



Contrastive Analysis of Declarative Sentence between Fur Language and English Language

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to contrast the structure of declarative sentences of Fur and English language with a view to identify the areas of similarities and differences. The study shows that English and Fur languages are from different language families. English belongs to Indio-European language family whereas; Fur belongs to Nilo- Saharan language family. The researchers have adopted contrastive analysis methodology to conduct this study. The data will be collected from grammar books of English as well as the text books of Fur language. Using the descriptive research method and tree diagrams (Phrase Markers) and tables to analyze the data. They contrast some examples of declarative sentences between Fur and English Language. The results reveal that Fur and English languages, are distinct from one another but at the same time they are alike in terms of sentential elements. The structure of declarative sentence in English language consists of subject (S), verb (V), object (O) SVO this is characteristic of English language sentence structure whereas, the structure of Fur language sentence is SOV that is to say the order of sentential elements of Fur language is different from the English one. The two languages have two kinds of questions (Wh-question and Yes/No question) but with different words arrangement. In order to overcome the above problems, this study recommends that the teachers should concentrate on the areas of differences in both languages. The curriculum designers and textbook writers in Sudan should clearly reflect, in their work the differences that exist between the sentence structures of English and Nilo- Saharan Languages which spoken by a large number of Sudanese.

Keywords: *Sentence, subject, verb, object, similarities, differences, contrastive analysis.*

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INTRODUCTION

What is Contrastive Analysis?

Contrastive Analysis means the comparison of two languages by paying attention to differences and similarities between languages being compared.

Contrastive analysis was used extensively in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in the 1960s and early 1970s, as a method of explaining why some features of a target language were more difficult to acquire than others. According to the behaviourist theories prevailing at the time, language learning was a question of habit formation, and this could be reinforced or impeded by existing habits. Therefore, the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language (L2) depended on the difference between the learners' mother language (L1) and the language they were trying to learn [1].

Contrastive analysis (CA) is the systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences. CA has often been done for practical/pedagogical purposes. Contrastive analysis has two versions –

(i) the strong version and (ii) the weak version. In the first version, that is, the strong version, the system of one language such as the grammar, phonology and lexicon is contrasted with the system of a second language in order to predict the difficulties a speaker of a second language confronts in learning the first language and thereby to construct reading materials to help him or her learn that language.

Contrastive Analysis can be conducted at different levels of linguistic analysis. The levels that are of major importance for language teachers are "contrastive lexicon, contrastive syntax, contrastive semantics and contrastive pragmatics, the latter including text studies some aspects of sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspective" [2].

CA is situated at the theoretical level when it is devoted solely to the comparison of the linguistic systems of two or more languages. It is situated at applied level when it provides linguistic data for the preparation of instructional material in second /foreign language teaching.

Contrastive Analysis has often been done for *practical/pedagogical* purposes. The aim has been to provide better descriptions and better teaching materials for language learners. There is more to CA than this, however. When we compare, we often see things more clearly.

Contrastive Analysis and Language Teaching

The background for CA, as applied to language teaching, is the assumption that the native language plays a crucial role in learning a second language. Mother tongue influence is sometimes very obvious, e.g. in the case of foreign accent. We can often recognize foreign speakers by their accent; an American speaking French normally sounds quite different from a Frenchman or a German. Influence from the mother tongue is not just negative, however; learning a related language is much easier than learning one that is very different. These sorts of observations have probably always been made in language learning and in the contact between native and foreign speakers. When people have written textbooks for learners of foreign languages, there has regularly been an element of comparison between the native language and the foreign language to be learned. Bilingual dictionaries are of course also contrastive. But when we refer to CA, we think particularly of a systematic comparison of the mother tongue and the foreign language in order to describe similarities and differences, to identify points of difficulty which might lead to interference. The basic ideas are:

- Describe and compare the mother tongue / L1 / source language and the foreign language / L2 / target language.
- Predict points of difficulty.
- Use the results in order to improve teaching materials [3]. This sort of approach was developed in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s. Two prominent names were Charles Fries and Robert Lado, who explained the rationale for applied CA in this way:

The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner [4].

Syntactic Structure What is syntax?

Chomsky [5] states that syntax is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages. Syntactic investigation of a given language has as its goal the construction of a grammar that can be viewed as a device of some sort for producing the sentences of the language under analysis.

Attempting to describe the language you speak is about as difficult as attempting to describe yourself as a person. Your language is very much part of you and your thinking. You use your language so instinctively that it is difficult to stand outside yourself and think of it as something that is independent of you, something which you know and which can be described [6].

This indicates that analyzing and describing a language syntactically is not an easy task, therefore, it needs extra efforts to be exerted in order to achieve its goals.

Concerning structure Noel Burton-Roberts [6] claims that:

'structure is central to the study of syntax. But structure is a very general concept that applies to any complex thing, whether it's a bicycle, a commercial company, or a carbon molecule. When we say something is complex we mean, not that it is complicated (though of course it may be), but that

(a) it's divisible into parts (its constituents),

(b) there are different kinds of parts (different categories of constituents), (c) the constituents are arranged in a certain way, (d) and each constituent has a specifiable function in the structure of the thing as a whole.'

In dealing with syntactic structure, we will be doing three things:

(a) analysing linguistic expressions into their constituents, (b) identifying the categories of those constituents, and (c) determining their functions. This study is mainly concerned with the first of these – constituency. But what kind of expressions should we begin with? I'll take the sentence as the starting point for analysis.

Types of Sentences

In linguistics, sentences have different functions and structures. The function of sentence refers to the speaker's purpose in uttering a specific sentence. Therefore, there are four basic sentence functions in the world's language which include the following: declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative. These sentences can be changed from one function to another through a combination of changes in word arrangement and the addition of certain auxiliaries. This study focuses on the structure of declarative sentences.

Declarative Sentence:

This is the most common type of sentence. It tells something and always ends with a full stop.

The Need for Contrastive Analysis of English and Fur Language

English is an official language of many countries across the globe. It is used as the mediums of instruction for different educational institutions. While Fur language is spoken in Sudan particularly in western Sudan in Darfur region by Fur tribe which is the largest ethnic group in western Sudan. In order to know more about the language and to avoid errors in writing and speaking, a contrastive analysis of the two languages is an essential task.

Therefore, the present study focuses on the important aspects of the two languages, that is, the syntactic structure of these two languages to find out the similarities and differences between the two languages.

English Language

English belongs to the western branch of the German languages, a sub-family of the Indo-European languages. It is used as the chief medium of communication by the people in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and numerous other countries. English is an official language in many of the Commonwealth countries. It is spoken all over the world than any other language ever before throughout the human history. There are many dialects of English language spoken in England Scotland. Besides standard form of English, there are England and Scotland as well as cultural varieties such as Black English which spoken by African-American in United States.

Fur Language

Fur language is a Nilo-Saharan language spoken by the Fur people in Darfur region in western Sudan. It is part of a broader family of languages known as the Fur languages. It is native to Sudan and Chad. It is spoken by 750,000 native speakers in 2004. Amdang (also called Mimi) in eastern Chad with around 40,000 native speakers in 2000 [1].

The Statement of The Problem

Sudan is multilingual country which around 115 languages are spoken besides 500 dialects. Every language of the world has its own sentence pattern or structure. This is due to difference of linguistic backgrounds. It is clear that the structural differences in English and Fur sentences create problems in the teaching and learning of English, the target language. This study attempts to find out the similarities and dissimilarities that exist between the two languages as well as the implications 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 problems due to the fact that the sentence constituents and the syntactic arrangements of the two languages are slightly different in nature. In this situation, it is expected that contrastive analysis of English and Fur sentence structures will be of pedagogical benefit 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 researches have been conducted on this area therefore, this study intends to address this issue deeply.

The Significance of The Study

This Study will benefit the students of language, especially those who are concerned with grammar and the field of structural analysis 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 have a positive effect on the learners to master English language. The curriculum designers and text book writers will find roadmap in this study to design school curricula and syllabuses to reflect sentence patterns of Nilo-Saharan languages particularly in Darfur region schools. Consequently, the study will serve as a source of further studies of this field. Moreover, this study will shed lights on sentence structures of both English and Fur languages, by analyzing the structure of declarative and interrogative sentences of the two languages. Therefore, this study guides teachers to focus on the areas of differences to improve learners' comprehending of the sentence structures of the target language (English).

The Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. identify the areas of similarities in the syntactic structures of the English and Fur languages;
2. describe the differences between the English and Fur syntactic structures;
3. point out the pedagogical implications of the similarities and differences in English and Fur sentence structures.

The Questions of the Study

This study tries to answer the following questions:

1. How far do the English and Fur syntactic structures differ from one another?
2. To what extent do English and Fur syntactic structures have similarity with one another?
3. What are the pedagogical difficulties which the Fur learner of English will encounter with English syntactic structures?

The Hypotheses of the Study

This study hypothesizes the following:

1. The English and Fur syntactic structures differ from each other.
2. English and Fur syntactic structures have similarity with one another.
3. The pedagogical difficulties which the Fur learner of English will encounter with English syntactic structures.

The Methodology of the Study

The researcher has adopted contrastive analysis methodology and phrase structure rules to conduct this study. He contrasts and compares some examples of declarative and interrogative sentences of Fur and English Language. The data will be collected from English grammar books and text books of Fur language. Population of this study includes written and spoken sentences in both English and Fur languages.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

Every language has several aspects that can be studied. These aspects include phonology, syntax, semantics and morphology. However, this study sheds lights on the area of syntax, which is a part of grammar. It focuses only on declarative and interrogative sentences structure between Fur and English languages.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section is about constructions and analysis of the sentences of Fur and English language.

Structure of English Language Sentences

Sentences in English language are formed by the careful arrangement of the words according to the syntactic or grammatical rules of English language, subject, verb and object (SVO).

Structure of Fur Language Sentences

Fur language has its unique form of sentence structure which is basically, subject, object and verb (SOV).

Contrastive Analysis

The English and Fur language differ in various aspects; socioeconomics; cultural features, geographical location and language families. As the topic requires i.e a contrastive analysis of the sentence structure of English table (A) and Fur Language (B), the sentential elements are used to analyze the declarative sentence structure of both languages. By doing so, the similarities and differences will manifest and form the final result based on which conclusions can be drawn.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Table(A) English Language	Table(B) Fur Language
Demonstrative adjectives	Demonstrative Adjectives
this	in
these	kin
that	illa
those	killa
	illá
	killá

- illá is used to point out the singular object or person which is further than illa, however, English does not have this kind of demonstrative adjective.
- killá is used to point out the plural objects or people which they are further than killa but, English does not have this kind of demonstrative adjective.

English sentences	Fur sentences
This is a man.	In aba ai.
These are men.	Kin abanage
That is a tree.	Illa koru ai.
Those are camels.	Killa kamala ge.
That is a dog when is further than that.	Illá asa ai.
Those are mountains when they are further than those	killá fugonage.

The above sentences begin with demonstrative adjectives either singular or plural in both languages this is very good indication of similarity between two languages. Whereas, there are two demonstrative adjective (Illá and killá) which are excluded to Fur language, shows the difference in two languages.

There is verb to be (is – are) in above sentences in English as well as in Fur language(ai- ge) but these two languages are different in terms of word order particularly, verb and its object, for example:

Table(A) English sentences

Demonstrative adjective	Verb to be	Complement
This	is	a man
These	are	men
That	is	a tree
Those	are	mountains

Table(B) Fur sentences

Demonstrative adjective	Complement	Verb to be
In	aba	ai
kin	abanage	ge
Illa	asa	ai
killá	fugonage	ge

The table (A) shows the structure of English sentence (demonstrative + verb to + complement) whereas, the table(B) shows the sentence structure of Fur language (demonstrative + complement + verb to be).

English sentences	Fur sentences
The boy eats mangoes.	Kowémanhanáam.
They killed a lion.	YeéñmUr kawheé.

Table (A) English Structure

Subject	Verb	Object
The boy	eats	mangoes

They	killed	a lion
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Table(B) Fur Structure

Subject	Object	Verb
Kowé	maṅṅaṅá	aam.
Yeéŋ	mŭrɐ	kawŋeé.

The above table(A) shows the structure of English sentence (SVO) whereas, the table (B) obviously, shows the sentence structure of Fur language (SOV). This indicates that the two languages begin with the subject but, they are different in terms of verb and object arrangement.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study is to show the structure of declarative sentences of Fur and English languages in order to identify the similarities and differences. Through this study many declarative sentences were compared and contrasted, consequently, the analysis displays that Fur and English languages are distinct from each other but at the same time they are alike in terms of sentential elements.

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