
Bases of words in Kinyarwanda: Ambiguity in examinations

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Abstract: Considering the Questions that are prepared in the Kinyarwanda examinations and the ways of marking them, the concept of “base” is ambiguous. The question is formulated as follows: “Mention the bases of the following/underlined words.” Through this question, it is wondered if all words have “bases” and if all words have such morpheme. Additionally, in some words, such a morpheme is called “root”. Different materials differentiate the base and root of words saying that the base comes from words like nouns, mixed nouns, adjectives, and pronouns whilst the root is found on the verb and other words formed from it. In marking, when a candidate answers a base in the place of a root, he is not awarded marks, because he is supposed to know that there is a place where he must present the base, and root in the other place, depending on the type of word. For that, researchers wonder the reasons why examiners ask to mention the bases of the words when they include some words that have roots. This study “*Bases of Words in Kinyarwanda: Ambiguity in Examinations*”, first, discusses all words that have bases, followed by words that have roots. Further, it discusses the difference between base and root. It also presents the relationship between base and root and ends with the decision for a term that should be used in all questions related to this topic, that term may be used to help the candidates to identify if their answers should be “base or root”.

Keywords: Base, Kinyarwanda, Root, Stem, Word

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1. Introduction

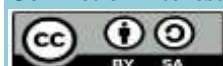
The word “Kinyarwanda”, is understood as a language that has its root in Rwanda, it is a combination of Rwandan dialects which joins all Rwandans and their neighbours without the intervention of an interpreter (Bizimana, 1998). That is to say that, Kinyarwanda is a traditional language of Rwandans, it started to be used during the reign of Gihanga Ngomijana, a former Rwandan King and the founder of the Rwandan Kingdom. In the Kinyarwanda language, the term “word” refers to the combination of sounds (they come from the signs used in written form), which form a basic unit of a sentence that carries a meaning and function in a sentence. A person gets a word by understanding it when it is spoken, and by reading it when it is written (Bizimana, 1998: 75). This is applied in grammatical context.

In a normal situation, a word may be a combination of many words that form a single sentence or many sentences that form an idea of someone. For example, a person can say: “Mureke twumve ijambo rya Nyakubahwa Perezida wa Repubulika (Let us hear the speech of H.E the President of the Republic)” or: “Uvuze ijambo ryiza! (You have said a wonderful word!)” There is also a time when they say that: “Ijabo riduhe ijambo (virility gives us the speech).” At this time, the meaning that is given to the word is not related to the one from grammatical concepts. In this way, they instead mention “message” or “idea” which someone is addressing by using many words instead of a single word, which Bizimana (1998: 75) takes as a small part in a sentence that carries a specific meaning.

Grammatically, when a word stands alone, it has morphemes. when it is combined with others (in a sentence), it contains a function. Referring to the structure of words (ways of their analysis), we find that words are divided into two categories.

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Which are: “Variable words and invariable words (Amagambo agoragozwa n’atagoragozwa)”. On this point, according to the study of Bizimana on those two categories of words, they may be namely analysed and unanalysed words (amagambo asesengurika n’amagambo adasesengurika), because he mentioned those to show that some words can be analysed via morphology, whilst others cannot. Based on their uses in sentences, they do not show the relationship with other words accompanied. For that, Coupez (1980: 4461-467) mentions those two categories as “Changeable and Unchangeable words (amagambo ahinduka n’adahinduka)”.

Words that can be analysed are those which have pre-initials and infixes and others which have suffixes and finals. However, words that cannot be analysed are those which cannot be separated with their pre-initials, suffixes, or finals (Bizimana, 1998: 77). Here, we can say that words that could be analysed, they must have morphemes like initials or prefixes that allow their relationship with other words in a sentence. Those morphemes should be active, not passive. Whilst unanalysed words do not have such morphemes, even when one of those morphemes is present, it is passive. Those words are formed through normal words which, are normally, analysed by having an invariable initial. Words that are analysed may be the basis of the relationship between words in a sentence meanwhile, those which are not analysed should not be the basis of that relationship.

Through these analyses, it is found out different morphemes in a word. Bizimana (1998: 77) mentions that variable words have pre-initials and infixes, and they may have suffixes and finals, this means that those morphemes have other segments that are attached to them. For that, those segments are the ones that are fundamental to a word, it is called “**base**”. He (ibid: 83) defines a base as a fundamental morpheme of the word and always ends with a vowel. Concerning the meaning given by Bizimana, all fundamental morphemes of analysed words cannot be called “base”, because some categories of analysed words have fundamental morphemes which do not end with a vowel, that segment is called “root”.

2. Statement of the problem

Amongst the questions asked in examinations of Kinyarwanda, when they want to evaluate the fundamental morphemes of words, they ask that: “Mention or write the bases of the following or underlined words.” (REB, 2013, 2017 & 2019). When candidates are asked that kind of question, it means that when they reach to the fundamental morpheme of any word, they should mention it (base or root). Sometimes, a candidate fails to mention it because a question does not clearly mention the expected answer. In this study, the following questions will be answered: What is a base in Kinyarwanda? What is a root? Do all words in Kinyarwanda have a base? Do all bases of words in Kinyarwanda have the same structure? What is the difference between the root and base of words? What is the term that can be used in place of all morphemes instead of base? And how can a question be asked, to remove ambiguity?

3. Objectives of the study

This study aims to find out, according to research that has been made, the difference and relationship between base and root. It also clearly shows the ways of mentioning the base and root of words of Kinyarwanda in one word which combines both aspects, to help examiners to ask about it and the candidate may easily know to give a correct answer between base and root, and remove ambiguity. Further, it mentions the ways of clarifying the base or root of a word that has two bases or two roots.

4. Literature review

In Kinyarwanda, some words may be analysed. To analyse a word means to find out its small morphemes which are meaningful to the word. That content is covered in the course of **morphology**, the course that deals with the structure of word segments. Those segments are called “morphemes”. Morphemes are divided into two categories, which are segmental morphology and morphotonemes (Uturemajambo nteme n’Uturemajambo saku), (Bizimana, 1998:78). Segmental morphology is classified into any categories, but there is one morpheme which is the fundamental of a whole word, and others come to accompany it. Those remaining morphemes have their addition on the use of a word in a sentence or with other words.

When we say pre-initials and finals, it is very clear that one should come before or on the top while the other should come at the end. On this point, a person can ask himself the following questions: Which word takes pre-initials? Which word that takes finals? Do all words take both pre-initials and finals? Which morpheme is between these two segments (pre-initials and finals)? Morphemes that do not add extra meaning to the word but decide or dictate the uses or relationship of that word with others that are used together in a sentence, are called “affixes (Inyomeke)”. It is clear that the term affixes (inyomeke) shows the ways those morphemes are affixed to the word in temporary ways, but the word uses them because of its importance in a sentence.

Fundamental morpheme is the umbrella of the meaning of a word. This means that it has the message which is delivered by that word or what the word wants to define, which is called the “basic morpheme (akaremajambo muzi)”. To use correctly that word with others, it needs an affix. A fundamental morpheme is the one that needs an affix, not an affix that needs it because it carries a meaning while an affix itself does not have the meaning. Jouannet (1983:192-194) mentions that in word formation in Kinyarwanda, each word should have a morpheme that shows the meaning of the word. That morpheme is called “radical (root)” in the French language, it may have other morphemes attached to it, called “Affixes”.

According to Kinyarwanda dictionary, if a person wants to check the meaning of any analysed word, s/he firstly needs to know its fundamental morpheme and then s/he can continue to check it in a dictionary by using the alphabet of that morpheme (IRST, 1989). Basic morphemes are divided into two categories, depending on the word they present. There is a basic morpheme that ends the word. This morpheme is found in the principal words which are nouns, adjectives, mixed nouns, and pronouns (izina, ntera, izina ntera and ibinyazina). That morpheme is called “base (igicumbi)” (Bizimana, 1998:83,185). There is another basic morpheme which does not end a word. It appears on words that have finals, these are words that are nearly related to the verb. In this category, there are verbs (inshinga) and bitypes (inkomahabiri) like infinitive, autonome, and gerund (imbundo, ikinyanshinga and inkore) (ibid, 210-212). Bizimana (1998: 79) also mentions that among the morphemes, they are base (igicumbi), root (umuzi), and stem (intima). Both base and root are the fundamental morphemes of words, but their difference depends on the words they represent.

The root is a fundamental morpheme of a word that needs a final. The root may be independent or dependent. Independent root may be used without adding any suffix. Whilst the dependent root needs a suffix in its use. In written form, an asterisk should be placed before writing a dependent root (ibid: 83). Bizimana differentiates root and base by defining root as a fundamental morpheme of a word that needs a final, whilst the base is a fundamental morpheme of a word that does not need a final. For that, this study is not concerned with unanalysed words because its focus is the targeted morpheme of a word. This study does not analyse all categories of morphemes, it only analyses one morpheme, mentions how that morpheme is found in all analysable words, shows how that morpheme is appeared in different forms based on the word it presents, and also presents all categories of analysable words. The study also presents the ways a fundamental morpheme may vary due to other morphemes that are used together in a single word. The remaining categories of morphemes will only be used to mention fundamental morphemes.

4.1. Base

The base is a fundamental morpheme of a word. It always ends with a vowel (Bizimana, 1998: 83). The author continues that to find out that morpheme, we must change the word into different possible classes or compare it with other words that have the same origin. He (ibid: 78) also mentions that, in the case of word variation, a person puts that word into different classes, a segment that remains constant is the fundamental segment of that word. That unchangeable segment is called “base” (REB, 2017: 23).

Example:

A word “ikigege” may be **ibigege, akagege, utugege, urugege, ubugege**. All those words have a common part, which is **-gega**.

4.2. Words that have bases

The base is a fundamental morpheme of a principal word. Principal word is a type of word that shows everything that happens, it has initials, and it is a fundamental of relationships. It is followed by other words which explain it which have the same initials. Principal words are nouns, adjectives, and Mixed nouns (amazina, ntera and amazina ntera) (REB, 2017: 150).

4.2.1. Noun (Izina)

Noun is a word that is normally characterized by augment, prefix, and base. It is fundamental to a sentence, in its usage. it is further the fundamental of the relationships of words (Bizimana, 1998: 150).

i. Bases of Native Nouns

Nouns have different categories of bases. Bizimana (1998: 159) mentions that the base of a word may be located in one class or many. To find a base of a noun requires changing that word from one class to another, and the unchangeable segment which remains is the base. That unchangeable segment is the one that Kinyarwanda dictionary refers to, in the case of explaining words (Coupez, Kamanzi & Bizimana, 2005). Some complete words have all three morphemes that should be had by word (Augment, prefix, and base). Some bases of words only have one syllable which comes from the complete names.

Examples:

Ibiro: -ro	Umura: -ra
Umubu: -bu	Umusa: -sa
Umuvu: -vu	Igiti: -ti
Umuba: -ba	Uruvu: -vu
Ikiro: -ro	Urugo: -go
Amabya: -bya	

There are other bases that have many syllables.

Examples:

Umugabo: -gabo	Urugi: -ugi
Umwobo: -obo	Inzuho: -uho
Icyayi: -ayi	Ubuki: -uki
Ikijumba: -jumba	Umwungeri: -ungeri
Imiyaga: -yaga	Umunyu: -unyu
Amazi: -zi	Igitebo: -tebo

Some words do not have all morphemes while they have bases. Many times, those words present the relationships between people. Those words have an initial and base.

Examples:

Mushiki: -shiki	Mubyara: -byara
Musaza: -saza	Muramu: -ramu
Murumuna: -rumuna	Mukuru: -kuru (this is the base of adjective, “cfr adjective”)

Other words have prefixes that do not appear in the word. Someone can think that those words are only formed by pre-initial and base. Those kinds of words are likely to be classified in the word class, groups five and nine (inteko ya 5 and 9).

Examples:

Ifi: -fi	Isuka: -suka	Isinde: -sinde
Isi: -si	Ikara: -kara	Igare: -gare
Ivi: -vi	Ibano: -bano	Isasu: -sasu
Igi: -gi	Ibati: -bati	Itara: -tara
Ivu: -vu	Irimbi: -rimbi	Ihwa: -hwa
Iriba: -riba	Ishuri: -shuri	

Some words do not have augment and prefixes. Those words only remain with the base. For that, when they ask a candidate to mention a base, s/he automatically writes that word.

Examples:

Some words can be used in all classes. The following words present the relationship of derivation (Coupez, 1981: 217).

Adds that the words “data” and “mother” (father and mother) are formed from the repetition of incomplete base “-ta” and “-ma”.

Examples: Data: **-data**, So: **-so**, Se: **-se**, Mama: **-mama**, Nyoko: **-nyoko**, Nyina: **-nyina**

Other words which mention materials: Dodo: **-dodo**, Feri: **-feri**, Byeri: **-byeri**, Radiyo: **-radiyo** Terefone: **-terefone** Tereviziyo: **-tereviziyo**

i. Bases of Foreign Nouns

Foreigner nouns are words that are borrowed from other languages and take the same structure as Kinyarwanda's original words. Those words should take the relationship of morphemes and have bases.

Examples:

Ishati: -shati	Umugati: -gati	Ikiyiko: -yiko
Ishuri: -shuri	Umushoferi: -shoferi	Umusumari: -sumari
Isaha: -saha	Ipatanti: -patanti	Ishu: -shu
Imodoka: -modoka	Ipantaro: -pantaro	Ibendera: -bendera

Ipine: -pine	Ikariso: -kariso	Ifaranga: -faranga
Ikiringiti: -ringiti	Isafuriya: -safuriya	Isukari: -sukari
Indege: -dege	Urupapuro: -papuro	Akabati: -bati
Isahani: -sahani		

Note: The way of mentioning the meaning of any word in the Kinyarwanda dictionary, they refer to the base of it and add a number. That number is mentioning a class of the mentioned word.

Example:

-gabo 1= umugabo	-tebo 12= agatebo
-gabo 2= abagabo	-unyu 7= icyunyu
-gabo 13= utugabo	

The research of Bizimama (1998:153-154) gives more examples about it.

ii. Base which magnetized with initial

This kind of base is found in nouns which have two initials. The first initial mentions a class that shows a relationship while the second magnetised with the base to form a new base (Bizimana, 1998: 161).

Examples:

Umuntu: -ntu	Ingurube: -gurube	Ingeri: -geri
Ubumuntu: -muntu	Ikingurube: -ngurube	Ubungeri: -ngeri
Ingwe: -gwe	Ukwaha: -aha	Inyegamo: -egamo
Ubungwe: -ngwe	Inkwaha: -kwaha	Umunyegamo: -nyegamo

iii. Repetitive Base

In words, base can be repetitive itself or doubled together with itinal (Bizimana, 1998: 162). All those bases are not found in nouns that do not have repetitive bases, because some repetitive bases exist while there is no existence of the first noun in Kinyarwanda.

Examples:

a. Repetitive base by itself

Ikigori: -gori	Ikigorigori: -gorigori
Insore: -sore	Insoresore: -soresore
Uruzungu: -zungu	Uruzunguzungu: -zunguzungu
Ubutumba: -tumba	Ubutumbatumba: -tumbatumba
Igisembe: -sembe	Igisembesembe: -sembesembe
Ikijumba: -jumba	Imijumbajumba: -jumbajumba
Ubutumba: -tumba	Ubutumbatumba: -tumbatumba

Igikobokobo: **-kobokobo** (there is no existance of the word “**igikobo**” in Kinyarwanda).

Umugwegwe: **-gwegwe** (there is no existance of the word “**umugwe**” in Kinyarwanda).

Igitete: **-tete** (there is no existance of the word “**igite**” in Kinyarwanda).

b. Repetitive base which magnetised with initial

i. Substitutive Pronoun (Ikinyazina ngenga)

This pronoun directs its meaning and explains the addresser, addressee, and receiver. When it is directed to the addressee, it can take variation into all classes. In the first and second persons and the first class of the third person, the base of this pronoun is “-e”, while the base of other classes of the third person is “-o” (Bizimana, 1998:185-187).

Examples:

Ng.1 bu: ge: -e	Ng.3: nt1: we: -e
Bw: twe: -e	nt2: bo: -o
	nt3: wo: -o
Ng.2 bu: wowe: -o, -e	nt4: yo: -o
Bw: mwe: -e	

ii. Precessive Pronoun (Ikinyazina mbanziriza)

It is a pronoun that replaces a word that can be the complement of a verb in a sentence. Its base is “-ô”.

Examples:

Icyo nshaka: -ô Izo naragiraga: -ô Abo twiganye: -ô

iii. Interpellative Pronoun (Ikinyazina mpamagazi)

This pronoun requests the receiver to come or to be ready to get a message. It is found in the second person, single and plural. Its base is “-a” (Ed. Bakame, 2010:90).

Examples:

Wa mugabo we: -a Mwa bagabo mwe: -a

Wa nka we: -a Mwa nka mwe: -a

Interpellative pronoun comes before the noun that is called, it causes that noun to lose its augment when it has it, and the noun is always followed by substitutive pronoun which has the base of “-e” Everything that is called, is taken as a human that is going to discuss with an addresser.

iv. Prefixal Pronoun (Ikinyazina mboneranteko)

This pronoun mentions the plural, big and small sizes of proper nouns. Its base is “-a”

Examples:

Baa Yakobo: -a Twa Kalisa: -a

Zaa magore: -a Zaa Mukara: -a

v. Connective Pronoun (Ikinyazina ngenera)

It is a pronoun that connects two words that have different relations. It has two bases which are “-a” and “-o”. The base ‘-a’ is used in a general manner while “-o” is used before the infinitive, preposition of place, and some adverbs of place which started by consonants (Ed. Bakame, 2010:191).

Examples:

Inkoni ya Gatare: -a	Inka ya Rumonyi: -a
Abana ba Butera: -a	Umwana wo mu muhanda: -o
Icyapa cyo kuri Nyirangarama: -o	Ikayi yo kwandikamo: -o
Abakobwa bo ku rurembo: -o	Ikote ryo kwambara: -o

vi. Connective-Substitutive Pronoun (Ikinyazina ngenera ngenga)

When a connective pronoun is followed by substitutive pronoun, they make a joint of one pronoun. This joint pronoun is found in all persons. It mentions at the same time container and containee. It is called connective-substitutive pronoun (Bizimana, 1998:193 & Ed. Bakame, 2010: 93). According to its status, this pronoun takes two bases.

Examples:

Umwana **wange**: u-a-n-gi-e Ukwezi **kwawo**: ku-a-u-o
 Inka **ye**: i-a-u-e Ingero **zacyo**: zi-a-ki-o
 Umukobwa **we**: u-a-u-e

When the connective pronoun is followed by substitutive pronoun of the first class, the connective-substitutive pronoun does not show its formation which is composed of two pronouns, it seems like it is formed by one pronoun. Bases of both pronouns are not present, there is a presence of one base of substitutive pronoun, both bases are presented while present all morphemes of the pronoun.

Examples:

Umugore **wa we**: umugore **we**: u-a-u-e Urugo **rwa we**: urugo **rwe**: ru-a-u-e
 Igiti **cya we**: igiti **ke**: ki-a-u-e Intama **za we**: intama **ze**: zi-a-u-e
 Amagambo **ya we**: amagambo **ye**: a-a-u-e

Variation of Connective-Substitutive Pronoun base

Some bases of the connective-substitutive pronouns have variation of the bases of their substitutive pronouns that follow the connective pronouns in the first and the second persons of plural.

Normal Morphology:

Umwana **watwe**: u-a-tu-e → Umwana wacu: u-a-**cu**
 Umwana **wamwe**: u-a-mu-e → Umwana wanyu: u-a-**nyu**

“-cu” and “-nyu” are the variations of the substitutive pronouns that follow the connective pronouns for making connective- substitutive pronoun. This time, prefix and base join together to form a variant that cannot be morphologically separated.

vii. Numeral Pronoun (Ikinyazina nyamubaro)

Numeral Pronoun explains a word by using numbers. Bases of numeral pronouns are seven: **-mwe, -biri, -tatu, -ne, -tanu, -tandatu, -rindwi**. The remaining numbers are nouns (Bizimana, 1998:198). A numeral pronoun is a pronoun that is used for presenting the number of materials. It starts from one to seven, while eight and above, are called “numeral nouns” because they have structures of nouns which are: augment, prefix, and base (Ed. Bakame, 2010:93).

Examples:

Umugabo **umwe**: **-mwe** Abakobwa **babiri**: **-biri**
 Imyaka **itatu**: **-tatu** Ubwato **butandatu**: **-tandatu**
 Amezi **ane**: **-ne** Ahantu **harindwi**: **-rindwi**
 Ibiraro **bitanu**: **-tanu**

Base Variation

In the tenth class, bases are : **-biri, -tatu, -ne, -tanu,** and **-tandatu** change to: **-byiri, -shatu, -nye, shanu** and **-sheshatu** (Bizimana, 1998:199).

Examples:

Inka ebyiri: **-byiri**
Inkoko eshatu: **-shatu**
Inkwavu enye: **-nye**

Ingurube eshanu: **-shanu**
Intare esheshatu: **-sheshatu**

Note: When it reaches to other numbers like eight, nine, and ten; that time, it is called common nouns, but when there are other numbers above ten added with numbers with bases of numeral pronouns, that time, the first number is a noun while the following is a numeral pronoun.

Examples:

Amakote cumi na rimwe: **-mwe**

Ubwato cumi na burindwi: **-rindwi**

Inka cumi n' eshanu: **-shanu**

Other nouns that mention numbers are found in the tens (numbers end with a single zero), where those nouns form a jointer, and they form their interrelation.

Examples:

Makumyabiri: Makumi abiri
Mirongwitatu: Mirongo itatu
Mirongwine: Mirongo ine
Mirongwitanu: Mirongo itanu

Mirongwitandatu: Mirongo itandatu
Mirongwirindwi: Mirongo irindwi
Mirongwinani: Mirongo inani
Mirongwikenda: Mirongo ikenda

Repetitive Bases

When a base is repeated as it is, it forms two words without any change.

Examples:

Mukore amatsinda ya **bane bane**

Bafunze ubutunguru **butanu butanu**

viii. Indefinite Prounoun (Ikinyazina ndafutura)

The indefinite pronoun has two crucial meanings. The first meaning mentions something different from the one talked about, while the second, meaning mentions something which is added to other(s) (Bizimana, 1998:194).

An indefinite pronoun is a word that accompanies a noun but does not clearly explain who is saying or said. They are categorised into two classes: Short and long indefinite pronouns “Ikinyazina ndafutura kigufi n’ikirekire” (Ed. BAKAME, 2010:94). Base of indefinite pronoun is “-ndi”

Examples:

Undi muntu: **-ndi**
Umuntu wundi: **-ndi**
Abandi bana: **-ndi**
Abana bandi: **-ndi**

Izindi nka: **-ndi**
Inka zindi: **-ndi**
Ahandi hantu: **-ndi**
Ahantu handi: **-ndi**

ix. Demonstrative Pronoun (Ikinyazina nyereka)

Demonstrative pronoun mentions and/or reminds what a word in which it describes, means. Generally, it comes before a word it describes (Bizimana, 1998:195). It is a word that shows or reminds an other word. It may not have a base, for that time, it is mentioned by an empty sign “-ø”, it has other bases like **-no, -o, -riya, -rya** or **-a** (Ed. Bakame, 2010:89).

Examples:

It shows something which is near to the interlocutors. Its base is “-ø”.

Uyu mwana: u-yu-ø

Aha hantu: a-ha-ø

Aba bakobwa: a-ba-ø

Iyi myambi: i-yi-ø

Izi nka: i-zi-ø

Aya mazi: a-ya-ø

It shows something which is only near to the receivers. Its base is “-o”.

Uwo mwana: u-u-o

Aho hantu: a-ha-o

Abo bakobwa: a-ba-o

Iyo myambi: i-i-o

Izo nka: i-zi-o

Ayo mazi: a-a-o

It shows something which is near to the sender. Its base is “-no”.

Uno mwana: u-no

Hano hantu: ha-no

Bano bakobwa: ba-no

It shows something which is far from the interlocutors. Its base is “-riya”.

Uriya mwana: u-riya Hariya hantu: ha-riya

Bariya bakobwa: ba-riya

It shows something which has been mentioned before by interlocutors. Its base is “-a”.

Wa mwana: u-a Ha hantu: ha-a

Ba bakobwa: ba-a

It shows something which already known by the interlocutors. Its base is “-rya”.

Urya mwana: u-rya Harya hantu: ha-rya

Barya bahungu: ba-rya

This pronoun has its way of taking assimilation in the class of place (Bizimana, 1998:195-198).

Iwacu **ino** ni heza.

Mu nzu **muno/umwo/ muriya** harashyushye.

Uryamye ku manwa **uku**?

I Kigali **iriya** narahatembeye.

x. Interrogative Pronoun (Ikinyazina kibaza/mbaza)

The Interrogative pronoun accompanies or replaces a word that it describes. It asks for its size, or its places (Bizimana, 1998:193). It is used to ask for an explanation of what is said. It is a word that accompanies nouns and asks some questions about them (Ed. Bakame, 2010:95). The base of this pronoun is “-he” followed by an interrogative question mark (?). When a base becomes “-ngahe”, it is called the cardinal interrogative pronoun. This Pronoun is a word that takes the same class as a word it describes. That is the reason why when it does not take the same class as that word, it is not a pronoun, it is another category of word.

Examples:

Uwuhe mwana: u-wu-**he**?

Abahe bagabo: a-ba-**he**?

Irihe shuri: i-ri-**he**

Ayahe mazi: a-a-**he**?

Ibiti bingahe: bi-**ngahe**?

Ahantu hangahe: ha-**ngahe**?

4.3. Root

A root is a fundamental morpheme of a word that needs a final (REB, 2017; Bizimana, 1998). It may stand alone, at that time, and may be used without adding a suffix. There is also another root that cannot stand alone, this root cannot be used without adding a suffix. In written form, a root that cannot stand alone follows an asterisk. To know the root of a word requires removing all additional morphemes, including prefixes and suffixes. An easy way of identifying the root of a word is to remove all initials and use the word in the imperative form, then remove all known suffixes and final. That times, it remains suffixes that are not known and checks if they may be replaced with others, if not invariable remaining segment is a root. To get a root in this way, requires to interchange of at least two suffixes for reaching to words that have the same meaning and share the origin.

Examples:

Bayimusaba: conjugated verb

If removed a and adds “e” object in which action works for, it remains **bayimusabe**

If removed normal objects of action, it remains **basaba**

If removed an initial which represents subject of action, it remains **saba**

If removed a final of verb, it remains **-sab-**

For that **-sab-** is a root of verb “**bayimusaba**” (Bizimana, 1998:83-89).

One of the examples Jouannet (1983:38) gives on the root is:

-seg- (gusega), means to be slim for a dog.

-seeg- (guseega), means begging.

Words that have root

Root mentions many changeable words but all those should share the relation with a verb. Those words are verbs, infinitives, autonome, gerund, and noun that is delivered from a verb (inshinga, imbundo, ikinyanshinga, ikegeranshinga, inkore and izina rikomoka ku nshinga).

4.3.1. Verb (Inshinga)

A root of a verb is a morpheme that a verb shares with other words which come from on it. It is a fundamental meaning of a word (REB, 2017). Some Verbs have roots that may stand alone without adding other segments to have their clear and full meaning. These are the ones called independent roots. While roots that can not stand alone take a full meaning when they are added to some suffixes. This state is clearly explained by the book of REB (2017) of Senior Three, where it mentions that: “Root is a fundamental morpheme of a word which needs a final. It is fundamental to the meaning of a word. The root may stand alone or not. The root which can stand alone may be used without suffixes and still have its full meaning, While a root which can not stand alone needs suffixes for getting full meaning.”

i. Independent Roots (Imizi yihagije)

These are the roots of normal verbs which have rules to follow for finding their roots. These verbs are into two categories. There are one-syllable verbs that have only two syllables when they are in infinitive, while there are other verbs that have more syllables because they have two or above syllables when they are in infinitive. To find their roots are not done in the same way.

a. Normal Verb (Inshinga isanzwe)

Jouannet (1983:116) mentions that to find out the root of a verb, you take an infinitive of any verb and put it in the imperative, then remove the last vowel. This applies to verbs that are not single syllable verbs.

Examples:

Kuza ->**za** hano (ngwino): **-z-**
 Kuza-> uza (wa nka we) : **-uz-**
 Kwiga->iga: **-ig-**
 Kwanga->anga: **-ang-**
 Kwera->era: **-er-**
 Kuma->uma: **-um-**

Kuvuga->vuga: **-vug-**
 gufata->fata: **-fat-**
 gusaba: saba->**-sab-**
 gukaraba: karaba->**-karab-**
 gusakuza->sakuza: **-sakuz-**

He adds that there are other free morpheme verbs which have roots formed by a single syllable.

-ba-: kuba	-hi-: gushya	-gu-: kugwa
-ha-: guha	-ri-: kurya	-vu-: kuva
-ta-: guta	-ko-: gukwa	-pfu-: gupfa
-ke-: gucya	-mo-: kumwa	-ci-: guca
-ne-: kunya	-nyo-: kunywa	-gi-: kujya
-se-: gusya		

Regarding these verbs, Bizimana (1998:85) mentions that to find out their roots, you firstly give them a final “-ye” and then you remove other morphemes and the final that they have. This rule applies when there is no suffixes.

Like Bizimana (1998:84), Jounnet also gives examples of the independent roots.

-z-: kuza	-eng-: kwenga
-ak-: kwaka	-ang-: kwanga
-ib-: kwiba	

b. Defective Verbs (Inshinga nkene/mburabuzi)

Defective verbs are conjugated in one tense, when they change into other tenses, they change their root too. That is the reason why they are called defective verbs because their roots are not the same while one verb is changing its tense. These verbs, Jouannet (1983:115) calls them “defective verbs (les verbes defectifs)”. He also mentions that those verbs may still have vowels at the end of their roots or those vowels may be lost as time roots followed by suffixes. On this point, we may say that when a root of a defective verb stands alone, it does not work with finals while when it is together with suffixes worked with finals.

Examples:

-zi: n- \emptyset -zi: nzi (Kumenya)	u-\emptyset-zi: uzi	ba-\emptyset-zi: bazi
-fite: n- \emptyset -fite: Mfite (Kugira)	u-\emptyset-fite: Ufite	ba-\emptyset-fite: Bafite
-ruzi: n- \emptyset -ruzi: Nduzi (Kubona)	u-\emptyset-ruzi: Uruzi	ba-\emptyset-ruzi: Baruzi
-z-: n-ra-z-w-i: Ndazwi (kumenya)	Tu-ra-z-ir-an-ye: Turâaziranye	
-ruz-: u-ra-ruz-w-i: Uraruzwi	i-ra-ruz-w-i: Iraruzwi	
-fit-: tu- \emptyset -fit-an-ye: Dufitanye	u-ra-fit-w-e: Urafitwe	

Mutate (1981:92) also mentions that these verbs are called defectives because they do not have their infinitive mode and they are not conjugated in all modes and tenses as normal verbs. He also adds that these verbs take only subjunctive mode in affirmative or negative form and are conjugated in simple present and present continuous tenses, except only the verb “ri” which may be conjugated in past and future tenses. He (ibid:93) also highlights those verbs as “ri”, “fite”, “zi” and “ruzi”.

He (ibid:95) adds that “oy” is another word that may be taken as a defective verb. This verb may be conjugated in present followed by an object. That object is a clause based on the infinitive. When that defective verb is conjugated in affirmative form, it prevents the addressee from doing an action which is addressing in its object. However, when it is conjugated in negative form, nothing is prevented because it gives ahead its subject to do the action mentioned in the object.

Examples:

Affirmative aspects (Indango yemeza)

n- \emptyset -oy-e Gukina: means I don't play
 (Ndeke gukina or sinkine)
 u- \emptyset -oy-e
 a- \emptyset -oy-e
 tu- \emptyset -oy-e
 mu- \emptyset -oy-e
 ba- \emptyset -oy-e

Negative aspects (Indango ihakana)

si-n- \emptyset -oy-e Gukina: (means I play)
 nti-u- \emptyset -oy-e
 nti-a- \emptyset -oy-e
 nti-tu- \emptyset -oy-e
 nti-mu- \emptyset -oy-e
 nti-ba- \emptyset -oy-e

c. Co-verb (Ingirwanshinga)

There are three co-verbs in Kinyarwanda (“ti”, “tya” and “tyo”). These are words that are in the category of words that have characteristics similar to verbs’ ones because they take the initial of a verb when they are used in a sentence (Mutake, 1981:96). On this part, we may have another co-verb which is called “-te” but Mutake forgot to mention it. It also has the same characters as the co-verbs he mentions. These co-verbs do not take finals because they are not able to work with suffixes. Their roots remain as follow:

-ti	-tya	-tyo	-te
n- ti : Nti	n- tya : Ntya	tu- tyo : Dutyo	tu- te : Dute
u- ti : Uti	u- tya : Utya	mu- tyo : Mutyo	mu- te : Mute
a- ti : Ati	a- tya : Atya	ba- tyo : Batyo	ba- te : Bate

ii. Dependent Roots (Imizi itihagije)

Dependent Roots are the roots of verbs that can not stand alone. They can not give a full meaning without adding a suffix on it (Jouannet, 1983:117-118).

Examples:

-* pfu -:	-* pfu -k-: Gupfuka	-* zi -:	-* zi -ik-: Kuzika
	-* pfu -r-: Gupfura		-* zi -ur-: Kuzura
-* ah -:	-* ah -ur-: Kwahura	-* gum -:	-* gum -uk-: Kugumuka
	-* ah -uk-: Kwahuka	-* man -:	-* man -ik-: Kumanika
-* tu -:	-* tu -ek-: Gutweka		-* man -ur-: Kumanura
	-* tu -er-: Gutwera		-* man -uk-: Kumanuka
-* amb -:	-* amb -ar-: Kwambara	-* hir -:	-* hir -: -* hir -ik-: Guhirika
	-* amb -ik-: Kwambika		-* hir -im-: Guhirima
	-* amb -ur-: Kwambura	-* sho -:	-* sho -k-: Gushoka
-* eg -:	-* eg -ik-: Kwegeka		-* sho -r-: Gushora
	-* eg -am-: Kwegama	-* nan -:	-* nan -ur-: Kunanura
	-* eg -ur-: Kwegura		-* nan -uk-: Kunanuuka
	-* eg -uk-: Kweguka	-* ku -:	-* ku -uk-: Gukûuka
-* han -:	-* han -ik-: Guhanika		-* ku -ur-: Gukûura
	-* han -am-: Guhanama	-* oh -:	-* oh -ir-: Kooheera
	-* han -ur-: Guhanura		-* oh -y-: Kooshya
	-* han -uk-: Guhanuka		-* oh -ir-ir-y-: Koohereza
-* yo -:	-* yo -r-: Kuyora	-* tam -:	-* tam -ik-: Gutamika
	-* yo -k-: Kuyoka		-* tam -ir-: Gutamira
-* gum -:	-* gum -ur-: Kugumura		

Jouannet gives the same meaning of dependent roots as the one that mentioned by Bizimana (1998:84), and mentions some examples:

- z -: kuza	- eng -: kwenga	- ib -: kwiba
ak -: kwaka	- ang -: kwanga	

4.3.2. Infinitive (Imbundo)

Infinitive is a mode of a verb that does not show someone who is acting or being given the action. This means that someone who is doing action is hidden. The base or root of a verb is an invariable part of it, that it shares with other words that have the same origin. Infinitive is classified into the category of **bitypes**. Bizimana (1998: 210) explains it as words which have two different morphemes. One is for nouns or pronouns while others are for verbs. He adds that an infinitive is a word based on the prefix of the noun, the root or stem, and the final of a verb. It mentions the action, size, or shape of an unknown subject.

Examples: Kuvoma (-vom-), Kurya (-ri-), Kubyiruka (-byiruk-), Guha (-ha-)

The ways of finding the base or root of an infinitive verb are the same as for conjugated or normal verbs because it is to firstly put the verb in infinitive and check if it is not single syllable verb (a verb which only has two syllables) and follow the rule that mentioned above (REB, 2017:34-35).

4.3.3. Autonome (Ikinyanshinga)

It is a word based on the prefix of pronoun, on the root or stem, and the final of a verb. It may take many other morphemes of verbs. It explains and relates with the words that are going together. It also mentions the action, size, or shape of a word

and when it replaces that word, it takes an augment. It appears in the two first persons of popular form, and all classes (Bizimana, 1998:211). Its root is the same as the one of the verb because it has its origin to the verb.

Examples:

Ni twe <u>duhinga</u> : -hing-	<u>Uhiga</u> umugabo: -hig- (uguhiga ubutwari)
Si mwe <u>muwoma</u> : -vom-	<u>Afutse</u> : -fuk-
Ni jye <u>ukora</u> : -kor-	<u>Iyumye</u> : -um-
Si wowe <u>ubishinzwe</u> : -shing-	

4.3.4. Gerund (Inkore)

It is a word that has a prefix located in the 14th class (nt.14) and the base and final of any verb. Its final is always “e”. It always follows a verb based on the root “-ri”.

Examples:

Ndi <u>bugende</u> : -gend-	Ntibyari <u>buzakunde</u> : -kund-
Ndakeka ko batari <u>bwige</u> : -ig-	Twari <u>bwambuke</u> : -ambuk-

To find the root of a gerund is the same as the ways of finding the root of a normal verb because it has its origin in the verb.

4.3.5. Nouns delivered from verbs (Amazina akomoka ku nshinga)

These are nouns that exist through verb derivation. Referring to the origin of these nouns from the verb, their basis is the root of the verb, then that root should work like the one of the verb and it should get affixes similar to the ones of the verb (this root may take suffixes). For that, these nouns have four morphemes which are: **augment, prefix, root, and final (indomo, indanganteko, umuzi and umusozo).**

Examples:

Umukwe>gukwa: -ko-	Umwashi>kwasa: -as-	Itegeko>gutegeka: -teg-
Umuhinzi>guhinga: -hing-	Umuhashyi>guhaha: -hah-	Umutesi>guteta: -tet-
Umukozi>gukora: -kor-	Umuhigi>guhiga: -hig-	Indyo>kurya: -ri-
Abasyi>gusya: -se-	Isakaro>gusakara: -sakar-	Indabo>kuraba: -rab-

Note: All roots of verbs (independent and dependent which are added on them suffixes to get meanings) are fundamental to creating nouns, while roots of co-verbs and defective verbs are not fundamental to verb derivation, for that there is no Kinyarwanda nouns delivered from these roots.

4.3.6. Roots Variation (Impindurantego z'imizi)

There are forms of some roots which take variation when they are followed by semi-vowel “y”. That semi-vowel likes to appear in the causative suffix “-y-”, in the final of noun ‘-yi’ and the final of the verb ‘-ye’ (Nsanzabiga & Twilingiyimana, 2009:76 & Coupez, 1980:232).

Examples:

Gusa: -sa-	variation: Gususa: -sus-
Gufata: -fat-	variation: Yarafashe: -fas- (it is not used in infinitive)
Kubandwa: umubandwa: -bandw-	variation: imandwa: -mandw- (it is not used in infinitive)
Gusenya: -seny-	variation: Yashenye: -sheny- (it is not used in infinitive)

4.4. Relationships between base and root

Both root and base are the fundamental morphemes of words (Bizimana, 1998) and they are the basic morphemes of words (Nsanzabiga & Twilingiyimana, 2009:10). Those morphemes are the fundamentals of a word, they form an invariable part of it, which covers the meaning of words like noun, pronoun, adjective, mixed nouns, verb, and other categories of words that may be analysed. Coupez (1980:193) mentions that there is a morpheme of the word that ends it

and other which does not end it. He calls that morpheme in French “**Lexème**”. He gives examples of a morpheme that does not end a word called “**-vug-**” while on the morpheme that ends a word, he gives “**-vugo** and **-beho**”. He adds that when a morpheme does not end a word followed by a final, they form what is called in French “**thème**”. He continues that “**-vug-**” is a “**root**” while “**-vugo** and **-beho**” are “**bases**”.

Some parts of the bases of words come from the root of the verb when they are followed by the final, but other parts of the bases of words are not analysed (Coupez, 1980: 233).

In the National examinations and other examinations of Kinyarwanda which are prepared in schools and district levels, they ask that: “Mention bases of the following underlined words.” Someone may wonder if candidates are requested to mention base but they mention their answers to the words which may only have base and leave those which do not have it, but it is not as it is, because a candidate gives answers for all questions. That answer should cover bases and roots. According to the lesson guidelines prepared by Nsanzabiga and Twilingiyimana (2009) at Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) currently the University of Rwanda, College of Education, they mention that the base and root are the basic morphemes, and the study of Bizimana (1998) where he mentions that both base and root are fundamental morphemes of word. For that, we may decide on removing ambiguity for everyone who is going to set a question whose answer is the base or root of given words.

On this issue, if a candidate responds on words which only have bases, and leaves those that have roots, s/he may be right because of the question that may be asked. If a candidate also answers to the words that have roots and adds other post-root morphemes (suffixes, and final) to have a similarity with the base, s/he may be right because s/he has not been asked about the root of that question. Referring to this relationship, we may ask ourselves if this question can change instead of focusing on only one side of words with bases, meanwhile, it may be asked to include both words that have bases and/or roots and the candidate may be free for understanding a question asked for.

Coupez (1980:194-345) mentions that one single morpheme has two parts. Here, he combined fundamental morphemes of words because he wants to mention that “some bases of words deliver from to the base of verbs”. When he mentions the base of a verb, it means root with final, because he calls root another name that is called “**Radical**”. According to his research, “base” is a morpheme that ends a word, and there is no other morpheme that can come after the base in the word, while “Radical” is a morpheme that cannot end a word, this means that it has other morphemes which follow it (final).

In Kinyarwanda, there are some bases which are similar with the roots, and their difference is in their writings. At this level, people may not know if it is a base or a root, but to differentiate them they have to add an hyphen.

Bases	Roots
Umuko: -ko	Inkwano: -ko-
Umuba: -ba	Yarabaye: -ba-
Umuvu: -vu	Avuye: -vu-
Umugi: -gi	Yagiye: -gi-
Amata: -ta	Yabitaye: -ta-
Inyo: -nyo	Yanyoye: -nyo-
Se: -se	Urusyo: -se-

One hyphen before reveals that the base may have prefixes, and the hyphen after reveals that the root may have suffixes. This means that with the base we have only prefixes, but with the root we have prefixes and suffixes.

4.5. Difference between base and root

The base is a fundamental morpheme of a word that does not need a final and it is the end root morpheme. This means that there is no other morpheme that may be added to the base to make any change of the word except for other kinds of words like post-final. It means that there is no suffix or final may be added to the base. Bases are found on nouns, adjectives, mixed nouns, and pronouns. As mentioned above, bases are the fundamental meanings of words from the dictionary and all bases should at least have consonant and vowel. The base should be hidden (in the demonstrative pronoun) and replaced by an empty sign (-∅) or can only be formed by a vowel (in some pronouns). All bases are independent (they deliver meanings without the help of other morpheme). When we are writing a base, it is necessary to start with a hyphen to present that other morphemes come before it (prefixes). We are not putting another hyphen after it, because there is no other morpheme that should follow the base. It means that a base is the last morpheme.

Examples:

Umwana: -ana	Batatu: -tatu	Inkoko: -koko
Injangwe: -jangwe	Zingahe: -ngahe	Mwiza: -iza
Iki: -∅	Ikibabi: -babi	

A root is a fundamental morpheme of a word that needs a final. It is also basic morpheme which is not end. This means that after that morpheme, others may be added (suffixes and final). A root may be independent or dependent (started by the asterisk). It may only be formed by a consonant (there is no root which is only formed by a vowel in Kinyarwanda) and to write it, it is necessary to start with a hyphen to show that there are morphemes that come before (prefixes), and ends by putting that hyphen, to show that there are other morphemes that are following it (suffixes and final).

Examples:

Umugenzi: **-gend-**
Inkwano: **-ko-**
Guhinda: **-hind-**

Yashoye: **-*sho-**
Birahanamye: **-*han-**
Zaraje: **-z-**

Kuva: **-vu-**
Kwambara: **-*amb-**

Jouannet (1983:38) differentiates base and root but he mixes them in the examples he mentions. The researcher (1983: 44, 114-115) adds another new meaning which is called “**stem**” and on page 45, he mentions that “**stem**” is a “**root**” that is added with suffixes. Jouannet’s research mentions that what he calls “**root**” and “**stem**”, both are from the verb while “**base**” appears on nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and mixed nouns.

5. Recommendations and conclusion

It is clear that some researchers who have written on the grammar of Kinyarwanda did not align the ways, these words should be used in teaching and learning morphology. That is the reason why teachers miss clear ways of asking questions related to the demonstration of fundamental morphemes of words and asking questions based on one side (only for base). To mark this question (to award marks for it), there is no clear instruction for answering what is asked because the normal way of teaching them which is common for the candidates and examiners is to mention bases of nouns, adjectives, mixed nouns, and pronouns, and to mention root to the verbs and all other words which come from to the verbs (nouns formed from verbal derivation, infinitives, gerunds, and autonomes).

Researchers may ask, on this point, when they ask (in questioning) words like: “nzagemura, iramurika” and other verbs which have their origin to the nominal derivation, if a candidate may answer “root or base” because the root of the verb “kumurika” and the base of the word "ikimuri" is “-muri-”. According to all of those circumstances, the basic ways proposed of removing that ambiguity mentioned, to the teachers and learners, without forgetting examiners and candidates who should use “fundamental morpheme” or “basic morpheme” for combining both morphemes (base and root) in one question, are as follow.

Instead of asking a question mentioning that: “**Mention bases of the following/underlined words or Write bases of the following/underlined words.**” It should have an alternative as follows: “**Mention the basic morpheme of the following/underlined words.**” Or “**Mention the fundamental morpheme of the following/underlined words.**” But these should not remove normal names of those morphemes. It may remain as “base” if a question is only dedicated to “nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and mixed nouns”, and the “root” to “verb and other words which have their origin from the verbs”.

In teaching grammar of Kinyarwanda, teachers should train their students that any word has its fundamental part which is called “fundamental morpheme or basic morpheme” (“Akaremajambo shingiro” or “Akaremajambo muzi”). It is also necessary to clarify the difference between a fundamental/basic morpheme which ends (base) and a fundamental/basic morpheme which does not end (root). Students who are not yet reaching the level of being asked such kinds of questions may still study in a normal way because their level is not allowing them to know and understand the difference between base and root.

After presenting those issues based on the questions from the examinations of Kinyarwanda, analysing how Kinyarwanda is taught and its values in Rwandan education, and reading different books which written about Kinyarwanda in Kinyarwanda and/or in other languages (English and French), researchers found that they must contribute on the Kinyarwanda language, to clarify the difference between root and base and also give contributions on that point. After reading and analysing different research, and observing different questions which are asked in examinations, this study finds that base and root are different. It is not only in written form but also in its structure and uses in a language. For that, the study advises ways of removing ambiguity which is in the question then it should be changed.

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