With constantly increasing difficulties in reading classical texts written in the Latin language comes the need for clarification of certain grammatical issues connected with the names of organisms governed by the ICN (McNeill & al. in Regnum Veg. 154. 2012). In this contribution I propose to specify that adjectival epithets are to be in the nominative case and may be not only adjectives but also participles used as adjectives. I also propose that when protologues contain names in different inflectional forms, which typically cause difficulties in interpretation, such forms do not preclude valid publication of the names.

(104) Amend Art. 21.2 as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough):

“21.2. The epithet is either of the same form as a generic name, or a noun in the genitive plural, or a plural

adjective

(or participle used as such) in the nominative plural agreeing in gender with the generic name, but not a noun in the genitive singular. It is written with an initial capital letter (see Art. 32.2 and 60.2).”

This change reflects the practice that subdivisional epithets expressed by plural adjectives or participles used as adjectives (participial adjectives) are to be in the nominative case, as exemplified in Ex. 1 under Art. 21.3. It makes unambiguous that the use of other grammatical cases in protologues is correctable to the nominative because otherwise a name may be validly published in any other case used in a sentence by the original author, apparently contrary to his or her intention, or the validly published form cannot be formally established under the rules.

(105) Amend Rec. 21B.2 as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough):

“21B.2. The epithet in the name of a subgenus or section is preferably a noun; that in the name of a subsection or lower-ranked subdivision of a genus is preferably a plural

adjective

(or participle used as such) in the plural.”

(106) Amend Rec. 21B.3 as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough):

“21B.3. Authors, when proposing new epithets for names of subdivisions of genera, should avoid those in the form of a noun when other co-ordinate subdivisions of the same genus have them in the form of a plural

adjective

(or participle used as such) in the
plural, and vice-versa. They should also avoid, when proposing an epithet for a name of a subdivision of a genus, one already used for a subdivision of a closely related genus, or one that is identical with the name of such a genus."

(107) **Amend Art. 23.1 as follows (new text in bold):**

"23.1. The name of a species is a binary combination consisting of the name of the genus followed by a single specific epithet in the form of an adjective (or participle used as such) in the nominative, a noun (or word treated as such) in the genitive, or a word in apposition, or several words, but not a phrase name of one or more descriptive nouns and associated adjectives in the ablative (see Art. 23.6(a)), nor any of certain other irregularly formed designations (see Art. 23.6(b–d)). If an epithet consists of two or more words, these are to be united or hyphenated. An epithet not so joined when originally published is not to be rejected but, when used, is to be united or hyphenated, as specified in Art. 60.9."

(108) **Amend Art. 23.6(a) as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough):**

"(a) Descriptive designations consisting of a generic name followed by a phrase name (Linnaean “nomen specificum legitimum”) of one or more descriptive nouns and associated adjectives (or participles used as such) in the ablative.""

Proposals 104–108 are plainly technical changes suggested because epithets can be expressed not only by adjectives but also by participles used as adjectives. As in Prop. 104, Prop. 107 reflects the practice that the species epithet, when expressed by an adjective or a participle used as adjective, is in the nominative. Proposal 107 also includes a mention that some epithets, strictly speaking, may be not nouns but other parts of speech adopted in place of nouns (such as in *Wollemia nobilis* in Art. 60 Ex. 19).

(109) **Add a new Note after Art. 32.2 with a new Example:**

“Note 2. Improper terminations of otherwise correctly formed names or epithets may result from the use of an inflectional form other than that required by Art. 32.2.”

“Ex. *Ibis*. Bentham (in Bentham & Hooker, Gen. Pl. 2: 448. 1873) discussed characters of certain species of *Senecio* which, in his opinion, constituted a separate section (“in speciebus ... sectionem subdistinctam (*Synotios*) constituentibus”). The sectional epithet was expressed in this sentence by an adjective in the accusative plural because of being used as a direct object, which requires the use of accusative in Latin. Under Art. 21.2 this epithet must be in the nominative plural, and the name was validly published as *Senecio sect. Synotii* Benth.”

This clarification covers those situations that are not grammatical errors or malformations but rather are results of the synthetic nature of the Latin (and also Greek) language, in which names and epithets, if expressed by nouns or adjectives (or participles used as adjectives), are subject to inflection for case when used in sentences. I propose to exemplify the new provision by an Example that is well known in the relevant taxonomic literature but has been commonly misunderstood because the difference between inflected forms, irregularly formed epithets, and grammatical errors is not always self-evident. In particular, the sectional epithet in this Example has been variously interpreted as validly published with the spelling "*Synotis*" (e.g., Jeffrey & Chen in Kew Bull. 39: 285. 1984) or "*Synotio-*tios" (e.g., Vanijajiva & Kadereit in Kew Bull. 63: 214. 2008), but never as "*Synotii*".

**Acknowledgement**

Critical comments, corrections, and guidance of Nicholas Turland (Berlin) are highly appreciated.