample, students from GS Bisika were 19, from GS Gihuke were 6 and 33 students from College de Rebero. Thirty teachers who teach Kinyarwanda in secondary schools were selected purposively also. Informed consent forms were prepared and students and even teachers were given time to ask questions before answering to questionnaires. After clear explanations and guidelines, the selected sample agreed to participate and answered questions on their will. Hard copies of questionnaires were given to students, because the researcher was able to travel to those three schools. However, soft questionnaires were given to teachers in Gicumbi district, but not on the selected schools. As teachers were 30, it was very difficult to find them in only three schools, because we would find only not more than two teachers of Kinyarwanda on one school. Depending on a number of students, a school can have only one or two Kinyarwanda teachers. In this regard, we used an internet link which contained questions, and was given to a teacher after confirming that he/she has access to internet and an ICT tool that has it, and also is able to use the tool.

3.3 Research Instruments

Informed consent forms were firstly given to respondents, in order to ensure the willingness to participate in research activity. Hard copies of questionnaires were provided to students in the selected schools, while soft copies were distributed to teachers in Gicumbi district via an internet link. This method accommodated the logistical challenge of reaching teachers dispersed across multiple schools.

The use of the internet link for teachers ensured access to the questionnaire, provided they had the necessary ICT tools and internet access. This approach facilitated data collection while accommodating the varied circumstances of Kinyarwanda teachers in the district.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

Asked questions reflected research objectives, in the sake of finding the reason why students have ambiguities in discovering the adjectival noun in a sentence. They also wanted to check understanding of the definition of the adjectival noun, in order to clearly expose this ambiguity. Discussions highlight the ambiguity in defining and discovering this word class in a sentence, in concordance with what the literature review presents.

4.1 Results from Students

Students who answered questions were 58, coming from three schools, senior five and senior six as indicated in the following table:

Table 1
School Combination

		Combinations		Total
		LFK	LKK	
School	GS BISIKA	19	0	19
	GS GIHUKU	0	6	6
	COLLEGE DE REBERO	12	21	33
Total		31	27	58

A significant number of respondents came from College de Rebero, particularly from the LFK combination, where Literature French and Kinyarwanda are major subjects. Conversely, the LKK combination involves Literature Kinyarwanda and Kiswahili as major subjects. During the study, students were tasked with identifying the part of speech of underlined words suspected to be "izina ntera" (adjectival nouns). These words encompassed various forms previously discussed as belonging to this word category. Questions were many, but among them, students answered as follows:

Nge ndabona uyu mwana w' umugoyi yambaye umwenda w' umutirano kandi ni inyangamugayo cyane.
(I see this child *from bugoyi* wearing a *borrowed* cloth and even he/she is a very *honest* one)

Table 2

How Students Assigned a Word Class to "Umugoyi"

	Frequency	Percent
Izina ntera (adjectival noun)	14	24.1
Izina rusange (Common noun)	8	13.8
Izina bwite (proper noun)	29	50.0
Izina (noun)	5	8.6
Ubundi bwoko (other category)	2	3.4
Total	58	100.0

With this table, "umugoyi" was said to be an adjectival noun with an average of 24.1%, proper noun 50% and common noun 13.8%. We are referring to the averages of adjectival noun (the correct one) and the common noun (as where the misunderstanding stands). This misunderstanding relies on the saying that "umwana w'umugoyi" should be interpreted as "a son/daughter of a Bugoyi person" which results in a common noun (the correctness of 13.8%), whereas "a Bugoyi child" which results in an adjectival noun (the correctness of 24.1%). The other answers is not considered (proper noun) because there was no feature of it should bring ambiguity.

Table 3

How Students Assigned a Word Class to "Umutirano"

	Frequency	Percent
Izina ntera (adjectival noun)	22	37.9
Izina rusange (Common noun)	3	5.2
izina mvanshinga (noun derived from a verb)	10	17.2
Ubundi bwoko (other category)	23	39.7
Total	58	100.0

In the table, 37.9% representing the answer "adjectival noun" is correct. There was no misunderstanding because the given word referred to the real cloth immediately. There was no ambiguity in the sentence, however 17.2% calls it a derivative noun, because it is a derivation from a verb "gutiira (to borrow)". In Kinyarwanda, a derivative noun is not a word class. This made respondents to answer by 39.7% by giving other category, to mean that they have misunderstood the category.

Table 4

How Students Assigned a Word Class to "Inyangamugayo"

	Frequency	Percent
Izina ntera (adjectival noun)	3	5.2
Izina rusange (Common noun)	9	15.5
Izina (noun)	7	12.1
izina mvanshinga (derived noun)	2	3.4
Ubundi bwoko (other category)	37	63.8
Total	58	100.0

The word's category of "inyangamugayo" is 5.2% correct (the real answer), incorrectly the rest. However, 15.5% is incorrect but may bring misunderstanding because of the omission of a possessive adjective. The other number (12.1% came because there was no clear understanding, resulting in staying on the half of the answer, while 63.8% have gone out of subject.

The first question appeared to be describing how students identify words believed to be in the "adjectival noun" category, specifically the second structure as discussed in the literature review. Despite this focus, only 22.4% of the respondents correctly identified these words as adjectival nouns, while the remaining 77.6% categorized them as belonging to other parts of speech.

This discrepancy suggests that students are encountering difficulty in distinguishing adjectival nouns (second structure) from other word classes, often confusing them with real nouns, whether proper or common nouns.

Interestingly, the majority of students are familiar with the concept that "an adjectival noun" refers to an adjective of quality that has taken an augment. This understanding is reflected in the responses to questions posed during the study. Below is a table summarizing the answers provided:

Abato imbere, **abakuru** inyuma, **abagufi** na bo baze mbere y' **abanini** muri iki cyumba.
(**Small ones** in front, **old ones** behind, and also **short ones** come before **big ones** in this room)

Table 5

How students assigned a word class to "Abato"

	umubare	ijanisha	Ijanisha ribanza	Igiteranyo cy'amajanja
Izina ntera	53	91.4	91.4	91.4
Izina rusange	4	6.9	6.9	98.3
Ubundi bwoko	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Igiteranyo	58	100.0	100.0	

This table presents the results from the second sentence containing the word class given in literature review as the first structure of an adjectival noun. These results show that 91.4% gave the correct answer, according to the first structure. With the second structure, 6.9% gave the other answer which is also correct, but with minority.

Table 6

How Students Assigned a Word Class to "Abakuru"

	umubare	ijanisha	Ijanisha ribanza	Igiteranyo cy'amajanja
Izina ntera	53	91.4	91.4	91.4
Izina rusange	2	3.4	3.4	94.8
Izina bwite	1	1.7	1.7	96.6
Ubundi bwoko	2	3.4	3.4	100.0
Igiteranyo	58	100.0	100.0	

The table above also discusses results of the first structure of an adjectival noun, where also 91.4% confirm that the word is an adjectival noun, and 3.4% gives the other counterpart. To this, we find that a great understanding was put on the first structure, not on the second one.

Table 7

How students assigned a word class to "Abagufi"

	umubare	ijanisha	Ijanisha ribanza	Igiteranyo cy'amajanja
Izina ntera	51	87.9	87.9	87.9
Izina rusange	1	1.7	1.7	89.7
Izina	1	1.7	1.7	91.4
Ubundi bwoko	5	8.6	8.6	100.0
Igiteranyo	58	100.0	100.0	

A clear comprehension is put on the second structure of the adjectival noun, as even "abagufi" deriving from the adjective of quality "bagufi" has been argued to be the real adjectival noun, because of 87.9% of the agreement, while its counterpart has 1.7%. Another big number is "other category" resulting in 8.6% of responses, but not emerging.

Table 8*How students assigned a word class to “Abanini”*

	umubare	ijanisha	Ijanisha ribanza	Igiteranyo cy'amajanja
Izina ntera	52	89.7	89.7	89.7
Izina rusange	3	5.2	5.2	94.8
Ubundi bwoko	3	5.2	5.2	100.0
Igiteranyo	58	100.0	100.0	

The word “abanini” is an adjective of quality (banini) with the augment, a result of the first structure of an adjectival noun. Its corresponding answer is summarized in 89.7%, while its counterpart has got 5.2%. These results are not contradicting the others above, because of the reason behind.

In the second sentence, it's noteworthy that 90% of respondents indicated that the words in question belong to the category of "adjectival noun," specifically identifying this category with the structure described as structure one (an adjective that has taken an augment). Conversely, the second structure (a noun that modifies another noun) was recognized by students as belonging to the category of "izina ntera" at the extent of 10% only.

When asked to define the word category "izina ntera," students' responses predominantly focused on two main structures: one being "an adjective that has taken an augment," and the other being "a noun that modifies another noun." Their collective definition emphasized that "izina ntera" is a word that resembles a noun but differs in its usage within a sentence, or it is an adjective that has undergone augmentation.

According to students, a word will be assigned to be “izina ntera” when it is an adjective of quality that has taken an augment. On the other hand, an adjective of quality which takes an augment becomes a noun (proper noun), not “adjectival noun” (Bizimana, 1998; Kabayiza et al., 2010; Zorc & Nibagwire, 2007; Nsanabiga & Twilingiyimana, 2015). This is because at this time, it is functioning as a noun. It does not modify a noun anymore, but it replaces it. Here it has the morphologic structure of a noun, but the function is different from the one assigned by the combination of a noun (izina) and an adjective of quality (ntera) which give birth to this new word category “adjectival noun” (izina ntera) in Kinyarwanda. As results show, the word that is not known to be “izina ntera” as stated by researchers is the one which meets all requirements of being found in this word class “Adjectival noun”.

This shows that this word class should be emphasized so that it becomes popular to students, because it is not yet. In textbooks, it must be well structured and explained, in order to be understood well. The discrepancy highlighted in the results suggests that the word known and recognized by researchers as an adjectival noun does not meet all the criteria perceived by students for classification within this category. This underscores the importance of emphasizing and popularizing the concept of adjectival nouns among students. Textbooks must provide clear and structured explanations to facilitate better comprehension and correct usage of adjectival nouns in Kinyarwanda grammar. By doing so, students can develop a clearer understanding of the distinctions between adjectival nouns and other word classes, particularly those involving adjectives and nouns that undergo augmentations.

4.2 Results from Teachers

Thirty teachers were asked questions also reflecting on how the said word class is taught and how textbooks explain it. However, we found the difference. Teachers were asked some same questions and other different from students' questions. Question one was the same as students':

Nge ndabona uyu mwana w' **umugoyi** yambaye umwenda w' **umutirano** kandi ni **inyangamugayo** cyane.
(For me, I see this child from **Bagoyi tribe** wearing a **borrowed** cloth and he/she is a very **honest one**)

The answers came in percentages (in red it is adjectival noun, in blue is common noun) like the following:

On the word “umugoyi” (one from Bagoyi tribe), 21 teachers with the percentage of 70% said the target category, but 9 among them with 30% gave another category which is “common noun”, in the following illustration:

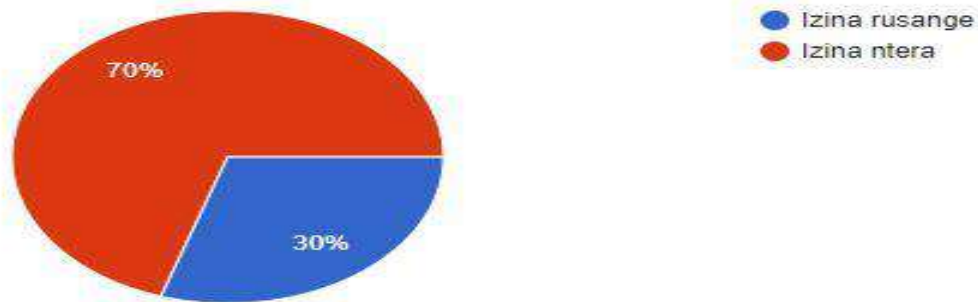


Figure 1
Results for “umugoyi”

On the word “umutirano” (borrowed one), 23 teachers with the percentage of 76.7% said the target category, but 7 resulting in 23.3% among them gave another category “a common noun”, below is its illustration:

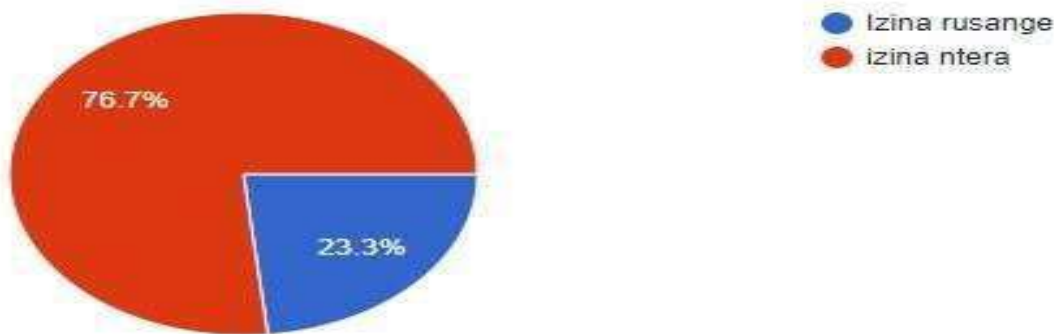


Figure 2
Results for “umutirano”

On the word “inyangamugayo” (honest one), only 12 teachers resulting in 40% gave the research word category (izina ntera), but 18 resulting in 60% among them gave the other category “common noun”, see the diagram below:



Figure 3
Results for “inyangamugayo”

It's evident from this research findings that the definition of the adjectival noun category in Kinyarwanda grammar contributes to misunderstandings in teaching and learning. The discrepancies observed between textbooks and research books regarding this category's definition highlight inconsistencies that can confuse both teachers and students.

Moreover, this study reveals that the structure involving an adjective that has taken an augment is the more widely recognized and accepted form of adjectival noun among teachers. This consensus among educators is reflected in their responses to the questions posed to them.

By comparing these responses with those of students, your research can pinpoint where these misunderstandings originate and how they propagate through educational practices. The prevalent belief among teachers that adjectival nouns primarily consist of adjectives that have taken augments underscores the need for clarity and alignment in educational materials and instructional practices.

Addressing these discrepancies through improved definitions in textbooks and enhanced teacher training can significantly enhance the teaching and learning of adjectival nouns in Kinyarwanda grammar. This alignment would ensure that both educators and learners have a consistent understanding of this linguistic category, thereby reducing confusion and improving educational outcomes.

Abato imbere, **abakuru** inyuma, **abagufi** na bo baze mbere y'**abanini** muri iki cyumba turimo.
(*Small ones in front, old ones behind, short ones also come before big ones in this room*)

In this question, words that were asked are in the first structure of adjectival noun. In answers, blue color stands for “izina ntera” (adjectival noun), the answer from 22 teachers, and red color stands for “izina rusange” (common noun) the results from 8 teacher respondents.

On the word “abato”, 22 teacher respondents with the estimation of 73.3% said that it is the adjectival noun, but other 8 for 26.7% called it the common noun. Here is the diagram:

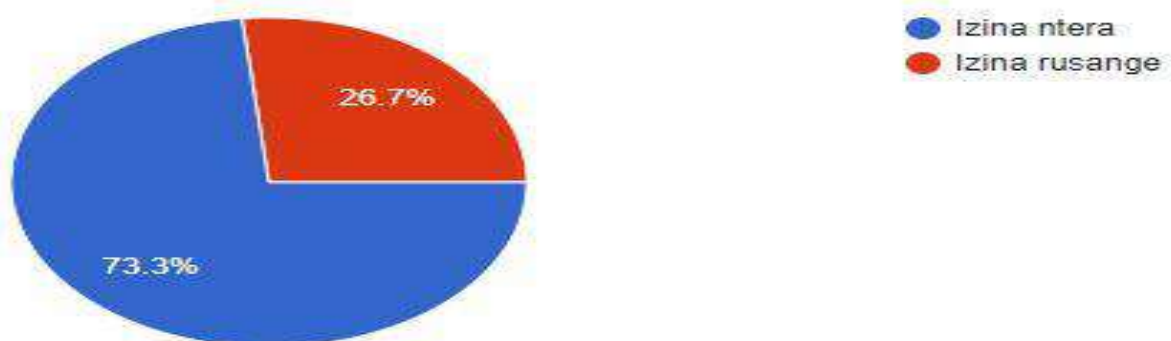


Figure 4
Results for “abato”

On the word “abakuru”, 21 estimated to be 70% of teacher respondents said that it is the adjectival noun, but the other 9 with the percentage of 30% called it the common noun, below is the illustration diagram:

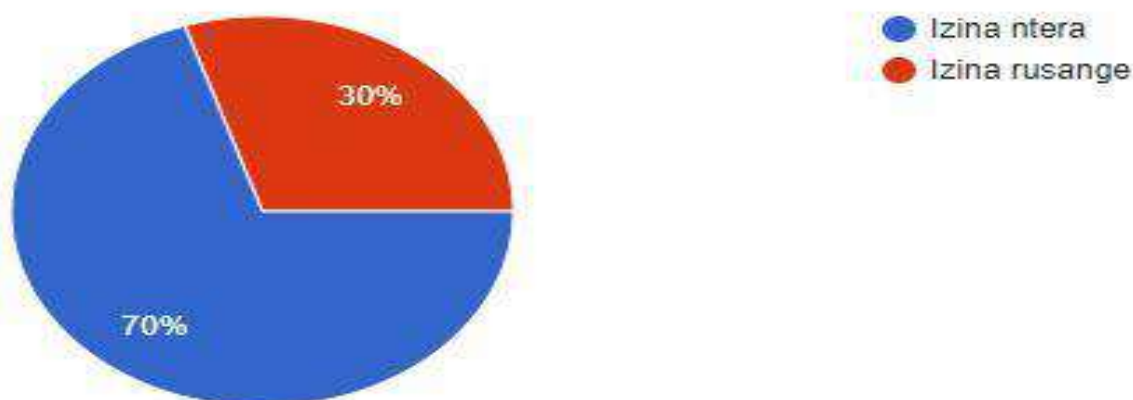


Figure 5
Results for “abakuru”

On words “abagufi” and “abanini”, answers are the same. Twenty three (23) teacher respondents corresponding to 76.7% assigned these words to belong to adjectival noun category, but other seven (7) with the percentage of 23.3% put the word in common noun category. Here there is a diagram for more details:

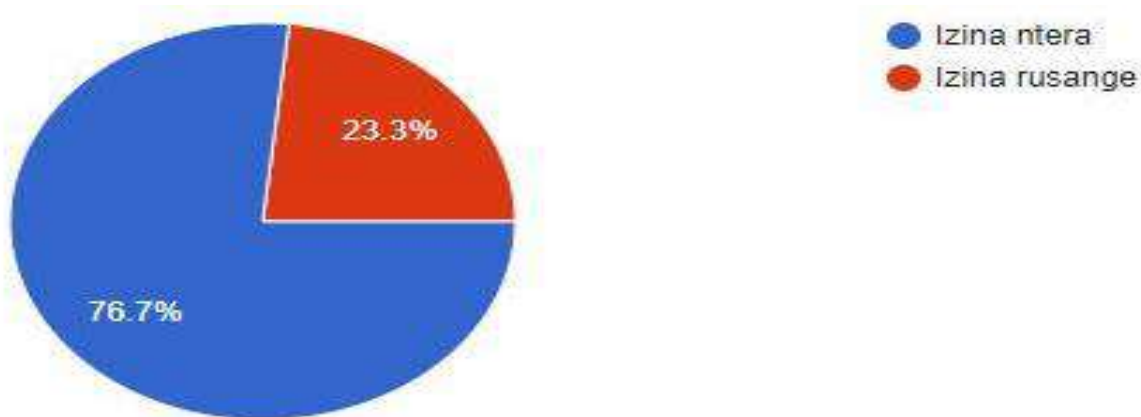


Figure 6
Results for “abagufi” and “abanini”

As seen in the literature review, researchers say that the first structure is not “izina ntera”, but a noun. Reason why answers in red color say that it is a common noun. Textbooks call this form “izina ntera”, the reason why answers in blue color call it the same.

The definition of this word category was asked to teachers, in order to evaluate if there are two main structures of this word category. However, only 2 teachers gave the definition which talks about the second structure. They said “It is a noun that describes another noun and assigns on it tribe, nationality, color or shape, and they are connected by using a possessive adjective”.

This word category presents difficulties, misunderstandings and ambiguity in its definition. This does not help students to understand it. Research books give one structure, but textbooks prepared for students in primary and secondary give two structures, and these textbooks were prepared by using research books. This means that during the preparation of textbooks, writers refused the change and maintained the previous definition, which says that “an adjectival noun (izina ntera)” is an adjective that has taken an augment, and they also considered what is written in research books. They did not decide (between the first structure and the second structure of an adjectival noun) on what must be called “izina ntera” in Kinyarwanda grammar.

Basing on the structure and function, the adjective that has taken an augment does not modify a noun, but it replaces it. This means that it will not be found among noun modifiers. This means that it is not “izina ntera” but it is a noun (common noun) as its use in a sentence does not differ from the noun’s use.

The definition of “izina ntera” should be the following:

“Izina ntera is a noun that modifies another noun and assigns to it quality (1), country (or nationality) (2), color (3) or tribe (4), or material (5) used to make a thing (noun), connected to it by an associative (possessive adjective). It should be a single (a) or complex (b) noun, agree(i) or not agree(ii) with the noun it modifies by using prefixes specific to a noun it modifies and having an augment (I) or not (II).

Examples:

Umugabo w’**igisambo**^{1/a/ii/I} (a man who is greedy), umwana w’**umukinnyi**^{1/a/i/I} (a child who plays), ingwe y’**ingore**^{1/a/i/I} (a leopard which is female)

Umwana w’**umugande**^{2/a/i/I} (a child who is Ugandan), terefone y’**inshinwa**^{2/a/i/I} (a phone which is Chinese), isaha y’**imbirigi**^{2/a/i/I} (a watch which is Belgian)

Ishati y’**umutuku**^{3/a/ii/I} (a shirt which is red), isahani y’**umweru**^{3/a/ii/I} (a plate which is white), ikoti ry’**umukara**^{3/a/ii/I} (a coat which is black)

Umwana w'umugoyi^{4/a/i/I} (a child from bugoyi), itabi ry'irigoyi^{4/a/i/I} (a tobacco which is from bugoyi), inka y'ingoyi^{4/a/i/I} (a cow which is from bugoyi)

Umushyitsi w'umunyacyubahiro^{1/b/i/I} (a visitor of honor), umugore w'inkandagirabitabo^{1/b/ii/I} (a woman who is illiterate)

Umuhanda wa kaburimbo^{5/a/ii/II} (A road which is tarmac), Ikamyo ya rukururana^{1/a/ii/II} (A vehicle with two vehicles), Igikombe cya zahabu^{5/a/ii/II} (A cup which is golden)

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

As it was shown by research findings, this word category has not been understood by students, because of different definitions and meanings given to it, which brings confusion. Two structures of this category are not understood at the same level. The structure which is understood well to be “izina ntera” is the one which is wrong, according to researchers and reality. The reality says that to be a noun (izina) and an adjective of quality (ntera) and become “izina ntera” at the same time, requires that this word class should be able to **meet the morphologic structure of a Kinyarwanda noun**, and the function should be of **modifying a noun**. The second structure of adjectival noun, is the one which meets the requirements, even if it is not the one which is clearly understood.

The definition emphasizes that "izina ntera" functions specifically to modify another noun, distinguishing it from a standalone noun (izina) or an adjective that has taken an augment. Using this definition, no other misunderstanding should come, because examples are also given and the meaning (definition) is well structured.

A traditionalism culture is kept in Kinyarwanda textbooks, as the qualifying adjective which has taken an augment results in an “adjectival noun”. The structure given by Bizimana in 1998 was half recognized, to the extent that till now the new word category has got two different structures with different use in a sentence.

Results have shown that the traditional structure is still highly understood, but the current one is not, even if both are written in Kinyarwanda textbooks. The second structure also still has some unclear settings, however, this research has tried to give another understanding on its definition and some examples to base on, so that it may become more popular in schools. With this regard, teachers should accept change and adapt to the new structure for language enhancement.

5.2 Recommendations

With results of this research, here are recommendations which should enhance Kinyarwanda grammar at secondary level. Textbooks should stop confusing learners about this word category, they should give one structure of this word class, not two structures. Grammarians and teachers should accept change. Seminars and training should be adopted as a result of enhancement and change. Those who are in charge of Kinyarwanda textbooks preparation should stand on one side, and write one theme about “izina ntera”, because these confusions are ones that do not allow learners to understand well what izina ntera is about.

Grammarians and Kinyarwanda language developers like Ministry of Youth and Culture, Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy, Ministry of education, Rwanda Education Board, Rwanda National Examination and Inspection Authority and University of Rwanda, should give directions to be followed in assigning Kinyarwanda word categories, without confusing students, because grammar and language change as long as the language develops. Research should continue on Kinyarwanda grammar, especially on parts of speech in order to update and explain well all parts of speech, to put in innovation and to correct where there is a mistake. Students should keep on doing research and asking questions in order to understand well Kinyarwanda grammar.

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