

Nouns and Adjectives

Mwana wangu 'my child'
Cuma cangu 'my wealth'
Linso langu 'my eye'

Mwana wa mfumu 'a chief's child'
Cuma ca mfumu 'a chief's wealth'
Linso la mfumu 'a chief's eye'

Mwana ni mukulu 'the child is big'
Cuma ni cikulu 'the wealth is big'
Linso ni likulu 'the eye is big'

Munthu ni mutali 'the person is tall'
Wanthu ni watali 'the people are tall'
Liluwa ni likulu 'the flower is big'
Maluwa ni makulu 'the flowers are big'

Based on the linguistic data above, answer the following questions:

1. What does *mwana* mean in English?
2. What does *cuma* mean in English?
3. What does *linso* mean in English?
4. How do you say 'chief' in Nsenga?
5. What does the word *ni* do in Nsenga?
6. What is the Nsenga word for 'my'?
7. Why are there three ways to say 'big'?
8. How do you show possession in Nsenga?
9. How do you make a word plural in Nsenga?
10. How might you say, 'a chief's flowers are tall'?

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3. What does linso mean in English?

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4. How do you say 'chief' in Nsenga?

a. Mfumu

5. What does the word ni do in Nsenga?

a. Ni serves as a "linking verb" to connect a noun and an adjective in an equative clause.

6. What is the Nsenga word for 'my'?

a. The root word 'my' is _ngu. Different prefixes are added to show agreement with nouns of different classes.

7. Why is there a difference between the three ways to say 'big'?

a. The adjective _kulu shows agreement with the

noun it is modifying – however, in Nsenga, unlike Spanish, Greek, or Latin, the agreement marker is in front of the noun instead of at the end.

8. How do you show possession in Nsenga?

a. Using a preposition _a (inflected for noun class) between the thing owned and the owner (e.g., child-of-chief).

9. How do you make a word plural in Nsenga?

a. The plural of an Nsenga noun is a different noun class – mu- becomes wa-, li- becomes ma-, etc. Notice that the adjective also changes to reflect the new noun class.

10. How might you say, 'a chief's flowers are tall'?

a. Maluwa ma mfumu ni matali.

<http://theplugers.wordpress.com/2011/05/16/may-newsletter-and-quiz-answers/>

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