

The shinyiha adjective as a distinct lexical category
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The question of how to identify and characterize lexical categories in Bantu languages has always been a challenging problem in Bantu Linguistics. This study examines the adjective as a lexical category in shinyiha in order to show its distinctive status. It applies morph syntactic and semantic criteria to identify and characterize lexical items that deserve to be recognized as adjectives in shinyiha. In doing so, the study uses dual representation hypothesis, which combines the classical approach (i.e., Phrase Structure Grammar) and the Cognitive Approach (i.e., Prototype theory). Data about morphosyntactic distribution and semantic properties were obtained from both primary sources through elicitation and Focus Group Discussion and secondary sources (i.e., oral literature texts). The study in shinyiha, an adjective consists of a root and, morphosyntactically appears with or without an overt prefix and/or augment. The co-occurrence of adjectives is governed by semantic rules. It is argued that, there is a covert copula between each adjective in sequence such that each adjective modifies the head noun independently. Therefore, a sequence of adjectives cannot form a phrase. In shinyiha, it is uncommon, though not ungrammatical, to pile up adjectives against one noun without explicitly showing concatenation of the epithets. In addition to what are claimed to be universal semantic properties (i.e., gradability, modification, semantic oppositions), certain adjectives are time bound in expressing property concepts. It is observed that, there is no such thing as strict core semantic classes since adjectives are capable of expressing various meanings which cannot be strictly confined to definite classes, The study concludes that based on semantic and morphosyntactic properties (i.e., the presence of category establishing morphology e.g., agreement with the head noun) and category establishing morphology (e.g., derivation of verb to adjective, adjective to abstract noun etc.), Shinyiha adjective is a distinct lexical category.