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The Position Of Adnominal Adjectives In BAKÓKÓ

Generally, adjectives are either considered as Specifier or as heads. They are also considered in some cases and by some linguists to be reduced relatives. Nchare (2011: 24) says that “The distinction between the types of adjectives is based on morphological and syntactic factors. Type 1 adjectives (Participle Adjectives) are derived from lexical verbs. Type 2 adjectives resemble canonical noun and they lack any kind of morphological complexity, they are inflected for number agreement as participle adjectives and are always Pre-Nominal. Type 3 adjectives are always post-nominal and are inflected for number agreement.” What about the position of adjectives in Bakókó? Relying on the morphological and distributional properties of adjectives in Bakókó, this paper is going to show they behave differently. Relying on works done by linguists such as Berman (1973), Abney (1987), Kayne (1994), Cinque (1995), Chomsky (1995), Bouchard (1998), Laenzlinger (2000), Nchare (2011), and Biloa (2013a) among others, it will be shown that in Bakókó, only ‘qualificative nouns’ which are ‘derived adjectives’ can be pre-posed and in that case, it triggers an associative construction whereas non-derived or ‘pure adjectives’ appear post-nominally with the agreement morpheme.

Key words: Bakókó, adjectives, derived adjectives, pre-nominal, post-nominal

Introduction

Adjectives are traditionally defined as words which provide a quality to nouns since they provide the attributes of persons and objects. They generally specify the quality or state of nouns. According to Mutaka and Tamanji (2000: 203), in many African languages, adjectives are mostly derived from verbs. Generally speaking, there exist pure adjectives, nominal adjectives and verbal adjectives. Pure adjectives are also termed as real or true adjectives. These are the type of adjectives which are non-derived; they do not originate from another part of speech. The nominal and verbal adjectives originate from nouns or verbs and that is why they are termed as derived adjectives. We have for example the noun èvívínè “the blackness”; in the phrase èvívínè è òmím, we obtain as translation ‘a black heart. We can also consider the word èpúpúè “the whiteness” in èpúpúè è òmím, the translation is ‘A white heart’ Bakókó Adjectives in Bakókó are then Adjectival Phrases (APs) and the subset of Adjectives with which AP are formed can often be specified semantically, derivationally and/or morphologically; on the same way, APs regularly involve adjectives lexically derived from nouns or verbs. Syntactically, adjectives have two uses: a predicative use, as predicates and an attributive use, as modifiers. Before examining this issue on adjective placement in Bakókó, we will provide the language classification and its word order at the level of the first and second sections. The third part deals

with theoretical assumptions on adjective placement and the last section focuses on the position of adjectives in this language.

1. Language classification

Bakókó is a Bantu language spoken in the Central part of Africa, precisely in Cameroon. This language belongs to the Basaa group. According to ALCAM (Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun), Bakókó is a Niger-Kordofan language, from Niger-Congo group, Benoue-Congo family, Bantoïd subfamily, from Bantu branch and from Bantu Equatorial North sub-branch. Guthrie (1967) classifies it under Basaa-beti group in A 436 whereas ALCAM puts it in A402. The population speaking this language is estimated at around 50,000 inhabitants. It is mainly spoken in Sanaga Maritime divisions, Wouri, Mounjo, and Nkam divisions.

2. Word order

Bakókó exhibits a chart of seven long vowels and eight short vowels. It also exhibits 22 phonemic consonants. As far as tones are concerned, Bakókó has maintained the two tones coming from Proto-Bantu, namely the high tone and the low tone. The combination of both tones gives rise to the rising and the falling tones which are also attested in the language. Bakókó is an SVO language. The example below attests this fact.

- (1) Songe à g sɔŋgòò káátì
Songe SM PO read book
 ‘Songe reads a book’

3. Theoretical assumptions on adjective placement: some background

Previous studies on the position of adjectives in languages have established different approaches. These approaches treat adjectives differently: as adjuncts, as heads, as specifiers and as reduced relative clauses.

3.1. Adjectives and adjunction

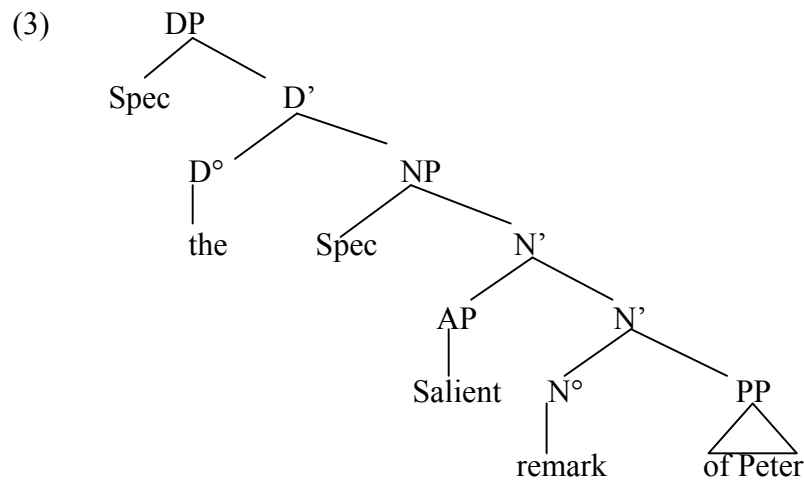
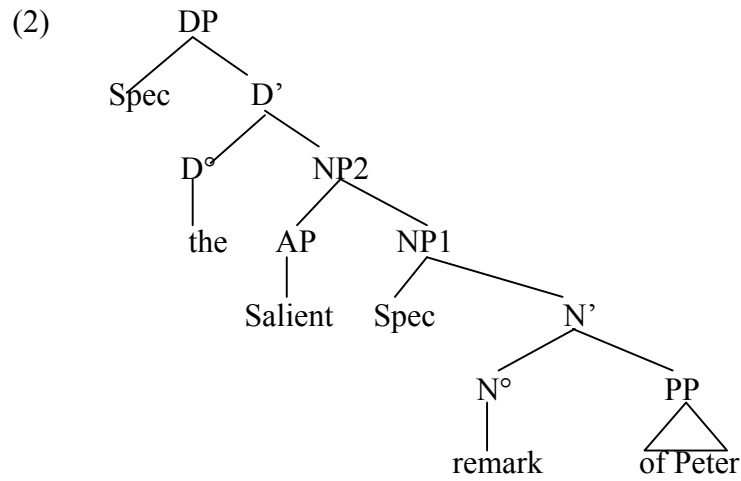
Adjunction may be to a maximal projection, to an intermediate projection or to the head. The first two requires an adjoined element to have a phrasal status whereas adjunction to a head requires adjoined elements to be themselves heads. Relying on these three adjunction sites, we can say that in relation to the noun phrase, the adjective can be adjoined to NP (maximal projection),¹ to N' (intermediate projection)² or to N° (head)³.

1 See Bernstein (1991), Picallo (1991), Ritter (1992), Svenonius (1993, 1994) among others.

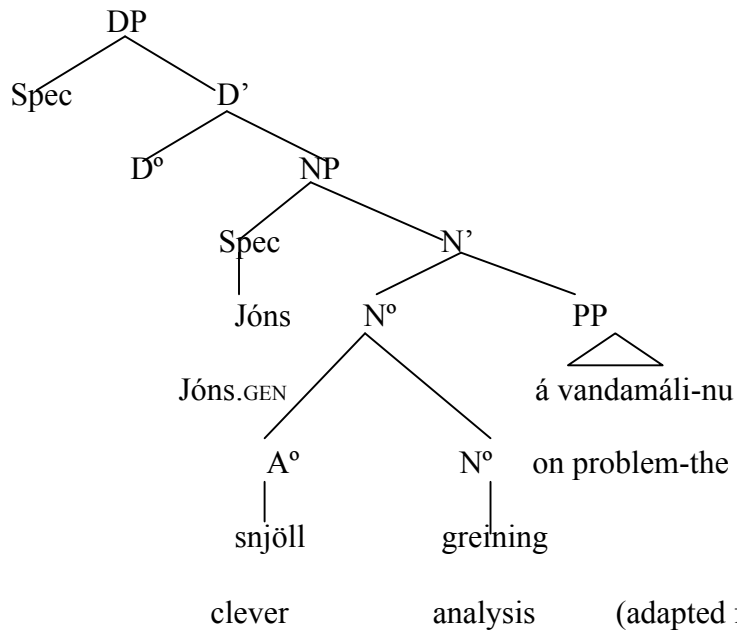
2 See Cooper (1986), Santelmann (1993), Delsing (1993) among others.

3 Although less popular, adjunction to the head has been defended for Modern Icelandic by Sigurðsson (1993) and for French by Bouchard (1998).

In the following diagrams, we have in (2) adjunction to NP1 in (3), it is adjunction to N'; and in (4), we observe adjunction to N°.



(4) Sigurðsson (1993: 191)

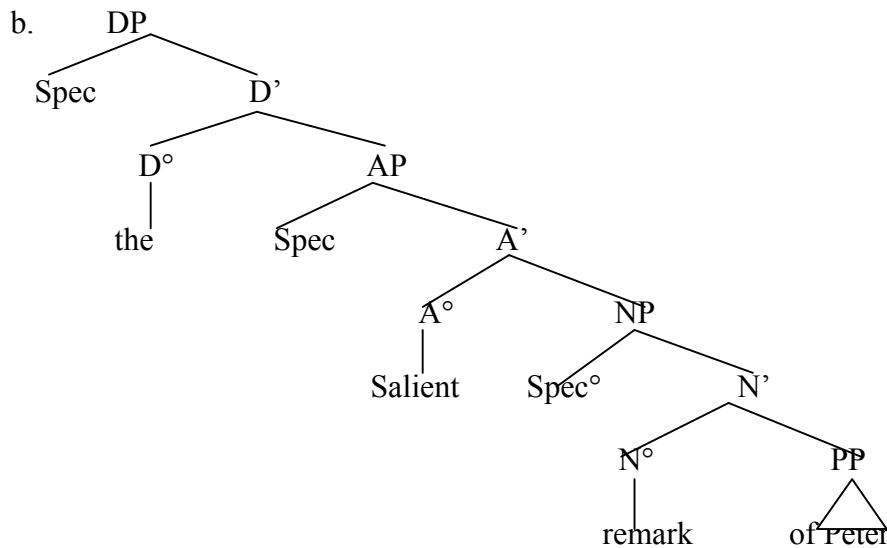


3.2. Adjectives as heads

Linguists such as Berman (1973), Abney (1987) and Bouchard (1998) argues that D selects AP and the adjective head of AP in turn selects an NP in this context.

In that case, they can take as complements an NP, a DP, or a PP. In (5a) below represented as (5b), the adjective takes an NP as complement.

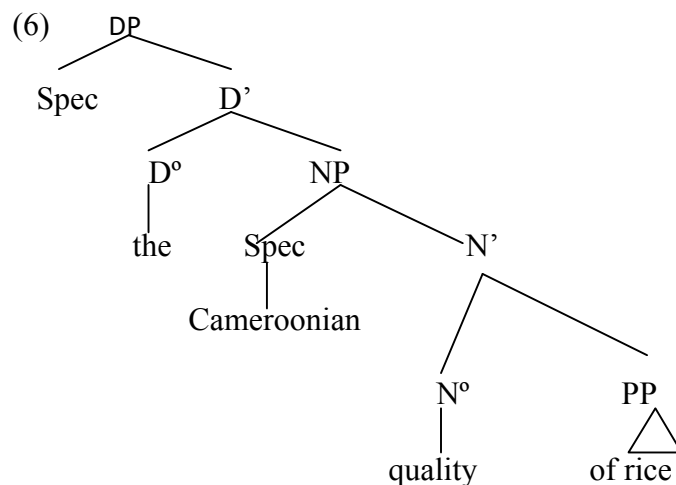
(5) a. The salient remark of Peter



3.3. Adjectives as specifiers

Analyzed as specifiers, adjectives are generated as specifiers of functional projections⁴ or, they are generated as specifiers of noun phrases.⁵ Relying mainly on Cinque (1995), adjectives are located in-between the DP and the NP, DP being the functional projection and NP the lexical one.

Generated at [spec, NP], we find a restricted group of adjectives. These adjectives have a modifying function. Generally, they are termed as ‘thematic adjectives’ by linguists. They are restrictive adjectives which appear in Romance languages before the noun and are directly followed by the noun or another restrictive adjective. This set of adjectives in Romance comprises ‘nationality adjectives’⁶ or ‘referential adjectives.’⁷



‘nationality adjectives’ and ‘referential adjectives’ either come from nouns in the first case and, in the second case, have their adverbial counterparts (see Zamparelli, 1993).

3.4. Adjectives as reduced relatives

Drawn from the promotion analysis of relative clauses, this approach stipulates that the head NP originates inside the Relative Clause CP and since it is the case, it is possible to reconstruct it inside the relative clause and interpret it in a relative clause-internal position. In Kayne’s system, relative clauses are CPs selected by an external D° and the relativized element (“the head”) raises from inside the relative clause to the Specifier position of CP. This is captured by the following phrase marker:

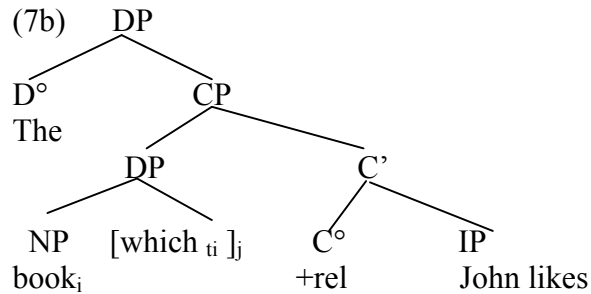
(7) a. the [book]_j [_{CP} [_{Op/which} _{t_j}]_i John likes _{t_i}]

⁴ The main proponents of this idea are Crisma (1993), Cinque (1995), Laenzlinger (2000), and Julien (2002).

⁵ See Kayne (1981), Longobardi (1991) and Guéron (1999) among others.

⁶ See Svenonius (1994) among others.

⁷ See Zamparelli (1993), and Alexiadou (2001) among others.



Kayne (1994) proposes a predicative relation between an NP-subject within [Spec, IP] and a predicate AP. The prenominal and the postnominal positions of adjectives are derived by movement operations along two possible paths:

- When there is a prenominal adjective, the raising inside the relative affects the adjectival predicate by crossing the subject in [Spec, IP] to land in [Spec, CP]. The following examples from English confirm this reasoning.

(8) a. the blue pen

b. [DP[D°the] [CP[AP blue][C°] [IP[pen] [I° tblue]]]]

- When there is a postnominal adjective as in French, two movement operations are at work inside the relative. The first one consists in moving the adjectival predicate from its base position to [Spec CP], in a way analogous to the one in (8b) above. The second movement is implemented in two steps: moving the head of the phrase from [Spec IP] to the head C° and raising it further to the head of an FP sandwiched between DP and CP as observed in (9a-b) adapted from Kayne(1994) where the adjective occurs after the noun. This yields the linear order in which an adjective surfaces after the noun.

(9) a. le livre jaune ‘the book yellow’

b. [DP[D°le] [FP[F°livre] [CP[AP jaune] [C° tlivre] [IP[tlivre] [I°tjaune]]]]]

- This can be well captured by the placement of postnominal adjectives in French. The different approaches presented above have received arguments for and arguments against from many linguists⁸.

4. The Position of adjectives in Bakókó

In Bakókó, there exist only three pure adjectives which are tóva “small”, tʃɛn “big” and tám “other”; but, we can also make use of qualifying noun to describe a noun in Bakókó.

⁸ To review these pros and cons, works by Kester (1996), Matushansky (2002) and Svenonius (1994) amongst others can be consulted.

If in some Bantu languages such as Lamnso’ and Tuki pure adjectives can precede or follow the head noun (see Mfikela 2010; Biloa 2013a), in Bakókó, pure adjectives only follow the head noun giving the structure Noun + Adjective. This is illustrated in the following data:

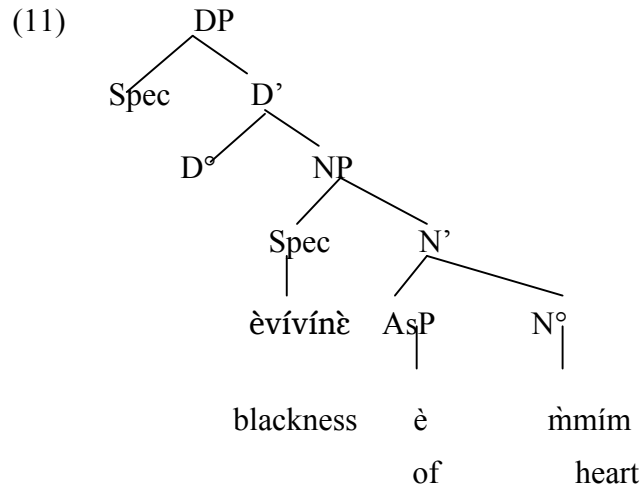
- (10) a. è-l̀l̀l̀ è-t̥ʃ̀ɛ̀n
 cl7-duck *cl7-big*
 “a big duck”
- b. l̀i-sòŋ l̀i-tóɾa
 cl5-tooth *cl5-small*
 “a small tooth”
- c. * è- t̥ʃ̀ɛ̀n è-l̀l̀l̀
 cl7-big *cl7-duck*
 “a big duck”
- d. * l̀i-tóɾa l̀i-sòŋ
 cl5-small *cl5-tooth*
 “a small tooth”

Laenzlinger (2000: 26) thinks that:

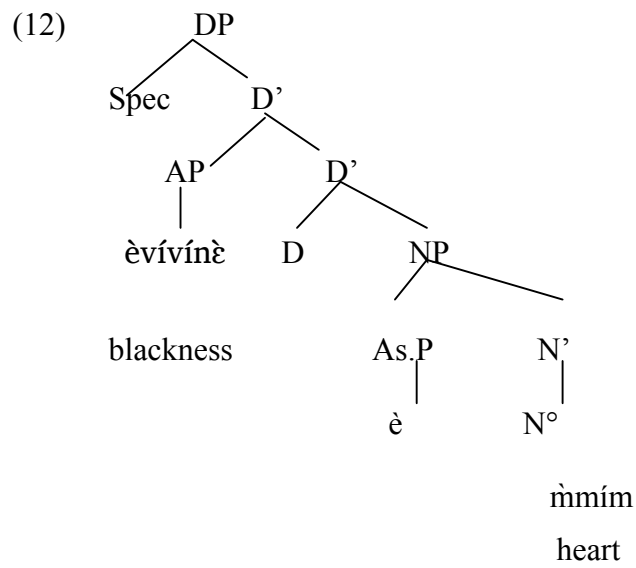
The prenominal placement of attributive adjectives, [...] results from the left attachment of adjectives to the nominal phrase, either as the specifier of NP following Abney’s (1987) DP-hypothesis or in a position left-adjoined to NP.⁹ In contrast, the postnominal placement of adjectives,[...] derives from their occurrence in a right-adjoined position.

In this case, Bakókó data will present the following phrase structures:

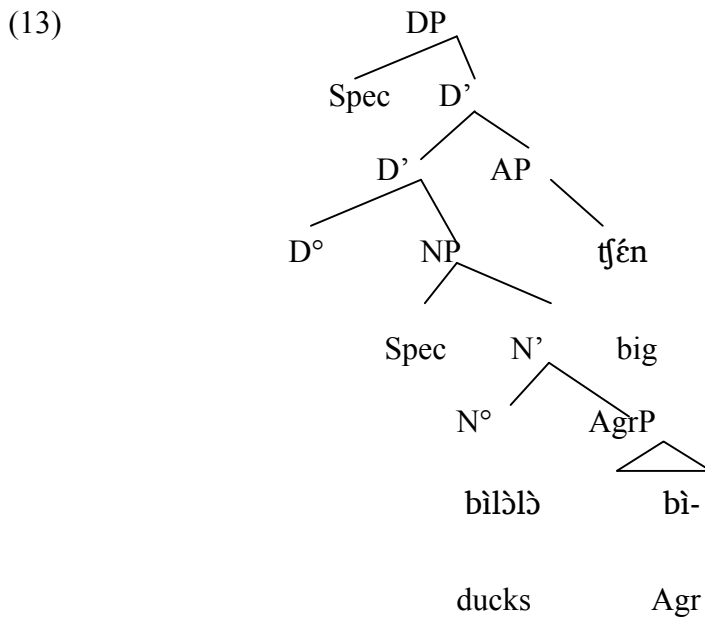
⁹ For details on “adjunction- based approach”, see Sproat and Shih (1988, 1991); Bernstein (1991); Lamarche (1991); Valois (1991) and “The specifier- based approach” see Crisma (1991); Cinque (1994, 2005, 2010); Scott (1998, 2002).



Left attachment as the specifier of NP



Left adjunction to NP



Right adjunction to NP

As stated in the introduction, pure adjectives are also termed as real or true adjectives since they are non-derived, they do not originate from another part of speech which is not the case with derived adjective. It can also be observed that when pure adjectives take an agreement marker which varies according to the noun they modify, the derived adjectives use an associative marker to be linked to the noun. That associative marker does not vary according to the qualified noun which functions as the complement of the derived adjective to which it is separated by the associative marker. The associative marker is then a linker as seen in the following examples:

- (14) a. ènívínè è m̀mím

 blackness *As.* *heart*

 ‘A black heart’

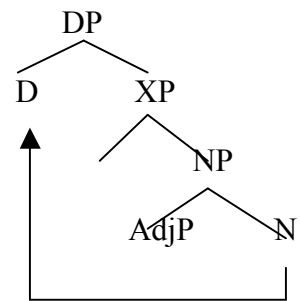
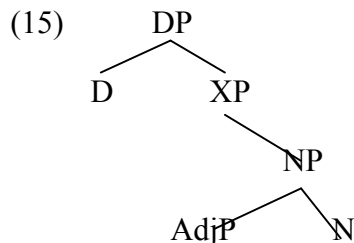
- b. èpúpúè è m̀mím

 whiteness *As.* *heart*

 ‘A white heart’

Kenmogne (2000:45)

Laenzlinger (2000) stretching his point of view further states that, according to the N-movement analysis (Bernstein, 1991; Cinque, 1994) and within the framework of a Spec-head analysis of adjective, the noun can raise as a head in the following way:



Prenominal adjectives

Postnominal adjectives

Bilola (2013), relying on Kayne’s (1994) universal hypothesis that all languages are the type Spec-Head- Complement and Chomsky (1995), say about postnominal adjectives that they occur in postnominal position because the noun has moved leftward. And this “leads one to consider the possibility that postnominal adjuncts are not in a right-hand position, but that their linear placement is affected by leftward movement of the noun” (Laenzlinger 2000: 56).

- (16) a. mbwa fíítiti **Tuki**

 dog(s) *black*

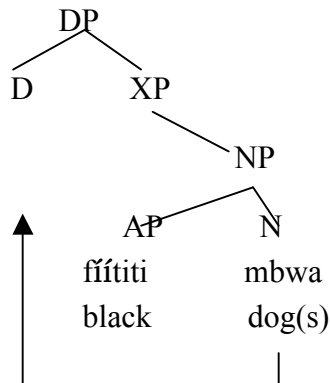
 ‘Black dogs’

- b. vamatúwa buututu
cars red
 “Red cars”

Biloa (2013: 371)

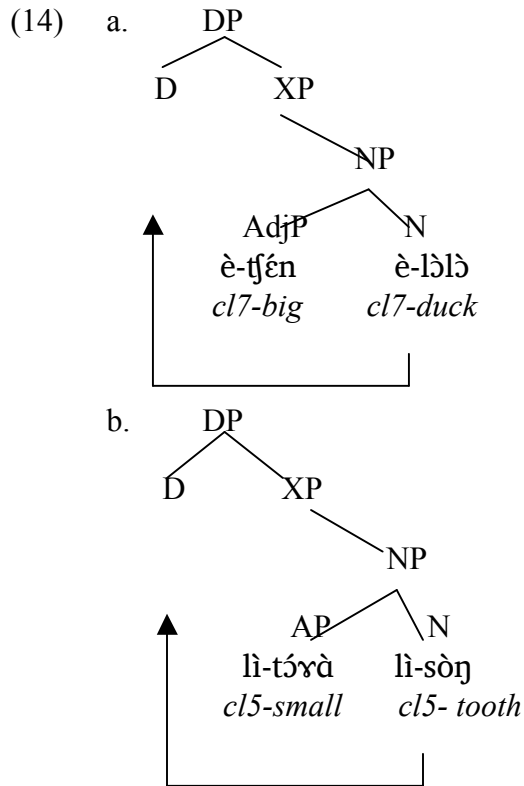
To obtain the above order on Tuki, the derivation will be the following:

(17)



We can say that what is observed in Tuki is also obtained in Bakókó as the examples below show. There, it is assumed that the nouns occur before the adjectives (18a and b) because of the leftward movement of these nouns as shown (19 a-b) below.

- (18) a. è-lɔ̀lɔ̀ è-tʃɛ̀n
 cl7-duck *cl7-big*
 ‘a big duck’
- b. lì-sòŋ lì-tóv̀à
 cl5- tooth *cl5-small*
 ‘a small tooth’
- c. * è-tʃɛ̀n è-lɔ̀lɔ̀
 cl7-big *cl7-duck*
 ‘a big duck’
- d. * lì-tóv̀à lì-sòŋ
 cl5-small *cl5-tooth*
 ‘a small tooth’



In (13a-b), the nouns appear before the adjectives at the surface structure; we then have grammatical phrases as presented in (14 a-b) while in (13c-d) the phrases are ungrammatical due to the preposing of the adjectives. So, pure/real adjectives cannot be preposed to the noun in this language. By the same token, real adjective or postposed adjectives agree with the noun they qualify or modify and the agreement morphemes for real/pure adjectives are distinct from associative markers of derived adjectives, which differ in turn from verbal subject agreement in Bakókó. These distinct patterns must therefore be recognized for each type of collocation.

In the above examples, we clearly notice that when we use the pure adjective, the agreement varies according to the qualified noun with which it is used. In the following table, examples appear per class. We clearly notice that in almost every cases, the agreement marker change when the noun class also changes. The elements in bold in the table clearly show that the agreement morphemes vary according to the noun they modify.

Table N° 1: Agreement on adjectives

Classes	Examples	Meanings
1	mɔ̀n n- tóʋà <i>child Agr small</i>	A small child
1a	vóm n- tám <i>place Agr another</i>	Another place
2	ɓɔ̀n ɓà- tóʋà <i>children Agr small</i>	Small children

3	ǹm̀m̀m̀ n- t́ám <i>heart Agr another</i>	Another heart
3a	̀ànù n- t́ám <i>mouth Agr another</i>	Another mouth
3b	ẁd̀ n- t́ám <i>arm Agr another</i>	Another arm
4	m̀ìnù m̀- t́ám <i>mouths Agr another</i>	Other mouths
5	̀l̀s̀d̀ŋ l̀- t́óxà <i>tooth Agr small</i>	A small tooth
7	̀è-̀l̀b̀l̀b̀ è- t́jén <i>duck Agr big</i>	A big duck
8	b̀ìl̀b̀l̀b̀ b̀ì- t́jén <i>ducks Agr big</i>	Big ducks
9	t́ít è- t́ám <i>animal Agr another</i>	Another animal
10	t́ít è- t́ám <i>animal Agr another</i>	Other animals
11	̀d̀ǹd̀ǹ v̀ì- t́jén <i>bird Agr big</i>	The big bird
11a	v̀d̀l̀ v̀ì- t́ám <i>laughter Agr other</i>	The other laughter
3c	̀d̀ǹd̀ǹ à- t́jén <i>birds Agr big</i>	Big birds

Kenmogne (2000:45)

The above table then shows the agreements that show up when pure adjectives are used with nouns. Just below, we provide a table showing the noun class prefixes attested in Bakókó to show how nouns agree with adjectives. Bakókó being a Bantu language, Demuth (2000:270) states that Bantu noun classes can be characterized the following way:

- Nouns classes tends to be realized as grammatical morphemes rather than independent lexical items;
- They function as part of larger ‘concordial’ agreement systems where nominal modifiers, pronominals and verbs are all morphological marked with the same noun class (gender) feature

According to her, ‘Noun class systems are grammatically productive in most Bantu languages, and semantically productive to some degree.’ and the division of nouns into classes is mainly determined by the pattern of agreement induced by nominal heads.

Table N° 2: Noun class prefixes

Class	Noun	Prefix	Stem	Glossary
1	mǔn	m-	-ǔn	Child
1a	kwètètè	∅	- kwètètè	Potato
2	ǔn	ǔa-	-ǔn	Children
2a	ǔndírǎ	ǔd-	-ndírǎ	Women
3	mím	m-	-mím	Heart
3a	ànù	à-	-nù	Mouth
3b	wǔ	w-	-ǔ	Arm
4	mím	mi-	-mím	Hearts
5	lisòŋ	di-	sòŋ	Tooth
4	mìsòŋ	mi-	sòŋ	Teeth
7	è-lǎlǎ	e-	lǎlǎ	Duck
8	bì-lǎlǎ	bi-	lǎlǎ	Ducks
9	ŋgǔx	ŋ-	kǔx	Grinding stone
9a	kǔ	∅-	- kǔ	Monkey
10	gǔx	ŋ-	- kǔx	Grinding stones
	kǔ	∅-	- kǔ	monkeys

11	òṅṅ	ɔ-	-ṅṅ	Bird
11a	vàṅgá	v-	àṅgá	Sun
16	ándǎéé	á-	-(n)ǎéé	To the house
18	múndǎéé	mú-	-(n)ǎéé	In the house
3c	àṅṅ	a-	-ṅṅ	birds

Adapted from Kenmogne (2000: 36-37)

When we use a ‘qualificative noun’ or ‘derived adjective’, we have an associative marker which does not vary according to the qualified noun as it is the case with real adjectives which have agreements that vary in relation to the noun they modify.

(15) a. èvívínè “the blackness”

èvívínè è òmím

blackness of heart

‘A black heart’

b. èpúpúè “the whiteness”

èpúpúè è òmím

whiteness of heart

‘A white heart’

Kenmogne (2000:45)

‘A white heart’ Relying on the proposal made by Kayne (1994), Chomsky (1995), and Biloa (2013) stated above, it can be said that the underlying position of the adjective in Bakókó is prenominal. Due to the movement of the noun across the adjective, the latter finally appear postnominally at surface structure. Diminutive and augmentative can also help us to establish the different position of the adjectives in Bakókó.

The diminutive is obtained in the language through a noun whose meaning is child. The diminutive is therefore a derived adjective obtained from a noun. On the contrary, augmentative is a real adjective. This diminutive appears before the noun as in examples (16a-c) where the phrases are grammatical with the prenominal position of the diminutive. When this diminutive appears after the noun, the structure becomes ungrammatical as the examples in (16d-f) show.

Contrarily, as stated above, augmentative is a real adjectives and therefore appear after the noun at surface representation as presented in examples (17a-c) where we have grammatical structures and when we reverse the order, we obtain ungrammatical structures as in (17d-f).

- (16) a. mǎn díí
 child *farm*
 ‘small farm’
- b. mǎn mbùù
 child *dog*
 ‘small dog’
- c. mǎn èlǎlǎ
 child *duck*
 ‘small duck’
- d. * díí mǎn
 farm *child*
 ‘small farm’
- e. * mbùù mǎn
 dog *child*
 ‘small dog’
- f. * èlǎlǎ mǎn
 duck *child*
 ‘small duck’
- (17) a. díí ètǎén
 farm *big*
 ‘big farm’
- b. mbùù ètǎén
 dog *big*
 ‘big dog’
- c. èlǎlǎ ètǎén
 duck *big*
 “big duck”
- d. * ètǎén díí
 big *farm*
 ‘big farm’
- e. * ètǎén mbùù
 big *dog*
 ‘big dog’

f. * ètʃén èlɔ̀ɔ̀
 big duck
 ‘big duck’

Speaking about African languages, Mutaka and Tamanji (2000: 203) state that “The adjectives seem to be the most flexible form in terms of position of occurrence in a sentence”.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be said that we distinguish in Bakókó two types of adjectives: real/ pure adjectives which are non-derived and derived ones. Adjectives in Bakókó are XPs which can occupy the pre-nominal post-nominal positions within the DP. Specifically, ‘derived adjectives’ also termed as ‘qualificative nouns’ appear before the noun they modify and pure or real which are only three in the language are positioned after the noun they modify. When used within the DP, real adjectives agree according to the noun they modify but derived adjectives are linked to the noun they modify by an associative marker. The two different morphemes also attest the fact that it is not the elements of the same nature which are used to reach that objective of qualifying a noun. Were they elements of the same nature, despite their relative position to the noun, the agreement morpheme or the associative marker would not have been different or behave differently. These two positions are recognized to be attested in many Bantu languages with the difference that when the adjective appears post-nominally, it is postulated that the noun has moved across the adjective to land before it.

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Abbreviations

- A.: Adjective
 Agr.: Agreement
 AgrP: Agreement Phrase
 AP: Adjectival Phrase
 As. : Associative
 As.P: Associative Phrase
 C: Complementizer
 cl.: class

CP: Complementizer Phrase
D: Determiner
DP: Determiner Phrase
IP: Inflectional Phrase
N: Noun
NP: Noun Phrase
P0: Present
PP: Prepositional Phrase
SM: Subject Marker
Spec.: Specifier
XP: X Phrase

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