

Research Article

A Contrastive Analysis of Adjective Phrases in English and Kihaavu

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Received: Sep 19, 2019

Accepted: Sep 26, 2019

Published: Sep 30, 2019

Abstract: This study is a contrastive analysis of adjective phrases in English and in Kihaavu. The aim is to point out the difficulties a Kihaavu native speaker is likely to face when learning English adjective phrases. To carry out this article, I resorted to the library approach, internet research and direct observation. The results reveal that the source of Kihaavu native speakers' errors and difficulties in learning English adjective phrase are due to differences in the structures of English and Kihaavu adjective phrases. It was found that interference from Kihaavu and is the main factor that affects their learning process. Kihaavu speakers should pay more attention, through a variety of exercises, on the structure and use of the English adjective phrase.

Keywords: Adjective phrases, Structure, Contrastive, Difficulties, factor.

1. Introduction

This article points out the outstanding similarities and differences between English and Kihaavu languages. First, it looks at those areas of similarities and differences so as to predict errors a Kihaavu native speaker learning English is likely to encounter. Second, it suggests some techniques in learning as a remedy to difficulties.

2. Review of literature

Linguistics got interested in comparing and contrasting languages in terms of systems and aspects. It is worth to say that Charles Fries was regarded by many scholars, as the founder of modern contrastive linguistics and the first to have applied contrastive analysis to foreign language learning. In the course of time, contrastive is now widespread through Lado (1975:2) as stated: "those elements which are similar to (the learner's) native language will be simple for him, and those elements which are different will be difficult."

Taking into consideration what precedes, Lado owns the position of the first man to have provided a comprehensive and outstanding deal for the contrastive study of language. Contrastive analysis was thought to be more successful linguistic approach for providing language teaching materials.

This point of view goes back to James (1980:3) who asserts: "it was on such a basis that the 1960's saw a range of contrastive analysis published (typically between English language and other world languages) and host of language teaching materials made available" Contrastive analysis remains ambiguous in that its strong version is looked at as a preventive measure whereas curative measure is its weak version. Moreover, contrastive analysis is a second language acquisition approach that compares features of first language with those of second

language in order to determine the similarities and differences between them. When people undertake to learn a second language, there are always two kinds of transfer that intervene (positive and negative transfer). Contrastive analysis claims to be in the right position to detect language learning problems and provide suitable materials as a remedy to facilitate the language learning but also predict ease and difficulty that are likely to be encountered in the process of second language learning. Johnson highlights the following: “contrastive analysis consists of a series of statements and differences between two languages so as to predict the learning problems.

For James, (1980:IV) views contrastive as an inter-linguistics which looks on a language not merely as form but also as function in context, not merely as system to be described but as a system to be acquired: a psycho-sociolinguistics study across language boundaries. Because of unlimited dimensions a language embodies, James shows that when someone is contrasting a pair of language, one should not focus on both form and structure only, but rather the way they function (their use as means of communication). A contrastive analysis considers the cultures of the society that uses the language under study. It is regarded as a linguistic approach which believes that the mother tongue is the sole source learners' errors. Lado (1975:2) argues: interference of mother tongue causes error and difficulties in foreign language learning... individuals tend transfer their native language and culture to the foreign language. Contrastive analysis is quite useful in predicting difficulties of the second language learner.

According to Leech (1968:186) about contrastive analysis, says: that (1) the prime cause or even the sole cause of difficulties and error in foreign language learning is interference coming from the learners' native language. (2) the difficulties are chiefly, or widely due to the differences between the two languages.(3) the greater these differences are the more acute the learning difficulties will be,

Linguistics analysts should have a different view about the above statements since there might be some contrastive realities that can occur due to the mother tongue with the second language. For Fries (1945:9) the most efficient materials are those that are based upon scientific description of the languages to be learned, carefully compared with parallel description of the native language of learner. The particular contrast concerns English and kihaavu.

3. Work Methodology

This work has carried out due some approaches such as: library, internet, and direct observation. Kihaavu is widely spoken in the whole Territory of Idjwi and consists of two parts, namely, South-Idjwi and North Idjwi. This language is also spoken in two groupings in Kalehe Territory, namely, Mbinga -Sud and Mbinga -Nord. I randomly selected informants from different areas where Kihaavu is spoken and realized to be in touch with 24 informants among them 12 informants from both North- Idjwi and South-Idjwi and 12 informants from both Mbinga-Sud and Mbinga-Nord, in Kalehe Territory. The aim was to find informants from both Territories, as this may bring in different accents.

In this study, I used extrinsic approach which consists of taking information from outside sources in order to show the link between the topic and the existing literature. It shows the evidence that is needed, obtained from other external sources. I made a questionnaire that consisting of sentences with adjective phrases differently structured. Through it, Kihaavu native speakers provided the necessary information needed for this study. The questionnaires

were written in French to allow a number of informants to be able to answer all the questions. Some of the sentences were to be translated in kihaavu, other were to be explained (structure, semantics, etc.), and other were to be translated in French. As for the interview, it allows verbal exchange with the informants to collect some data. The interview was an important tool in this process since some of the informants found conversing. The above approaches used have provided some explanations about the informants I contacted.

4. Differences and similarities: Predictions

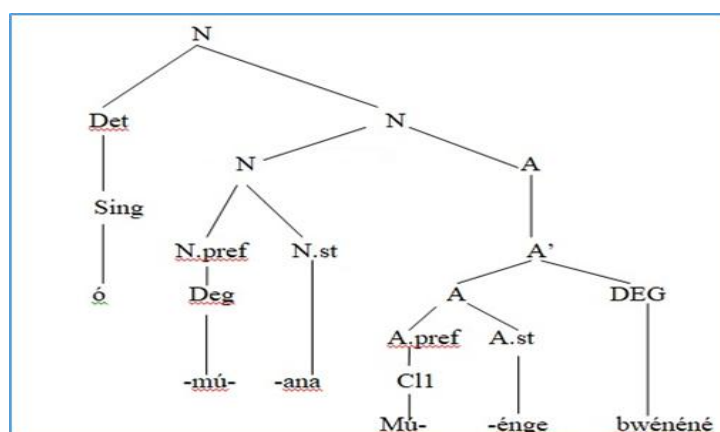
1.1. Structure

In both English and Kihaavu, the adjective phrase consists of adjectives functioning as a head of the phrase and its modifier. However, the ways these elements follow one another is what makes differences.

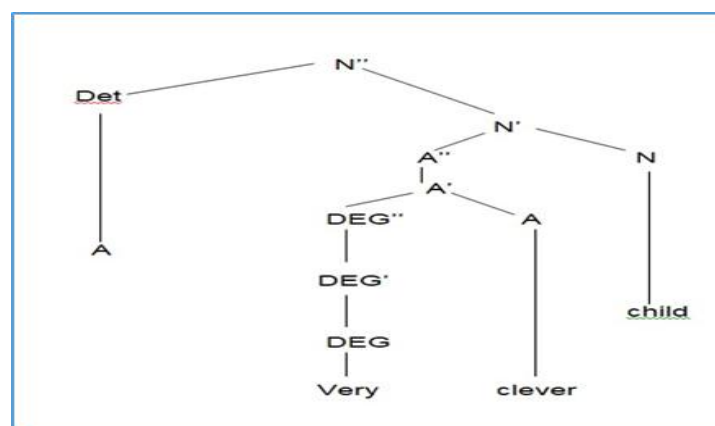
1.1.1. Modifiers and APs

Differences and similarities Examples:

Kihaavu): Omwana mwenge bwénéné



(English): A very clever child



These two tree diagrams illustrate the structure of an A and a DEG. Adv. in the two languages. In English the DEG Adv. premodifies the adjective, unlike in Kihaavu where only post-modifies the adjective.

Predictions of difficulties

The structure above may push the learner to produce wrong utterances like:

L1 → L2

L1 Kihaavu → L2 English

Omukazi mule bwénéné “A very tall woman”

*A woman tall very

Oluinji lubahofi bwénéné n’ényumpa yabo “a river (stream) is very close to their house”

*A river (stream) is very close to their house

It is well shown that the adjective can be repeated and stand for the degree adverb or simply use both for emphasis.

Omulumu mofi mofi “A very short man”

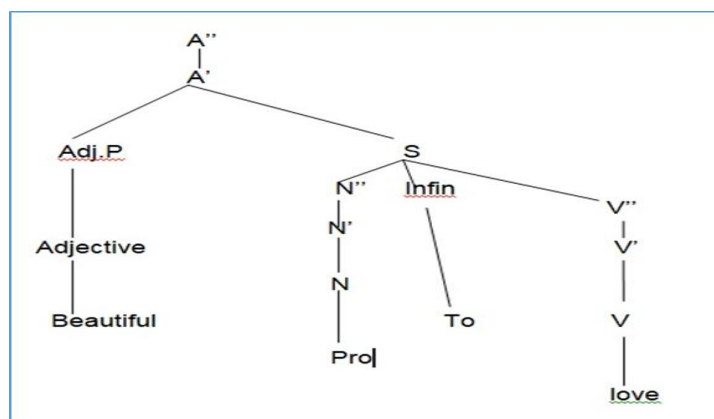
*A man short short

Hyana hyenge hyenge bwénéné “A small child who is very (very) clever”

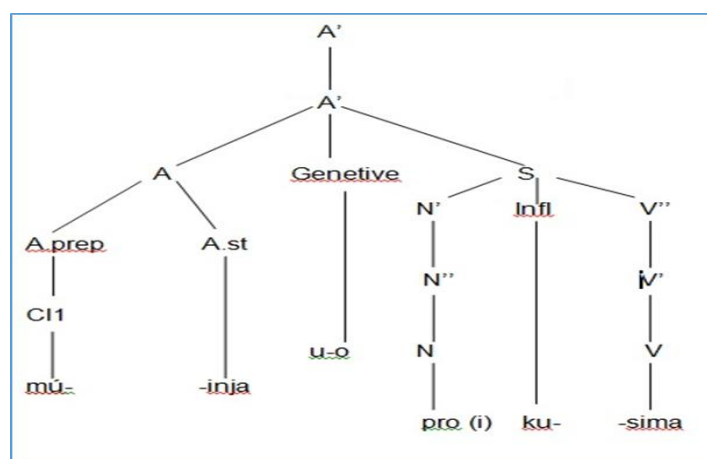
A (small) child clever clever very.

It should be noted that there are similarities in complementing the AP in both languages with clauses as well as with demonstratives. Clauses are always post-modifiers.

English: beautiful to love



Kihaavu: mwinja wokusima



Despite the similarity in the complementation the Kihaavu native speaker is likely to use a connective (genitive) between the adjective and the clause.

-Mwinja wakusima : beautiful to love”

*Beautiful of love

-(mishi) maholo mw’okunywa “(water) cold to drink”

*Cold of to drink

L1 English —————→L2 Kihaavu

-A very charming girl “Omunyere mushagalusi bwéneéné

*Obwenene mushagalusi bwéneéné

-She is so rich “Ali mugale bwéneéné”

*Ali bwéneéné mugale

-Alice is very fat “Alisi ali mucwezi bwéneéné”

*Alisi ali bwéneéné muchwezi.

2. Coordinated APs

Similarities

The similarity is that in the two languages, the conjunction “and” in English “Kandi” in Kihaavu are used.

English: The boat is long and big

Kihaavu: Amashuwa gaba male kandi manene

Either of these coordinated APs can be modified

English: Paul is very rude but intelligent

Kihaavu: Polo aba muguruguru bwenene aliko mwenge (wa hakiri)

Comparison

Differences: There are problems a Kihaavu native speaker learning the English APs may face as far as comparison of A is concerned. These difficulties can be found during the use of equality, superiority, inferiority and superlative.

In English, as you can see, → the structure as +A+ as is used to express equality, er +than for superiority with short adjectives, more + than for superiority with long adjectives, less + A + than for inferiority, and the + -est for superlative with long adjectives.

In Kihaavu, however, the structure ku-ndusha (for 1st PS) kulusha nka (kuguma) come after the adjectives to stand for the comparison.

Prediction of difficulties

Kihaavu native speaker may be tempted to produce ill-forme utterances like:

a. Equality: A+Equalizer

Kihaavu: Byegulu ali mule nk’eshe “ Byegulu is as tall as his father”

A equ.

English: Byegulu is tall as his father

A (equ.)

b. Superiority

Kihaavu: Byeragi ali mwofi ku (kulusha) Byenda “ Byeragi is shorter than Byenda

*Byeragi is short (more) than Byenda

- Ebarabara liba linja ku (kulusha) enjira. “A road is more beautiful than a path.”

*A road is beautiful (more) than a path.

c. Inferiority: not (-rha-)+A+Equalizer; as (nka or kuguma)

Kihaavu: Mugoli a-rha-mucwezi kuguma na nina “Mugoli is not as fat as her mother”

English: *Mugoli is not fat as her mother.

d. Superlative: Conn.N+A+NP (the group)

Kihaavu: Bahati ye mwana mucwezi omu mwabo “Bahati is the fattest child in their family”

*Bahati is (the) child fat in their family

Function of Adjective Phrases

a. Differences and similarities

In both languages, Adjective phrases can function either as nominatives (nouns), or as adverbials. As for nominalized adjective phrase, in English an adjective phrase takes the definite article “the” and stands for the plural form although “S” morpheme is not mentioned.

In Kihaavu, however, the adjective fronts the so-called Augment “O-“ , as well as the adjective prefix depending on the different classes; with regard to number.

Nominalized adjective phrase

Eg. A bashalishali “the hungry”

O mwinja “A beautiful (girl)”

The nominalized adjective phrase still keeps the nominal prefix, which makes it possible to be pluralized. This is not the case in English where an adjective is not put in plural.

Nouns from adjective phrase

Eg.: O bu bi = badness

Det A.pref A.st

O bu nene = bigness or fatness

In this case the adjective prefix is unique “-bu- of class 14 precedes the adjectival system and then the article (augment).

a. Prediction of difficulties

The learners might accordingly produce wrong expressions like:

Kihaavu: Abakene balorha obugale

English: The poor dream of riches

Kihaavu: Omwinja arhabula shembo. “A beautiful girl never misses a flaw”

English: *A beautiful never misses a flaw.

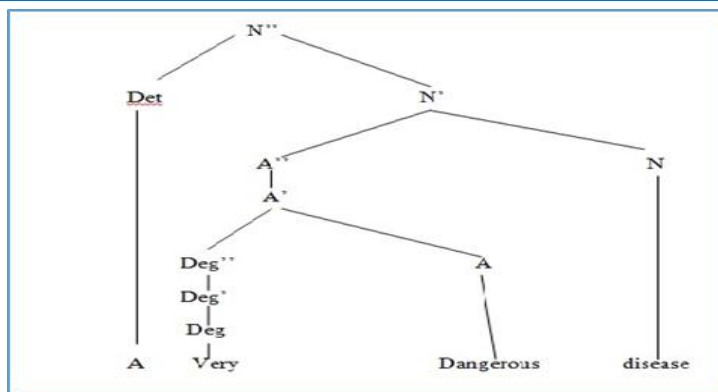
*A poor dreams of riches

Use of adjectives

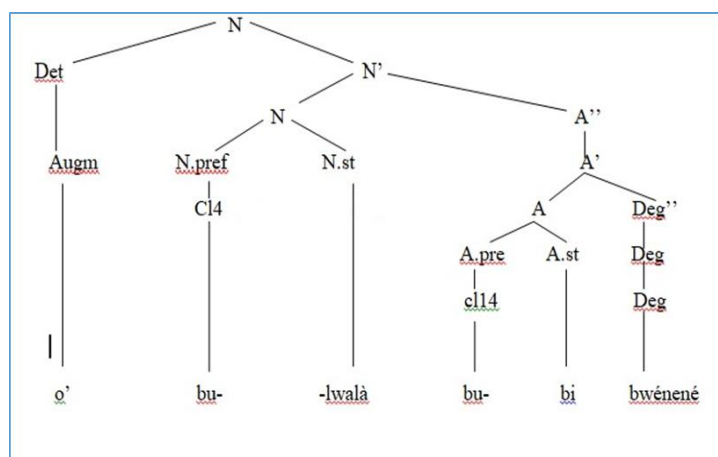
a. Differences and similarities

In both languages adjective phrases can function attributively and predicatively. Since attributiveness implies pre-modification and post modification, the Kihaavu adjective phrase differs from the English one.

The former never pre-modifies a noun within a Noun Phrase, i.e. it will always come after the noun and not before except the article, determiners and demonstratives whereas the latter does. This point is well-illustrated in the tree diagrams below: English: A very dangerous disease.



Kihaavu: Obulwala bubi bwénené



b. Prediction of difficulties

Following the illustrations in the tree diagrams above, A Muhaavu is likely to say:

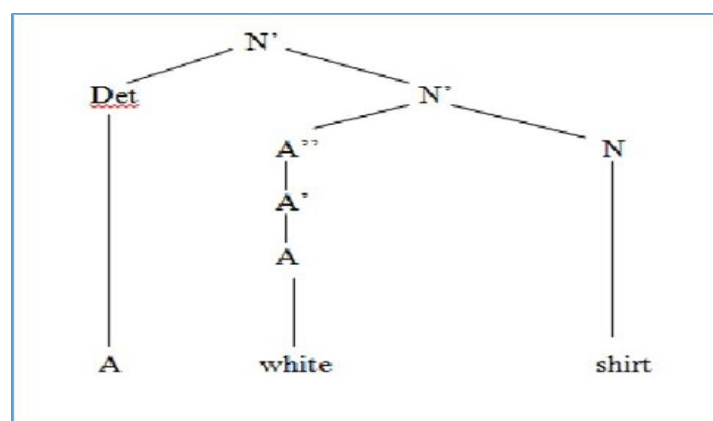
Kihaavu: Munyere mwinja bwenene, "A very beautiful girl"

English: *A girl beautiful very

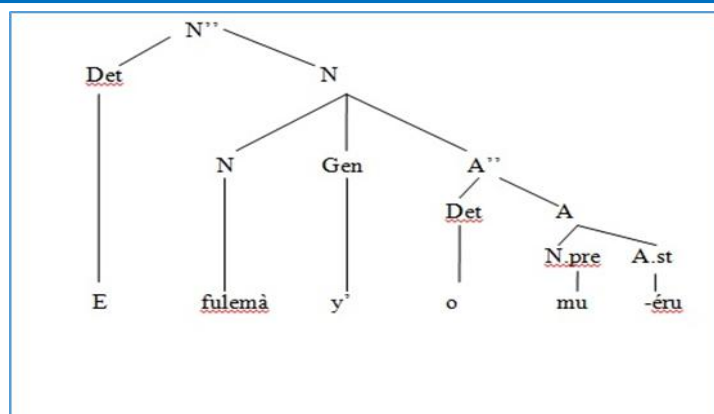
*A boy intelligent

I can mention the use of connective or genitive which is used with some adjectives, especially those of color and ordinals.

Examples: English: A white shirt



Kihaavu: Efulema (e shomizi) y'omweru



Ill-formed utterances are likely to be produced:

- *A shirt of white
- *A pen of red
- *An argument of first

This is possible from the time colour adjective phrases are regarded as nouns, and used with so-called augment. The semantic meaning of these adjectives used with genitives is such of considering a noun as belonging of an adjective.

Number: plurality and singularity

a. Differences and similarities

Kihaavu adjective phrases present forms that can be analyzed as singular or plural with regard to the number of the noun they are modifying. This is possible because of the cohesion or concord between the nominal prefix (of the noun it modifies) and the adjectival prefix, which is not the case of English.

b. Predication of difficulties

A Kihaavu native speaker may tend to put an adjective phrase in plural as s/he can say:

Kihaavu : Muntu mu – inja: “Good person”

Bantu ba –inja (benja) “Good persons”

English: *Goods persons

*Beautifuls girls

*These trees are bigs.

Conclusion

From the contrastive analysis, it was discovered that the structure and function of adjective phrases in Kihaavu differ from those of adjective phrases in English. As for the structure, an adjective phrase in Kihaavu comprises an obligatory adjective (A) which may be followed by an optional degree phrase, clause or adverbial, while in English, it is made up of an obligatory adjective(A), which may be optionally pre-modified by a degree phrase and/ or post-modified by a clause and/ or an adverbial. It is noticed that, even though an adjective within English or Kihaavu adjective phrase can be modified by a degree phrase, a clause or an adverbial, the difference is that in Kihaavu, all these modifiers come after the obligatory adjective, while in English, the degree phrase comes before the adjective but the clause and/or adverbial come after it. About the function, in both English and Kihaavu an adjective phrase functions attributively and predicatively within a noun phrase and within a sentence. The difference is that a Kihaavu adjective phrase is generally a post-modifier within a noun phrase, whereas in English it is usually a pre-modifier and sometimes a post modifier when

used attributively. As for the English adjective phrases to Kihaavu native speakers, it is worth mentioning that trainers should pay more attention, through a variety of exercises, to the structure and function of the English adjective phrase.

Conflicts of interest

There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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Appendixes

1. Questionnaires d'enquete

Cher(e) enquêtée, dans le cadre du travail pratique de la linguistique Comparée, nous menons une recherche qui porte sur « A Contrastive Analysis of Adjective phrase in English and in Kihaavu » c'est- à dire, « une analyse contrastive des expressions adjectivales en Anglais et en Kihaavu » Pour réussite de ce travail, nous vous prions de nous aider en répondant soigneusement et sérieusement aux questions suivantes :

I. Identification:

Nom:

Age :

Sexe :

Profession :

Milieux :

Date :

II. Lisez et expliquez les expressions soulignées :

1. Munyere mukulu mukulu bwene

.....

2. Cungu cikulukulu ntaye wa kivuyir'amo

.....


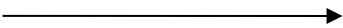
3. Cibuzi omunka mpu nay'enka.

.....

4. Mukazi orhalihubwire arharhama

.....

III.

1. Donnez une phrase dans la quelle vous parlez de l'etat d'une personne
.....
2. Donnez une phrase ou vous parlez de l'etat d'une chose ou d'un animal ou un objet.
.....
3. Comparez les figures suivantes :
A 
B 
4. Donnez une phrase, employez quatre adjectifs qualificatifs de meme nom
.....

IV. Traduisez ces phrases en Kihaavu:

Une belle jupe rouge.....
Une belle table a bois
Les malades ne sont pas seulement a l'hopital.....
Il a reussi une question tres difficile
Un enfant malin.....
Des enfants malin.....

Citation: Bake Muhigwa Julien and Lwaboshi Masirika Marc. 2019. A Contrastive Analysis of Adjective Phrases in English and Kihaavu. International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research, 3(9): 105-114.

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