

Contrastive Analysis of Adjectives of Quality of English and Fur Languages

¹**Dr. Mohyeldeen Mohamed Babiker**

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics -Al Fashir University-Faculty of Arts- Sudan

²**Dr. Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad**

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics- Al Fashir University – Faculty of Arts- Sudan

³**Dr. Saad Abbakar Bakheet Ahmed**

Assistant of English language- University of Zalingei – Faculty of Education for Basic Level - Sudan

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ABSTRACT : *The research aims to compare and contrast adjectives of quality of English and Fur languages to find out the similarities and differences between them. The researchers have adopted contrastive methodology to do this research. They compared and contrasted adjectives of quality of in English and Fur languages. The results of the research revealed that the two languages almost share the same adjectives of quality. English and Fur adjectives of quality modify the nouns. Moreover, the both languages use their adjectives of quality attributively and predicatively. The two languages use the intensifiers to strengthen the adjectives of quality. On the other hand, the both languages belong to different language families. English is from an Indo-European language family, whereas, Fur belongs to Nilo-Saharan language family. It is very obvious that English attributive adjectives go before the nouns which they describe whereas, Fur attributive use of adjectives (boorô, mandin , toy, diwwô, fattâ , dikkô) come after the nouns which they modify. English predicative use of adjectives slightly differs from the Fur language, because in English language they come after the verb (be) however, in Fur language they go before the verb (ii=be). In addition to the position of intensifiers in Fur language differs from English ones. The English intensifiers go before the adjectives whereas; the Fur ones go after the adjectives. The differences in adjectives of quality between the two languages result in problems encountered by the Fur learners in learning English language and vice versa.*

KEYWORDS: adjective of quality, comparative, superlative, intensifiers

INTRODUCTION

Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis (CA) contrasts and compares the two languages that are genetically distinct with a view to identifying their structural differences and similarities. Thus, CA studies the

structures of two languages from two different language families. English is an Indo-European language family as the source language whereas; Fur is Nilo-Saharan as the target language so as to determine the points where they are different. These differences are the main cause of problems in learning a second language.

The Statement of Problem

The approximately 29 million inhabitants of Africa's largest country, Sudan, speak at least 135 distinct languages belonging to three different language families, Afro-asiatic, Niger–Congo, and Nilo–Saharan (A.R. Mugaddam and G.J.Dimmendaal 265;2006).

Every language of the world has its own sound system. This is due to difference of linguistic backgrounds. It is obvious that the grammatical differences in English and Fur adjectives create difficulties in the teaching and learning of English, the target language. This research attempts to find out the similarities and differences which exist between the two languages as well as the effects which this linguistic difference may have on the process of teaching and learning of English, the foreign language in Sudan. It is to be expected that speakers of the languages experience difficulties due to the fact that the grammatical structure of the two languages are slightly different in nature. In this context, it is expected that contrastive analysis of English and Fur adjectives will be of pedagogical advantages to the Fur learners of English as a foreign language in particular and the other Nilo-Saharan languages speakers in general. Because very a few studies have been conducted on this area therefore, this research focuses on this issue in depth.

The Significance of Research

This research will enrich the students of a language, particularly those who concern adjectives structure of language. It will provide them with an example of how different findings of the field can be exploited to examine a form of language in use. This will enable the learners to master English language easily. The curriculum designers and text book writers will find roadmap in this research to design school curricula and syllabuses to reflect adjectives of Nilo-Saharan languages particularly in Darfur region schools. Consequently, the research will serve as a source of further studies of this field. Moreover, this research will shed lights on both English and Fur languages, by analyzing the adjectives of the two languages. Therefore, the research guides teachers to focus on the areas of differences to enable the learners to overcome the problems of the adjectives of the target language (English).

The Objectives of Research

This research aims to:

1. identify the areas of similarities in the grammatical structure of the English and Fur adjectives;
2. describe the dissimilarities between the English and Fur adjectives;

The Questions of Research

This research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what degree do the English and Fur adjective of quality differ from one another?
2. How far do English and Fur adjectives of quality have similarity with one another?

THE METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The researchers have adopted contrastive analysis methodology to conduct this research. They contrast and compares some examples of grammatical structure of Fur and English adjectives of quality. The data was collected from English grammar books, grammar book of Fur language as well as related websites and journals. Population of this research includes adjectives of quality in both English and Fur languages.

The Hypotheses of Research

This research hypothesizes the following:

1. The English and Fur adjectives of quality differ from each other.
2. English and Fur adjectives of quality have similarity with one another.

Indo-European Languages

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2022,11,26)The Indo-European languages are a language family native to the overwhelming majority of Europe, the Iranian plateau, and the northern Indian subcontinent. Some European languages of this family, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, and Spanish, have expanded through colonialism in the modern period and are now spoken across several continents. The Indo-European family is divided into several branches or sub-families, of which there are eight groups with languages still alive today: Albanian, Armenian, Balto-Slavic, Celtic, Germanic, Hellenic, Indo-Iranian, and Italic; and another nine subdivisions that are now extinct.

Today, the individual Indo-European languages with the most native speakers are English, Hindi–Urdu, Spanish, Bengali, French, Russian, Portuguese, German, and Punjabi, each with over 100 million native speakers; many others are small and in danger of extinction.

In total, 46% of the world's population (3.2 billion people) speaks an Indo-European language as a first language — by far the highest of any language family. There are about 445 living Indo-European languages, according to an estimate by *Ethnologue*, with over two-thirds (313) of them belonging to the Indo-Iranian branch.

All Indo-European languages are descended from a single prehistoric language, linguistically reconstructed as Proto-Indo-European, spoken sometime in the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age. The geographical location where it was spoken, the Proto-Indo-European homeland, has been the object of many competing hypotheses; the academic consensus supports the Kurgan hypothesis, which posits the homeland to be the Pontic–Caspian steppe in what is now Ukraine and southern

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Russia, associated with the Yamnaya culture and other related archaeological cultures during the
4th millennium BC to early 3rd millennium BC.

Nilo- Saharan Languages

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2022,11,26)The Nilo-Saharan languages are a proposed family of African languages spoken by some 50–60 million people, mainly in the upper parts of the Chari and Nile rivers, including historic Nubia, north of where the two tributaries of the Nile meet. The languages extend through 17 nations in the northern half of Africa: from Algeria to Benin in the west; from Libya to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the centre; and from Egypt to Tanzania in the east.

As indicated by its hyphenated name, Nilo-Saharan is a family of the African interior, including the greater Nile Basin and the Central Sahara Desert. Eight of its proposed constituent divisions (excluding Kunama, Kuliak, and Songhay) are found in the modern countries of Sudan and South Sudan, through which the Nile River flows.

In his book *The Languages of Africa* (1963), Joseph Greenberg named the group and argued it was a genetic family. It contains the languages which are not included in the Niger–Congo, Afroasiatic or Khoisan groups. Although some linguists have referred to the phylum as "Greenberg's wastebasket", into which he placed all the otherwise unaffiliated non-click languages of Africa, specialists in the field have accepted its reality since Greenberg's classification.^[3] Its supporters accept that it is a challenging proposal to demonstrate but contend that it looks more promising the more work is done.

Some of the constituent groups of Nilo-Saharan are estimated to predate the African Neolithic. Thus, the unity of Eastern Sudanic is estimated to date to at least the 5th millennium BC. Nilo-Saharan genetic unity would necessarily be much older still and date to the late Upper Paleolithic. The earliest written language associated with the Nilo-Saharan family is Old Nubian, one of the oldest written African languages attested in writing from the 8th to the 15th century AD.

English Language

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2022,11,26)English is a West Germanic language of the Indo-European language family, with its earliest forms spoken by the inhabitants of early medieval England. It is named after the Angles, one of the ancient Germanic peoples that migrated to the island of Great Britain. English is genealogically West Germanic, closest related to the Low Saxon and Frisian languages; however, its vocabulary is also distinctively influenced by dialects of French (about 29% of modern English words) and Latin (also about 29%), plus some grammar and a small amount of core vocabulary influenced by Old Norse (a North Germanic language). Speakers of English are called Anglophones.

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The earliest forms of English, collectively known as Old English, evolved from a group of West Germanic (Ingvaenic) dialects brought to Great Britain by Anglo-Saxon settlers in the 5th century and further mutated by Norse-speaking Viking settlers starting in the 8th and 9th centuries. Middle English began in the late 11th century after the Norman conquest of England, when considerable French (especially Old Norman) and Latin-derived vocabulary was incorporated into English over some three hundred years. Early Modern English began in the late 15th century with the start of the Great Vowel Shift and the Renaissance trend of borrowing further Latin and Greek words and roots into English, concurrent with the introduction of the printing press to London. Modern English grammar is the result of a gradual change from a typical Indo-European dependent-marking pattern, with a rich inflectional morphology and relatively free word order, to a mostly analytic pattern with little inflection, and a fairly fixed subject–verb–object word order.^[13] Modern English relies more on auxiliary verbs and word order for the expression of complex tenses, aspect and mood, as well as passive constructions, interrogatives and some negation.

Modern English has spread around the world since the 17th century as a consequence of the worldwide influence of the British Empire and the United States of America. Through all types of printed and electronic media of these countries, English has become the leading language of international discourse and the *lingua franca* in many regions and professional contexts such as science, navigation and law. English is the most spoken language in the world and the third-most spoken native language in the world, after Standard Chinese and Spanish. It is the most widely learned second language and is either the official language or one of the official languages in 59 sovereign states. There are more people who have learned English as a second language than there are native speakers. As of 2005, it was estimated that there were over 2 billion speakers of English. English is the majority native language in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland (see Anglosphere), and is widely spoken in some areas of the Caribbean, Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. It is a co-official language of the United Nations, the European Union and many other world and regional international organisations. It is the most widely spoken Germanic language, accounting for at least 70% of speakers of this Indo-European branch.

Fur Language

According to omniglot.com/writing/fur (2022, 11, 26) Fur (Poor) is a member of the Fur branch of the Nilo-Saharan language family. It is spoken by about 745,800 people in Sudan and Chad. There are about 744,000 speakers of Fur mainly in the states of North Darfur, South Darfur and West Darfur in southwestern Sudan, and also in the east of Sudan. There are also about 1,800 Fur speakers in the Sila region of southeastern Chad.

Fur is also known as Dala, For, Fora, Fordunga, Forok, Forta, Furakang, Furawi, Kadirgi, Konjara, Korra, Kungara, Kurka, Lali, Onage or Yerge. Native speakers call it *Poor* [pɔɔr] and call themselves *Poora* [pɔɔra].

Its members are:

- Fur in western Sudan with around 750,000 speakers in 2004.
 - Amdang (also called Mimi) in eastern Chad with around 40,000 speakers in 2000.
- Fur is written with the Latin alphabet and is used in literature and on the radio.

Adjectives

Aarts & et al (2014, p. 9) explain that adjective is a major word class, traditionally (i.e. notionally) defined as containing 'describing' words, or 'words that tell us something about a noun'. In modern grammar adjectives are usually defined in morphosyntactic terms. Formally, a central adjective meets four grammatical conditions.

- (i) It can be used attributively in a noun phrase (e.g. an old man)
- (ii) Follow be or another copular verb, and thus occur in predicative position (e.g. He looks old)
- (iii) be premodified by intensifying words such as very (e.g. He's very old)
- (iv) have comparative and superlative forms (e.g. an older person, the oldest person in the group).

Quantitative Adjectives

Qualitative adjective is an adjective that is gradable and describes a quality, in contrast to a classifying adjective.

1990 Collins Cobuild English Grammar Adjectives that identify a quality that someone or something has, such as 'sad', 'pretty', 'small', 'happy', 'healthy', 'wealthy' and 'wise', are called qualitative adjectives.

The division of adjectives into qualitative and classifying is just one of the many ways in which adjectives can be categorized (Aarts & et al 2014, p. 345).

Attributive

Aarts & et al (2014: 39) state that some adjectives can only occur in attributive position (e.g. former, inner, mere, lone, main, indoor, utter). Nouns used attributively cannot normally be transferred to predicative use (the effect is greenhouse, this holiday is bank), though a small number of predicative uses of nouns may be the historical result of such a transfer (e.g. She is frightfully county; So Regency, my dear)

Predicative

Aarts & et al (2014: 320) argue that predicative is a syntactic position: occurring after a linking verb. It is contrasted with attributive. The term is particularly used in the classification of adjectives. Most adjectives (or adjective phrases) can be used in both attributive and predicative positions (e.g. a fine day, the day was fine; an expensive restaurant, the restaurant looks expensive). But some adjectives are used in only one of these positions.

Intensifying

The term is applied to adjectives and adverbs. We thus have intensifying adverbs (usually called intensifiers) and intensifying adjectives (including emphasizees). The latter are exemplified in the

following: Pure joy, complete nonsense, affirm commitment, utter rubbish, great hopes (Aarts & et al 2014: 220).

Degree

Aarts & et al (2014: 220) explain that degrees are the three points on the scale by which gradable adjectives and adverbs are compared; this scale as a feature of an adjective or adverb. The three degrees are absolute (1), comparative, and superlative:

great, greater, greatest

good, better, best

soon, sooner, soonest

Comparative

Comparative expressing a higher degree of the quality or attribute denoted by the absolute form, whether through inflection (essentially, by the addition of -er to the absolute form) or periphrasis (by the use of more), e.g. better, happier, sooner, cleaner, dirtier, fresher, more beneficial, more careful, more beautiful, more wonderful (Aarts & et al 2014: 76).

Superlative

Superlative is gradual adjective whether inflected (essentially, by the addition of -est to the positive form) or periphrastic (by the use of most): expressing the highest degree of the quality or attribute expressed by the positive degree word. Examples are: best, happiest, easiest, most beneficial, most careful, most beautiful, and most wonderful. Superlative degree is the highest degree of comparison, above positive and comparative (Aarts & et al 2014: 402).

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND PREDICTION

Attributive Use of Adjectives

The term refers to the position of an adjective in a phrase or a sentence. It is said that an adjective is attributive or is used attributively when it comes before a noun. These adjectives can be called prenominal.

English Attributive Use of Adjectives

- They are **clever** students.
- I am **strong** man.
- She is **smart** woman.
- He is **fast** runner.
- It is **naughty** dog.
- We are **Sudanese** citizens.
- You are a **tough** boss.

These above examples show the attributive use of English adjectives which situated before the nouns (clever, strong, smart, fast, naughty, Sudanese, tough) come before the noun which they modify.

Fur Attributive Use of Adjectives

Fur	transcription	English comparable
Dəó boorô	/ duə bəɾə/	a fat man
Dəó mandin	/duə manden/	a thin man
Dombore toy	/dɔmbəri tɔi/	an old book
Dombore diwwô	/dɔmbəri diwə/	a new book
ú fattâ	/u: fatə/	a white cow
ú dikkô	/u: dikkə/	a black cow

Table (1) Analysis of Data

English language		Fur language	
Adjective	Noun	Noun	Adjective
fat	man	dəó	boorô
thin	man	dəó	mandin
old	book	dombore	toy
new	book	dombore	diwwô
white	cow	ú	fattâ
black	cow	ú	dikkô

The above table (1) shows the attributive use of Fur and English adjectives. It is very obvious that English attributive adjectives go before the nouns which they describe whereas, Fur attributive use of adjectives (**boorô, mandin, toy, diwwô, fattâ, dikkô**) come after the nouns which they modify. This difference predicts problem encountered by Fur language speakers when they learn English language.

Predicative Use of Adjectives

An adjective is predicative or it is used predicatively when it comes directly after the verbs (be, seem, feel, look, turn ...etc). It can be used on its own as the complement.

English Predicative Use of Adjectives

- It looks **hot**.
- The dog is **hungry**.

- The boy is **tired**.
- My daughter seems **happy**.
- His father feels **sick**.
- Her son became **mad**.
- It turned **dark**.

The examples above display the predicative use of English adjectives(hot, hungry, tired,happy, sick,mad, dark) which come directly after the verbs as a complement.

Fur Predicative Use of Adjectives

Fur transcription
 Dəó **boorô** -ii / duə bəɔə ei/
 Dəó **mandin** -ii / duə məndən ei/
 Dombore **toy**- ii /dɔmbɔri tɔi ei/
 Dombore **diwwô**-ii / dɔmbɔri diwɔ ei/
 ú **fattâ** - ii / u: fætə ei/
 ú **dikkô** -ii /u: dikkɔ ei/

English comparable
 The man is **fat**.
 The man is **thin**.
 The book is **old**.
 The book is **new**.
 The cow is **white**.
 The cow is **black**.

Table (2) Analysis of Data

English language			Fur language		
Subject	verb	adjective	Subject	Adjective	verb
The man	is	fat	dəó	boorô	ii
The man	is	thin	dəó	mandin	ii
The book	is	old	dombore	toy	ii
The book	is	new	dombore	diwwô	ii
The cow	is	white	ú	fattâ	ii
The cow	is	black	ú	dikkô	ii

It is clear from above table (2) examples of predicative use of adjectives of quality in English and Fur languages. That is to say, English predicative use of adjectives slightly differs from the Fur language, because in English language they come after the verb (be) whereas, in Fur language they go before the verb (ii=be). This difference may result in learning problem when Fur language speakers learn English and vice versa.

Intensifiers

The intensifiers are used to make adjectives stronger, they are like: very, much, so, really, extremely, too, incredibly.

English Examples:

- She is **very** clever.
- He is **too** strong.
- It is **extremely** cold.
- The journey was **really** wonderful.
- Thank you **so** much.

The above examples show that the English intensifiers go before the adjectives which they modify.

Fur Examples:

The intensifiers are used to make adjectives stronger, they are like: *saw, led, terel, sod, lid, raw, red, sa soyya, paai, direl, tak, leny.*

- Duó boorô **lid** ai The man is **very** fat.
- Duó mandin **tak** ai The man is **too** thin.
- Dombore toy **tak** ai The book is **very** old.
- Dombore diwwô **leny** ai The book is **so** new.
- ú fattâ **terel** ai The cow is **so** white.
- ú dikkô diril ai The cow is **so** black.

Table (3) Analysis of Data

English language				Fur language			
Subject	verb	intensifiers	adjective	Subject	Adjective	intensifiers	verb
The man	is	very	fat	duó	boorô	lid	ai
The man	is	too	thin	duó	mandin	tak	ai
The book	is	very	old	dombore	toy	tak	ai
The book	is	so	new	dombore	diwwô	leny	ai
The cow	is	so	white	ú	fattâ	terel	ai
The cow	is	so	black	ú	dikkô	diril	ai

As can be seen from the above table(3) the intensifiers in Fur language usually go after the adjectives which they describe. The position of intensifiers in Fur language differs from English ones. The English intensifiers go before the adjectives whereas, the Fur ones go after the adjectives, this difference can cause problem to the learners of the Fur language when they learn English and vice versa.

Comparative Adjectives

Comparative adjectives are used to compare two things—they help describe differences between two nouns.

English Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
fast	faster	fastest
cheap	cheaper	cheapest
fresh	fresher	freshest
big	bigger	biggest
sad	sadder	saddest
important	more important	most important
attractive	more attractive	most attractive
embarrassed	more embarrassed	most embarrassed

Fur Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Fur

transcription

Duó boorô lid ai	/duə bəɾə lid ei/
Duó mandin tak ai	/ duə mænden tæk ei/
Dombore toy tak ai	/ dəmbəri tɔi tæk ei/
Dombore diwwô leny ai	/dəmbəri diwə leny ei/
ú fattâ terel ai	/u: fætə terel ei/
ú dikkô diril ai	/ u: dikkə diril ei/

English

The man is **very** fat.
 The man is **too** thin.
 The book is **very** old.
 The book is **so** new.
 The cow is **so** white.
 The cow is **so** black.

Table (4) Analysis of Data

English language		
Adjective	Comparative	superlative
fresh	fresher	freshest
big	bigger	biggest
sad	sadder	saddest
important	more important	most important
attractive	more attractive	most attractive

Table (5) Analysis of Data

Fur language				
Adjective	Comparative		Superlative	
	adjective	verb	Adjective pronoun	Adjective
boorô	boorô	ai	daiŋ (our)	boorô
mandin	mandin	ai	daiŋ(their)	mandin
toy	toy	ai	dúŋj (their)	toy
diwwô	diwwô	ai	dienŋ(your)	diwwô

The above tables(4),(5) show that the English comparative and superlative adjectives are formed by adding –er/est to adjective or more/most +adjective. However, the Fur language comparative and superlative adjectives are formed differently. Comparative adjectives are followed by verb to be (ai) in Fur language and superlative by using adjective pronoun, that is to say adjective pronoun+ adjective becomes superlative adjective in Fur language.

FINDINGS

The contrastive analysis of English and Fur adjectives of quality has revealed that there are differences and similarities between English and Fur adjectives of quality as the following:

Similarities

1. English and Fur adjectives of quality modify the nouns.
2. The both languages use their adjectives of quality attributively.
3. The two languages use the intensifiers to strengthen the adjectives of quality.
4. The both languages use the adjectives of quality predicatively.

Differences

- 1- It is very obvious that English attributive adjectives go before the nouns which they describe whereas, Fur attributive use of adjectives (**boorô, mandin , toy, diwwô, fattâ , dikkô**) come after the nouns which they modify.
- 2- English predicative use of adjectives slightly differs from the Fur language, because in English language they come after the verb (be) whereas, in Fur language they go before the verb (ii=be).
- 3- The position of intensifiers in Fur language differs from English ones. The English intensifiers go before the adjectives whereas, the Fur ones go after the adjectives.

4- The English comparative and superlative adjectives are formed by adding –er/est to adjective or more/most +adjective. However, the Fur language comparative and superlative adjectives are formed differently. Comparative adjectives are followed by verb to be (ai) in Fur language and superlative by using adjective pronoun, that is to say adjective pronoun+ adjective becomes superlative adjective in Fur language

CONCLUSION

This research has done on a contrastive analysis of English and Fur adjectives of quality. The analysis began with comparing and contrasting of English and Fur adjectives of quality. In the light of contrastive analysis (CA) the grammar difficulties for the learners of Fur and English languages were predicted based on the differences in the use of adjectives of quality in the two languages. These difficulties are due to grammatical differences of the use of adjectives of quality in the two languages. That is to say, English belongs to Indo-European language family, however, Fur belongs to Nilo-Saharan family. The tutors should be acquainted with the results of CA for the two languages; these differences enable them to teach accurate grammar to the foreign language learners in general as well as Fur learners in particular.

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