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A Comparative Study of Adjectives in English, Russian, and Yoruba

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Abstract

There exist a lot of literature on the form and functions of adjectives in English, Russian, and Yoruba, but, to the best of our knowledge, none of them employed trilingual comparative/contrastive approaches to study adjectives in the three languages. This paper examines the structure, usage, and meanings of English, Russian, and Yoruba adjectives by comparing and contrasting them. It employs contrastive linguistics and transfer theory to highlight the similarities and differences in the forms, functions, and contextual usages of adjectives in the three languages. The data employed were elicited from relevant textbooks. Findings show the existence of a significant degree of differences in the nature and grammatical status of adjectives in the three languages. The paper concludes that a proper comprehension of the status, existence, and usage of adjectives in the teaching and learning of these languages can increase learners' overall communicative competence.

Keywords: Adjective, Russian, Yoruba, English, Convergences, Divergences, Peculiarities.

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Аннотация

Синтаксические, семантические и морфологические различия в употреблении прилагательных в английском, русском и йоруба стали серьезной проблемой для ученых, работающих в области сравнительного языкознания и переводоведения. Существует много литературы по прилагательным на английском, русском и йоруба. Однако, насколько нам известно, ни один из них не использовал трехязычный сравнительный и сопоставительный подход к изучению прилагательных в этих языках. В этой статье рассматривается структура, употребление и значение прилагательных в английском, русском и в языке народа йоруба путем их сопоставления. Статья использует контрастивную лингвистику и теорию переноса, чтобы выделить сходства и различия в формах, функциях и использовании прилагательных в трех языках. Данные, используемые для исследования, были получены из соответствующих учебников. Результаты исследования показывают наличие значительной степени различий в природе и грамматическом статусе прилагательных в трех языках. В статье делается вывод о том, что правильное понимание статуса, существования и использования прилагательных в преподавании и изучении этих языков может повысить коммуникативную компетентность учащихся.

Ключевые слова: Прилагательное, русский, структура, сходства, расхождения, особенности

Introduction

Adjectives are integral parts of speech in human language given that they are sine qua non for effective communication. The term adjective, according to Merriam-Webster collegiate dictionary, signifies a word belonging to one of the major grammatical classes typically serving as a modifier of a noun to denote the quality of the thing named, to indicate its quantity or extent, or to specify a thing as distinct from something else (Merriam-Webster, 2009). Adjectives provide extra details about a noun, narrowing down its meaning to key feature characteristics that distinguish such nouns from others in a

grammatical context (Ilori, 2016; Yule, 2010; Dixon 1982; Creissels, 2000).

Adjectives do not change the basic meaning of the noun or pronoun which they modify. They are particularly used in language to improve interlanguage communication among interlocutors. Despite the universality of adjectives, they possess their own peculiarities and uniqueness. It is on this premise we decide to compare adjectives in three unrelated languages in order to reaffirm the fundamental universality and peculiarity of grammar. This paper is structured as follows: this first section introduces the paper; section 2 discusses various types of adjectives in the three languages; section 3 is devoted to the theoretical framework employed; section 4 contains the analyses of the usage, function, and meanings of adjectives in the languages; section 5 is an explication of the structural and semantic analyses of adjectives; section 6 discusses the convergence and divergence of adjectives in the languages; and section 7 highlights the findings and conclusions of the study.

A brief survey of English, Russian and Yoruba adjectives

English has a system of orthography that does not always accurately reflect the pronunciation of words (Crystal & Potter, 2020). In Nigeria today, English has remained the official Lingua Franca and the language of international business and commerce. Russian as the largest native language in Europe is a stress-timed inflectional language whose grammatical word endings change according to gender, number and cases (Арефьев, 2006; Шибко, 2014). Yoruba on her part is a Kwa language that belongs to the Niger-Congo linguistic family. It is a 'language continuum', that is a group of geographically contiguous and linguistically related dialects (Bamgbose, 1966). It is a tone language spoken as a first language mostly in southwestern Nigeria (Falola & Genova, 2009).

In the view of Quirk et al (1980), English adjectives possess four features:

A Comparative Study of Adjectives ...

- a) They can easily occur in attributive positions in a sentence.
- b) They can also occur in a predicative position in a sentence that is, they can function as the object or subject complement.
- c) Intensifiers such as *very* can pre-modify them.
- (d) The comparative and superlative degree forms of adjectives with inflexions can be formed by the addition of pre-modifiers *more* or *most*.

Adelabu 2014 opines that not all words that are traditionally referred to as adjectives possess these features. English adjectives can take adverbs as modifiers, e.g. The bus comes at a reasonably *early* hour; Nina went to bed *quickly* at a very late hour; The author spoke quite *passionately* about his book. A major distinctive feature of English adjectives is that they can not be pluralised. Examples of such include: The *young* boy is here; The *old* men are going to the park; The *new* students are having a meeting with their teachers. Further examples of adjectives abound in the literature: enormous, doglike, silly, black, yellow, fun, fast, slow. English adjectives can equally describe the quantity of nouns: few, many, thousands, millions.

Generally, Russian adjectives, like Russian nouns, can be grouped via gender (masculine, feminine, and neuter). Their functions in a sentence may be attributive or predicative. when used attributively they manifest the three genders and agree in gender and number «*хороший студент, хорошая студентка, хорошее знание хорошие студенты*».

Russian singular masculine adjective answers the question *какой* – (which?) Apart from this, masculine Russian adjectives in the singular have the soft ending *ий* or the hard ending *ный* while feminine adjectives have the soft ending *ья* or the hard ending *ая*. These gender endings of Russian adjectives are presented in the table below.

	Russian adjective endings-		
Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Красивый дом Beautiful house A beautiful house	Красивая Женщина Beautiful house A beautiful woman	Красивое платье Beautiful dress A beautiful dress	Красивые здания Beautiful buildings Beautiful buildings
Красный дом – red house A red house	Красная площадь – Red square The red square	Красное пальто – Red overcoat A red overcoat	Красные дома- Red houses The red houses
Новый галстук New tie A new tie	Новая машина New car A new car	Новое вино – New wine A new wine	Новые книги New books The new books
Большой стол Big table A big table	Большая комната- big room A big room	Большое окно- Big Window A big window	Большие комнаты Big rooms Big rooms
Хороший план good plan A good plan	Хорошая земля – Good land A good land	Хорошее решение – Good decision A good decision	Хорошие друзья – Good friends Good friends
Русский язык Russian Language The Russian Language	Русская кухня – Russian kitchen Russian Kitchen	Русское слово – Russian word A Russian word	Русские Конфеты Sweets Sweets

<i>Медвежий угол</i> Bear corner Godforsaken hole	<i>Медвежья лапа</i> <i>Bear paw</i> Bear's paw	<i>Медвежье ухо</i> Bear ear Bear's ear	<i>Медвежьи углы</i> – Bear's corner Godforsaken holes
<i>Утренний кофе</i> Morning coffee The morning coffee	<i>Утренняя новость</i> <i>Morning news</i> The morning news	<i>Утреннее собрание</i> Morning meeting The morning meeting	<i>Утренние музыки</i> Morning music The morning music

Yoruba Adjectives and Qualifiers

Adjective belongs to the qualifier group in Yoruba language. Awobuluyi (1978) defines qualifier as any word or grammatical (i.e. acceptable) group of words that qualifies a noun.. Examples : *iwé wúwo* - Heavy book; *mo ra işu sísè* – I bought cooked yam; *mo ra eja dín-dín* (Awobuluyi, 1978:31).

There are many qualifiers in Yoruba and they can either be nominal or non-nominal entities. Awobuluyi asserts that qualifiers never occur independently in a connected speech. This implies that they are not qualifiers unless they co-occur with and qualify something. Therefore, the word *wúwo* in the example above, on its own, is merely a word and one cannot tell whether it is a noun or a qualifier, or a verb. However, one can conclude from its function in the sentence above that it is a qualifier (Awobuluyi, 1978:31). Awobuluyi (2013) further avers that many qualifiers begin with either a vowel or consonant. Qualifiers that begin with consonant must take a prosthetic vowel, and such adjectives are regarded as adjectival nouns. Some nouns in Yoruba hardly work with adjectives. Examples are *àbàjà* (a set of three or four parallel and horizontal tribal marks on each cheek of the bearer), *pélé* (a set of three perpendicular tribal marks), *òjìjì* (sudden), and *òtò* (different). Awobuluyi (1978) asserts that many Yoruba adjectives are derived from nouns and verb

phrases. Examples are *diẹ* ‘few’, *púpò* ‘many’, *pupa* ‘red’, *dúdú* ‘black’, and *funfun* ‘white’, as in the following contexts.

- i. *ọmọ dúdú ni Adé*
Child black Foc Ade
‘Ade is a dark-complexioned child.’
- ii. *Mo ra ológbò fufun.*
I buy cat white.
I bought a white cat. (Logical translation)
- iii. *ọmọ rere ni Ọláníkẹẹ jẹ.*
child good Foc Olanikee be
‘Olanikee is a good child.’
- iv. *Mi ò ranti dé filà pupa ki n to jáde.*
I not remember wear cap red before I go out
‘I did not remember to put on the red cap before going out.’

Theoretical Framework

Contrastive linguistic research was pioneered by Charles Fries in 1940. Its main aim was to examine the structural features of a language to bring out the areas of difficulty in learning a second or a third language. Robert Lado developed the contrastive hypothesis stating that contrasting two languages would help predict the features that would represent difficulty or ease in learning a second language due to realizing the differences and similarities between the first and the second language (Zaki, 2015). According to Zaki (2015), Lado assumed that second language learners transfer the forms, meanings, and the way they are distributed in their native language to the second language. Robert Lado further stated that systematic comparison of languages can help predict and describe the difficult features that can face a second language learner in learning L2. According to Byung-gon (1992) referenced in Zaki(2015) “this perspective is founded on Bloomfield's (1933) structuralism, which further assumes that each language's structure is finite and so can be determined and compared to another language”.

Transfer theory is based on the premise that habits are transferred from one language to another (Corder, 1971; Byung-gon, 1992; Zaki 2015). The hypothesis supports Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis by showing how some linguistic elements of a second language are more difficult to learn than others. According to Stockwell et al. (1965), a positive transfer happens when the qualities of the opposed languages are comparable; whereas a negative transfer occurs when the properties of the contrasted languages are dissimilar. This research paper employs Lado's contrastive hypothesis and the transfer theory to examine the structure, usage, and meaning of the adjectives in the English, Russian and Yorùbá languages.

Classification and Usage of English, Russian & Yoruba Adjectives Groupings and Usage of English Adjectives

Adjective in English is regarded as one of the most essential parts of speech. It is imperative to state that English adjectives are not divided via gender, case, or number, as their endings do not change according to number, gender, or case. The classes of English adjectives include Number, Quality, Quantity, Distributive, Demonstrative or Demonstration, Interrogative, Possessive, and adjectives of Comparison. It is worthy of note that adjectives in English have a lot in common with pronouns, as lot of words are used both as pronouns and as adjectives in the language (Dahami, 2012).

Adjectives of number give information about the numbers or order of a person, animal, or thing. They are differentiated according to their function namely distributive, definite, or indefinite. Examples of numeral adjectives are those italicised.

- i. She sang *five* songs at the annual function ceremony. (Definite)
- ii. *Most* girls participate in knitting competitions. (Indefinite)
- iii. You can learn *twenty-four hours* a day on this site. (Definite)
- iv. There are *several* things to learn. (Indefinite)
- v. She has learnt *something*. (Indefinite)
- vi. He has bought *many* notebooks from the mall (Indefinite)
- vii. You should take *some* rice. (Indefinite)

- viii. *Every* word of this article should be edited. (Distributive)
- ix. There are *eleven* players on a football team. (quantity) (Dahami, 2012)

Adjectives of Quality

Adjectives of quality qualify a noun or its replacement – the pronoun – in a sentence. Examples are:

- i. The jasmine is a *beautiful* flower.
- ii. Edward's School is *small*
- iii. Mary is a *beautiful* lady
- iv. *Intelligent* and *hardworking* workers often get promoted.
- v. The old man narrated an *interesting* story to us at the village square. (Dahami, 2012).

Quantity Adjectives

Adjective of quantity is the third category of adjective. This kind of adjective explicates the involvement of a noun in a sentence in English. In other words, it explains how the noun is involved in a sentence by stating the quantity but not the precise number. Examples of adjectives of quantity include *little, much, enough, any, few, whole, some, no, all, great, half, and sufficient*. The usage of quantity adjectives in sentences is portrayed below:

- i. My father earned *enough* money.
- ii. He showed *much* courage in the war.
- iii. She received *some* books today.
- iv. The boy has *little* money left.
- v. Thomas came back *a few* weeks ago (Murthy, 2007; Dahami, 2012).

Distributive Adjectives

These are used to refer to every person or thing separately. Examples are each, every, either, neither, none, and both. Contextual illustrations of distributive adjectives are:

- i. *Each* student was awarded a diploma.

A Comparative Study of Adjectives ...

- ii. *Every* player in the team will receive a winning bonus.
- iii. *None* of the workers has the right to protest.
- iv. *Neither* party has got the majority in the recent elections.
- v. *Either* of the two smaller parties can merge with the mega party to form the majority. (Murthy, 2007; Swan, 2013).

Demonstrative Adjectives

These help in indicating the noun that is being talked about. They directly precede the nouns they qualify. To distinguish the Demonstrative Pronouns from Demonstrative Adjectives in English, it is imperative to comprehend that pronouns stand alone. Demonstrative Adjectives answer the question *Which?* Examples;

- i. *This* book is very interesting.
- ii. *This* boy works harder than Paul.
- iii. *That* house was built by an Italian architect.
- iv. *These* flowers are lovely (Murthy, 2007; Swan, 2013).

Interrogative adjectives

These are used in interrogation. Examples are what, which and whose as used in the clauses below.

- i. On *whose* recommendation did you apply for this post?
- ii. *What* advice shall I give you?
- iii. *Which* poet do you like most?
- iv. *What* language do you teach at college? (Murthy, 2007).

Possessive adjectives

These are employed when talking about ownership or possession. Examples are *my, your, our, his, her, its, and their*, as illustrations in the following sentences.

- i. *My* mother is a teacher.
- ii. *His* father is a doctor.
- iii. *Her* husband died in an accident.
- iv. All *their* daughters were married last year (Murthy, 2017).

Emphasizing Adjectives

These are mainly used to emphasize a noun or noun phrase in a sentence. Examples are:

- i. I saw it with my own eyes.
- ii. That was the very book I was looking for.
- iii. I received the gift with my own hands (Murthy, 2007).

Exclamatory adjectives

Exclamatory adjectives indicate exclamation. The following are illustrations of exclamatory adjectives used in sentences.

- i. *What* a tragedy!
- ii. *What* a day!
- iii. *What* an insult!
- iv. *What* a beauty! (Murthy,2007).

Proper adjectives

These are adjectives derived from proper names. Examples:

- i. The *American* navy.
- ii. The *British* parliament.
- iii. The *Canadian* president
- iv. The Nigerian army.

Comparative and Superlative Degree of English Adjectives and their Usages

Comparative adjectives are used to compare two things or propositions, and they help in bringing to light the differences between two nouns. As a rule, if an adjective has only one syllable in the English language, the comparative degree of such adjectives is usually derived by adding the suffix “er”, while the superlative degree forms of such adjectives are used when comparing more than two things, are often derived by adding the suffix “est”. However, the lexeme 'more' or less precedes adjectives in the comparative form for adjectives with more than one syllable, while the word 'most' or least also precedes the adjective in the superlative form for adjectives with

more than one syllable. Examples of comparative degree of adjectives in sentence propositions in English grammar include:

- i. My dog is *bigger* than his dog.
- ii. The *larger* house is mine.
- iii. Lydia is *taller* than Alex.
- iv. Jack is *more serious* than Nikki.
- v. Do you think math is *more important* than music?
- vi. These shoes are *less expensive* than yours (Swan 2013).

The examples below illustrate the usage of superlative forms of adjectives in English:

- i. Mary is the *eldest* of the four sisters.
- ii. His last book is the *least interesting* while his first book is the *most captivating*.
- iii. That must be the *weirdest* play ever written.
- iv. Ferrari is the *most expensive* car now. (Swan 2013).

It is imperative to state that some adjectives in English have an irregular comparative form. Examples include: good-better (comparative)- best (superlative)

English adjectives can be used as substantive adjectives. This implies that they may not modify a noun but replace the noun in a sentence proposition:

- i. The *meek* shall inherit the earth.
- ii. There is a gulf between the *rich* and the *poor*.
- iii. New Memphis is the land of the *free* and the home of the *Brave*.
- iv. In many ways, the *young* have a lot to learn from the *old*.
- v. When you travel to Prague make sure you try some of their beer, the Czechs are famous for it (Swan, 2013).

Russian Adjectives Classifications and Usage

Russian adjectives, like their English counterparts, may precede the nouns they modify, for example - *высокий человек* – the tall man,

синяя машина – the blue car, or may appear after the noun. Examples of such include: *Человек высок* – The man is tall, *машина была синяя* – the car was blue.

There are two forms of adjective endings in Russian (hard and soft endings). The stem of most adjectives in Russian ends in “ый” and such adjectives are referred to as hard adjectives. Hard adjectives are adjectives whose last letter before the ending is a hard consonant (*красивый, чёрный, интересный* – beautiful, black and interesting). The masculine singular form of such adjectives in the nominative case has the ending **-ый**, their singular neuter form takes the ending **-ое** and their feminine singular form have the ending **-ая**. The plural form of such adjectives is the same for all genders and always ends in **-ые** (Kemple, 1993:20; Maltzoff, 1984: 86).

Table II

Endings for adjectives in the nominative singular and plural
(stressed vowels are underlined)

Singular		Plural (any gender)	
masculine (-ый, -ой)	neuter (-ое)	feminine (-ая)	(-ые)
нов <u>ый</u> ,	нов <u>ое</u> ,	нов <u>ая</u> ,	нов <u>ые</u> ,
красн <u>ый</u> ,	красн <u>ое</u>	красн <u>ая</u>	красн <u>ые</u>
молод <u>ой</u> ,			
лесн <u>ой</u>			

Soft adjectives, on the other hand, are adjectives whose stem ends in the soft “н”. These adjectives take the endings *-ий, -ее, -ья, -ие* in the nominative masculine singular form, nominative feminine singular form, nominative neuter singular form, and plural form respectively. These adjectives are called soft adjectives and always have a stress on the stem, as in *хороший*. Table III depicts the endings of adjectives that have their stem ending in *к, г, х*, and *ж, ш, ч, ц*

Table III

Endings for adjectives with a stem in **к, г, х**, and **ж, ш, ч, щ**
(stressed vowels are underlined)

Stem ends in	Singular			Plural (any gender)
	masculine (-ий, -ой)	neuter (-ое, -о <u>е</u>)	feminine (-ая)	(-ие)
к, г, х	ма <u>л</u> еньк <u>ий</u> морск <u>ой</u> , друг <u>ой</u>	ма <u>л</u> еньк <u>ое</u> морск <u>ое</u> , друг <u>ое</u>	ма <u>л</u> еньк <u>ая</u>	ма <u>л</u> еньк <u>ие</u>
ж, ш, ч, щ	све <u>ж</u> ий	све <u>ж</u> ее	све <u>ж</u> ая	све <u>ж</u> ие

(Maltzoff, 1984: 86)

Russian adjectives are generally classified into qualitative, relative, and possessive adjectives (Pulkina, 1984; Maltzoff 1984:83). In the literature, examples of qualitative adjectives include *Красный* -red, *синий* – blue, *большой* - big, *красивый* – beautiful. Relative adjectives in Russian express characteristics which cannot vary in degree and which are always related to a noun. Examples, include adjectives such as: *деревянный дом* – wooden house, *железный* – iron, *вечерняя газета* – evening newspaper, *утренний чай* - morning tea , *отцовское благославение* – the father’s blessing , *уличное движение* - street traffic (Maltzoff 1984 :84; Пулькина & Некрасова, 2003 :124).

Possessive adjectives are adjectives which indicate possession. Their masculine are derived from masculine nouns that end in *ов* & *ев*. Examples: *Отцов дом* ‘the father’s house’; *Дамоклов меч* ‘Damocles sword’; *Адамово яблоко* ‘Adam’s apple’ (Maltzoff, 1984:84). Possessive feminine adjectives ending in *ин* in Russian are formed from feminine nouns or masculine Russian nouns ending in the nominative in - *а/я* – and are often used with the

diminutives in colloquial or written Russian: *Катина сестра* ‘Kate’s sister’; *Колин брат* ‘Nick’s brother’; *Папины часы* ‘Father’s clock’ (Maltzoff,1984:84). Qualitative adjectives in Russian have long and short forms. Table IV contains a list of these.

Table IV

Long forms of Adjectives		Short forms of adjectives	
Singular	Plural;	Singular	Plural
<i>Старый</i> Old	<i>Старые</i> Old	<i>Стар</i> Old	<i>Стары</i> Old
<i>Молодой</i> young	<i>Молодые</i> young	<i>Молод</i> young	<i>Молоды</i> young
<i>Спокойный</i> Quiet/calm	<i>Спокойные</i> Quiet/calm	<i>Спокоен</i> Quiet/calm	<i>Споконы</i> Quiet/calm
<i>Короткий</i> Short	<i>Короткие</i> Short	<i>Короток</i> Short	<i>Коротка</i> Short
<i>Плохой</i> Bad	<i>Плохие</i> Bad	<i>Плох</i> Bad	<i>Плохи</i> Bad
<i>Могучий</i> Mighty /strong	<i>Могучие</i> Mighty /strong	<i>Могуч</i> Mighty /strong	<i>Могуча</i> Mighty/strong
<i>Круглый</i> round	<i>Круглые</i> round	<i>Кругл</i> round	<i>Кругла</i> round

Particularly for adjectives, long forms are preferred to short forms in conversational Russian except in a few instances. Examples;

i. *Богат* – rich: *Андрей богат*

Andrew rich. ‘Andrew is rich.’

ii. *Болен* – sick: *Он болен*

He sick ‘He is sick.’

iii. *Виноват*- at fault/guilty “ sorry”: *Я не виноват*

I not guilty 'I am not guilty'

iv. *Готов* –ready: *Антон готов*

Anthony is ready.

v. *Женат* –married: *Ты женат?*

You married? 'Are you married?'

vi. *Жив* – alive: *Он жив*

He alive 'He is alive.'

vi. *Свободен* –free: *Борис свободен*

Borris free 'Boris is free.'

Russian adjectives further agree with the noun they qualify according to cases and there exist six different cases in Russian (Maltzoff, 1984). Table V illustrates this.

Table V

Nominative Case	Genitive Case	Accusative Case	Dative Case	Instrumental Case	Prepositional Case
<i>Новый</i> – new (animate)	<i>Нового</i> -new	<i>Нового</i>	<i>Новому</i>	<i>Новым</i>	(<i>О</i>) <i>Новом</i>
<i>Новый</i> (inanimate) – new	(<i>У</i>) <i>Нового</i> New	<i>Новый</i> - <i>new</i>	(<i>К</i>) <i>Новому</i> – (<i>То</i>) / towards the new	(<i>С</i>) <i>Новым</i> - (with) the new	(<i>О</i>) <i>Новом</i> -about the new
<i>Красивый</i> (animate)	<i>У</i> <i>красивого</i> <i>о</i>	<i>Красивого</i> <i>о</i>	<i>Красиво</i> <i>му</i>	(<i>С</i>) <i>красивым</i> <i>м</i>	(<i>о</i>) <i>Красиво</i> <i>м</i>
<i>Красивый</i> (inanimate)	<i>У</i> <i>красивого</i> <i>о</i>	<i>Красивый</i> <i>ый</i>	<i>Красиво</i> <i>му</i>	(<i>С</i>) <i>красивым</i> <i>м</i>	(<i>о</i>) <i>красивом</i> about the beautiful

<i>Старши й</i>	<i>(У) старшег о –</i>	<i>Старшег о Of the elder</i>	<i>Старше му Elder</i>	<i>С стариши м With the elder</i>	<i>(о) старшем About the elder</i>
<i>Молодая</i>	<i>Молодой</i>	<i>Молодую</i>	<i>Молодой</i>	<i>(С) молодой</i>	<i>(о) молодой</i>
<i>Русская</i>	<i>Русской</i>	<i>Русскую</i>	<i>Русской</i>	<i>(С) русской - with Russian</i>	<i>(о) русской about Russian</i>
<i>Утренни й</i>	<i>Утренне го</i>	<i>Утренни й/ утреннег о</i>	<i>Утренне му</i>	<i>утренни м</i>	<i>утренне м</i>
<i>Утренняя</i>	<i>Утренне й</i>	<i>Утреннюю</i>	<i>утренней</i>	<i>Утренне й. утренне ю</i>	<i>Утренне ф</i>
<i>Утренне е</i>	<i>Утренне го</i>	<i>Утренне е</i>	<i>Утренне му</i>	<i>утренни м</i>	<i>утренне м</i>

Neuter adjectives are declined the way masculine adjectives are declined. The concord of Russian adjectives is further depicted in these examples:

- *Я видел белую лошадь и чёрного быка.*
I saw white horse and black bull.
I saw a white horse and a black bull.
- *Дети играют в дворе старого дома.*
Children playing in courtyard.
The children are playing in the courtyard of the old house.

A Comparative Study of Adjectives ...

- *В магазине сегодня нет свежих фруктов.*
In shop today no fresh fruit.
There are no fresh fruits in the shop today.
- *Учитель пишет белым мелом.*
Teacher write with white chalk.
The teacher is writing with white chalk.

Russian adjectives like their English counterparts can be used as substantive adjectives, that is, as the subject or object of a verb on their own without any noun. Examples include:

- *Больная девушка крикнул .*
Sick girl cried out. ‘The sick girl cried out.’
- *Больной упал*
Patient fell. ‘The patient fell.’
- *Нищий стоял на углу*
Beggar stood at corner. ‘A beggar was standing at the corner.’

Aside from the above usage of substantive adjectives in Russian, several adjectives in Russian have become nouns but are still declined like adjectives. Examples include: рабочий worker , пленный, портной tailor etc.

Comparative Degree Forms of Adjectives in Russian

Qualitative adjectives in Russian are the only type of adjectives that have comparative degrees. However, Maltzoff (1984) asserts that there exists a few qualitative adjectives that preclude the idea of comparison as a result of their meaning: *женатый*- married; *живой* – alive; *мертвый* – dead (Maltzoff 1984:90). The comparative degree of adjectives in Russian like English counterparts take two forms: the simple comparative degree and the compound comparative degree form. In the simple comparative degree, the Russian suffix “*ее*”/ “*е*” is added to the stem and examples are illustrated below with the long adjectives coming first while the comparative forms precede them:

Длинный - long – *длиннее* – longer; *Умный* –clever -*умнее* -cleverer; *Бедный* – poor- *беднее* – poorer; *Широкий* – wide – *шире* – wider.

In Russian, the suffix – “e” is used to form the comparative degree of adjectives whose stems end in г, к, х, д, т, ст - *дорогой* (dear)– *дороже* (dearer); *строгий* (strict)- *строже* (stricter); *громкий* (loud). When an adjective is used attributively, its compound comparative degree is formed by placing the unchangeable adverb *более* – (more) / *менее*- (less) just before the positive degree form of adjectives: *Это более трудный экзамен* – This is a more difficult exam; *Более красивые дома* «more beautiful houses»; *менее интересный доклад* – «a less interesting lecture»; *менее красивые дома* «less beautiful houses» (Kemple 1993).

Superlative Degree Forms of Russian Adjectives

It is imperative to state that superlative degree forms of adjectives are only derived from qualitative adjectives, and there are two forms in Russian: the simple and the compound superlative degree forms. The simple superlative form is derived by adding the suffix *ейший* /*ейшая*/*ейшее*/*ейшие* to the positive degree: *Беднейший человек* – the poorest man; *Россия богатейшая страна* -Russia is a rich country; *Мы видели высочайшие горы* – we saw the tallest hills. In Russian, like in English, a few superlatives are formed irregularly: *хороший* (good) – *лучший* (best); *плохой* (bad) – *худший* (worse); *маленький* (small) – *меньший* – (smallest) (Maltzoff 1984). A superlative form may be formed by using the prefix *най*. This prefix is often added to the following Russian adjectives: *большой* – *наибольшой* (the biggest); *лучший* – *наилучший* (the very best); *меньший* – *наименьший* (the smallest).

The compound superlative form of adjectives in Russian is derived by adding the pronoun *самый*, *самая*, *самое*, *самые* (depending on the gender and the number of the nouns) to the positive form of adjectives:

Masculine: *Самый высокий мальчик* в школе – the tallest boy.

Feminine :Завтра будет *самая интересная лекция* – The most interesting lecture will come up tomorrow.

Neuter: *Мама написала самое интересное письмо* -Mummy wrote the most interesting letter.

Plural: *Самые интересные книги* есть в библиотеке – the most interesting books are in the library.

Classification of Yoruba adjectives

According to Ilori (2016), Bamgbose (1990) agrees with Awobuluyi that many adjectives in Yoruba are derived. He asserted further that Yoruba adjectives can be grouped into two categories – the non-derived root adjectives and the derived root adjectives that are derived from verbs in relative clauses. Examples of the non-derived adjectives are *Kékéré* - small, *rere* – good, *pupa* – red, *dúdú* – black, *funfun* - white. Derived adjectives examples include *lile*- hard, *díndín*- fried, *mímu* - drinking, *fifó*- broken (Ilori, 2016:127; Bamgbose 1990:123). (Ilori, 2016:128) posits that most of the items classified as adjectives in Yorubá are derived through reduplication and if that is the case then we should suspect that they are nouns since reduplication is considered one of the key morphological processes utilized in the derivation of nouns in Yoruba grammar. On his part, Yussuf (2006:33) classifies Yoruba adjectives into colour (*òrò àpèjúwe afáwòmòhàn*), quantitative (*òrò àpèjúwe afiwòhàn*), derived (*òrò àpèjúwe àìṣẹ́dà*), and non-derived adjectives (*òrò àpèjúwe ìṣẹ́dà*).

Adjective of colour (*òrò àpèjúwe afáwòmòhàn*) explicates the colour, appearance, or the features of nouns in a noun phrase, as in:

- *Mo wọ aṣọ pupa.*
I sg wear red cloth.
I wear a red cloth.
- *Ọmọ burúkú nì Àṣàkẹ́*
Child bad 3sg is Ashake.
Ashake is a bad child.
- *Ọmọ dárádára nì Olú jẹ́.*
Child 3sng good is Olu.

- Olu is a very good child.
- *Fèyisewà jé omọ rubutu.*
Feyisewa is child plump.
Feyisewa is a plump child.
- *Àkùkọ gágàrà kò mọ ara rẹ l'àgbà.*
Big cock does not know itself as an elder.
The big cock does not respect itself. (Yusuff, 2006).

Illustrations of quantitative adjectives (*òrò àpèjúwe afiwòhàn*) are as follows:

- *Oúnjé kékeré kò tó Adìgún*
Food *small* is not enough for Adigun.
Adìgún is not satisfied with little food. (Logical translation)
- *Àwọn akékó púpò ni ó wà ni ilé èkó wa*
There students *many* in our school.
There are many students in our school.
- *Adìgún ní owó reṣeṣe*
Adigun has money plenteous.
Adìgún has a lot of (plenteous) money. (Logical translation)
- *Okúnrin diẹ kò tó ó*
man *small* not enough.
A man must be very courageous.
- *Oláníkẹ́ bu ọbẹ́ kìn-ún fún mí*
Olanikee scup soup *little* for me.
Oláníkẹ́ dished a little soup for me. (Yusuff, 2006).

Examples of Yoruba derived adjectives are *fifó* 'broken', *dindín* 'fried', and *lile* 'hard'. Non-derived adjectives include *rubutu* 'robust, chubby/plumpy', *diẹ* 'little', *pupa* 'red', *funfun* 'white', *ńlá* 'big/massive' (Bamgbose, 1990:123; Yusuff, 2006: 33; Rowlands, 1969).

Convergences and Divergences

In Russian, adjectives have both singular and plural forms while in English and Yoruba adjectives have only singular forms.

A Comparative Study of Adjectives ...

English	Russian	Yorùbá
a. The tall boy is here	Высокий мальчик тут	Ọmọ gíga wá níbí yí
b. He is a courageous boy	Он храбрый мальчик	O jẹ́ akíkánjù ọmọ
	3sg be a courageous boy	3sg be courageous boy

Plural forms

English	Russian	Yorùbá
a. Those trees are tall	Эти деревья высокие	Àwọn igi yen ga
b. He is a courageous boy	Он храбрый мальчик	Ó jẹ́ akíkánjù ọmọ
	3sg be courageous boy	3sg be courageous child

The existence of long and short forms of adjectives is peculiar only to Russian adjectives while English and Yorùbá adjectives do not have this form. The usage of long and short forms of Russian adjectives are further depicted in the following examples:

<i>Long-form</i>	<i>Short-form</i>
• Умный мальчик. Intelligent boy An intelligent boy	Мальчик умён Boy intelligent The boy is intelligent.
• Трудная задача Difficult task. A difficult task.	Задача трудна- Task difficult. The task is difficult.
• Высокое здание Tall building 'A tall building'	Здание высоко (the building is tall). Building tall 'The building is tall.'

Comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives are peculiar to Russian and English adjectives. In Yorùbá language, the comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives are formed by adding a particle or an adverb to the adjective.

Stassen (1985) asserts that in Yorùbá, the comparatives are classified as "exceed-type" comparatives. This means that the comparative morpheme is a lexical verb whose subject and object are the subject and standard of comparison respectively. Examples are:

- *Adé ga ju Yínká lọ tó ẹsẹ̀ bàtà márún* - (p + v) *The particle (ju) is added to the verb*
Ade be tall exceed Yinka reach foot five.
Ade is taller than Yinka. *Аде выше Ёнки почти 5 футов*
- *Àdìsá kúrú ju Àjàmú lọ.*
Adisa shorter than Ajamu.
Adisa is shorter than Ajamu. *Адиса короче Аджаму.*
- *Aṣọ Yétúndé kéré sí aṣọ Fẹ̀yisẹ̀wà.*
Cloth Yetunde shorter to cloth Feyisewa's.
Yetunde's cloth is shorter than Feyisewa's. *Платье Ёетунде короче платья Фейисевы.*
- *Adé ní ó ga ju ní ilé ẹ̀kọ́ wa.*
Ade is tallest in school our.
Ade is the tallest person in our school. *Аде самый высокий человек в нашей школе.*

Findings and Conclusion

In this study on English, Russian and Yoruba adjectives, given their similarities, differences, and peculiarities, we reestablish that adjectives exist in Yoruba. Apart from the class of colour adjectives, many of them are derived. English and Yoruba adjectives have no plural forms and they do not change according to gender, number, or case. However, the reverse is the case in Russian which has plural forms of adjectives that change according to number, gender, and case. Apart from this, the study reaffirms the existence of substantive adjectives in Russian and English as peculiarities of adjectives in both languages. In English and Russian, adjectives can be attributive or predicative and they can precede or come after the nouns they modify. However, adjectives in Yoruba are attributively used after the nouns they modify.

There is no gain saying that there exist certain degree of variations inherent in the form usage of adjectives in English, Russian and Yoruba. The paper brought to light the idiosyncrasies and distinctiveness of adjectives in the three languages and reaffirmed that

adjectives do not alter the core meaning of the word that they qualify. Rather, they are used for distinctive and clarity purposes.

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