

ANAPHORIC EXPRESSIONS USED IN ENGLISH AND THE URDU LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The paper explores the application of anaphora in both English and Urdu with special emphasis on how these referring devices build cohesion and coherence in spoken and written language. These linguistic features refer back to the prior concept or antecedent within the same sentence or text, allowing readers and listeners to build up meaning between sentences. The paper also determines the most commonly used reference markers in each language and examines the variations in the structural positioning. To do this, two short stories in both Urdu and English were examined, and comparative tables were drawn up to show trends and differences in the use of these languages. Moreover, the study examines the correlation of antecedents and anaphors, with which it is possible to see how one interprets something based on references to earlier textual units. The finding reveals that the most frequently used expressions are related to nouns, with other types often being neglected. The article not only illuminates cross-linguistic similarities and differences in the use of anaphor but also highlights the greater role of reference in textual cohesion, which gives the article a contribution to discourse analysis and contrastive linguistics.

Keywords: Anaphora, Anaphoric expressions, Coherence in discourse, Reference markers

Introduction

Language is one of the most important tools of human communication, which allows people to share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas using structures of words and sentences. It not only supports the interaction but also helps in social and intellectual development. In the academic discipline of linguistics, various sub-fields examine the structure and use of language. Syntax is one of the branches that deal with the arrangement of words to form meaningful speech, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Another significant field of study is anaphora, which is a linguistic form that refers to something previously mentioned in discourse.

Anaphoric expressions play a critical role in the cohesion and coherence of texts. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), anaphora is one of the key cohesive devices that binds different elements of discourse together, thus enabling language to be a coherent whole. For example, in the sentence “*Mary decided to go to the zoo, but she had to wash the dishes first,*” the pronoun *she* refers back to the antecedent *Mary*. In this manner, the meaning of the anaphor is relative to the antecedent, as Krahmer (2000) notes in her definition of anaphora as a cohesive relation where one item cannot be considered complete without reference to the other.

The majority of studies on anaphora have concentrated on pronominal reference, especially in English. Researchers like McCoy (2015) identify how pronouns he, she, it, and they serve as cohesive ties. Anaphora, however, is much broader than the use of pronouns. There are other varieties, such as verbal, adjectival, propositional, and temporal anaphora in discourse (Cornish, 1999; Huang, 2000). As an example, the sentence “Please fill this form out completely. Failure to do that will lead to rejection (Gardelle, 2012), where the verb phrase does that is a reference to the previous verb phrase, complete this form. These are some examples of how anaphoric reference works in different categories of grammar.

Although much research has been done on English and other European languages (Lyons, 1995; Kibrik, 2011), there is little research on the broader scope of anaphoric forms in Urdu. Previous research has focused mainly on pronominal reference at the expense of other categories, which also help to establish cohesion in discourse. This lack of comparative work leaves a noticeable research gap, as both English and Urdu use various kinds of referring devices, but the way they are used and where they appear may be quite different.

This research paper aims to fill this gap by analysing the various kinds of anaphoric devices in short stories in English and Urdu. The first objective is to establish the scope of anaphoric expressions used in the two languages, and the second goal is to establish the most frequently used types of anaphoric expressions. This paper compares anaphoric usage in English and Urdu, thus extending the application of anaphora studies beyond the limited scope of pronouns and contributing to research on discourse analysis and cross-linguistic cohesion.

Research Objectives

To determine the various kinds of anaphoric devices in English and Urdu.

To identify the most recurrent types in the two languages.

Research Questions

Which are the anaphoric expressions in English and Urdu?

What are the most common types in each of the languages?

Operational Definition

The notion of an anaphoric expression, as used in this research, refers to the referring device that ties back to discourse antecedents. Their purpose is to eliminate needless repetition and to ensure cohesion and coherence in both oral and written communications.

Literature Review

Anaphora has been described as the use of a phrase that refers to a previous word or group of words in a discourse or a sentence (Simpson, 2004). Its main role is to create a connection between an anaphor and its antecedent, which makes cohesion in discourse possible. For instance, in the sentence John plays the guitar. He is fond of music, the word he is an anaphor, and John is its antecedent. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), anaphora is a cohesive tie where a linguistic item refers back to its antecedent, and cataphora is the reverse of this. Anaphora is a phenomenon in which the meaning of one linguistic expression is derived from another linguistic expression that occurs within the same discourse (Asher, 1987). Likewise, Quirk et al. (1972) use the term discourse references to describe such reference relations, indicating their use in signalling the connection between what has already been said and what is being said. When the reference is in the backward direction, then it is anaphoric. The connection between anaphors and antecedents has been referred to often, in terms of co-referentiality, that is, the identity relation between expressions referring to the same entity (Akmajian et al., 2001). Pronouns and noun phrases can often illustrate the relation. Moreover, deixis has been separated from anaphoric reference: whereas deictic expressions refer to some situational context, anaphoric expressions depend on referents that are already present in the text. Levinson (1983) also emphasizes that anaphora is the case where a pronoun is used to refer to an expression that has already been introduced. In the example, Robert is sympathetic; he is so caring, and the pronoun he is a back reference to Robert, and they are co-referential. Brown and Yule (1983) also underline that anaphora is dependent on contextual cues that enable the hearer to select the appropriate referent.

Types of Anaphoric Expressions

Scholars have identified several types of anaphoric expressions:

- 1) Pronominal anaphora -They are those in which pronouns refer back to proper nouns or noun phrases (e.g., Mary left. She claimed to be sick, she said
- 2) Anaphora in a verb phrase (VP) - They are used when an action that is described in a verb phrase is referred back to, typically in a structure such as did too (Partee & Bach, 1984; Prust et al., 1994). Lucy put out the garbage. Sara did also
- 3) Propositional anaphora -These use demonstrative words like this or that in referring to a previously mentioned proposition. As an example, one of the plaintiffs was denied three promotions. The jury did not accept this (Asher & Lascarides, 2003).

- 4) Adjectival anaphora -These refer to adjectival attributes. For instance, a sympathetic stranger returned my wallet. These types of people are not so common.
- 5) Modal anaphora - Modal verbs may also have an anaphoric use, in reference to potential actions. Elizabeth may make a presentation, e.g., she would utilize slides (Stone & Hardt, 1999).
- 6) Temporal anaphora- These are the expressions that indicate a specific time or an event. For example, "Lucy threw a birthday party last Friday, and Sara was injured a little", the time reference "last Friday" ties the two events (Partee, 1984).

Characteristics of Anaphoric Expressions

There are some significant characteristics of anaphoric expressions. An obvious antecedent in the text usually precedes them. Second, the antecedent-anaphor relationship can be co-referential and interchangeable, though it may also imply more complicated semantic relations. Third, they are important in ensuring coherence and eliminating redundancy, as there is less need to repeat information, which would otherwise be the case (Enkvist, 1978). The choice of the referring expressions may also illuminate the intellectual skills of the speakers or writers because it is an indication of their ability to select referring expressions that are appropriate in the context of the discourse.

Despite this extensive body of research on nominal anaphora, other types of anaphora, including verb phrase, propositional, adjectival, and temporal anaphora, have received relatively little attention. The current research is important because it brings to the attention of these overlooked categories, showing how they are used in spoken and written language. By studying these less-researched forms in combination with nominal anaphora, the research focuses on the general significance of anaphoric devices in the creation of textual cohesion.

Research Methodology

Study Design

The current study is quantitative in nature. The reason to use this method is to find out which anaphoric expression is used most in Urdu and English short stories. This would also highlight the fact of distribution of anaphoric expressions in relation to the antecedent.

Sample Size

A sample was selected to analyse the anaphoric expression of the Urdu and English languages, three English and three Urdu short stories. From these stories, anaphoric expressions are traced and picked out for further analysis.

Sampling Techniques

To investigate the types of anaphoric expressions used in English and Urdu, three short stories were selected from each language. This analysis also aims to identify which expressions are most frequently used in both languages and the nature of the relationship they establish with their antecedents. For this purpose, two stories were chosen from *Sarmaya-e-Urdu* (1st year): *Zewar ka Dibba* and *Aik Kahani Badi Purani*. The selected English short stories are *The Gift of the Magi* and *The Child Spy*.

Data Collection Procedure

To find out the anaphoric expressions in both languages, stories are selected from the 1st year Urdu book. After the selection of stories, they were read twice to find all types of anaphoric expressions. After doing so, anaphoric expressions of each type were separated. The purpose of doing so was to find out the nature and distribution of expressions according to their antecedent. Sentences are highlighted that contain anaphors.

Limitations

The current study has been done on a limited dataset to find out the anaphoric expressions of both languages. The study can be done on an extensive amount of data sets with an extended

sample size. This would further help to investigate the frequency of referring expressions in a language.

Data Analysis

Table for anaphors of Noun

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
Chandar parkash ko aik tution krny k siwa kuch na suja. Unn ki maan pehly e marr chuki thi	Chandar parkash	Unn
Parkash jo sherein khwab dekha krta ta wo mitti m mil gy.	Sherein	Wo
Aurat b mili to taleem yafta jisy motta khany sy marr jana qabool ta	Aurat	Jisy
Thakur parkash ki izzat krta ta or ghar k har mamly m uss sy mashwara lia jata ta.	parkash	Uss
Chor zewar ka dibba utha k ly gy, unhyn kesy maloom hua k zewar uss sandooq m rakhy hn.	Chor	Unhyn
Maal to jana ta, wo gya	Maal	Wo
Aik sandooq hamesha bnd rehta, us ski vhaba kaha sy ksi ko nahi maloom.	Sadooq	Uss
Parkash khana kha kr leta tous ka zameer usy malamt krta raha	Parkash	Ussy
Jo admi hum py yaqeen rakhy uss sy ankh beha kr aik pai lena b gunah smjhti hoo.	Aadmi	Uss
Sweater rkh do jo yah akaam kry ga woi pehny ga issy.	sweater	Issy
Sweater to buna hi nahi bss uss ka gala e to reh gya ta.	Sweater	Uss ka
Mian k rishty ki phupi or un ki langri beti	Phuppi	Unn ki
6 touly sony ka set ta wo b baich dia.	Sony ka set	Wo

Here, in this table, it is easily understandable that the anaphoric expressions used mostly are *iss*, *uss*, *un ky* and *wo*. This kind of expression shows the link between antecedents and anaphors. Mostly, anaphors of a specific antecedent continue till the end of the specific conversation.

Anaphoric expression of a verb

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
Chaey e theek bna sko to woi behtr h	Chaey bnana	Woi
Barhiya zewar bnty hn iss ki umeed na ti	Bariha zewar bnna	Iss ki umeed
Paou ki nishan mily hn, wesye dusri janib bhi paey gy hain	Paou k nishan	Wesye paey gy hn

This table shows the anaphors related to verb and these referring expressions are low in occurrence as compared to noun anaphors. In two Urdu stories only at three places referring expression for the verb is used.

Anaphoric expression of adjective

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
Bariya zewar bnty hn yaha	Bariya zewar	Iss ki
Budda noukar ny darwazy khola, ub us k hath m gathri ti	Buddha noukar	Uss k
Unho ny gehri sans li jo un ki thouri ko ja lagi	Gehri sans	Jo
Teen k dabby mila jo almari m rkha hota h har waqt	Teen ka dibba	Jo

These referring expression relate with the adjectival antecedent. These are again low frequency as they occur occasionally. Here, teen ka dabba is adjective which is replaced by anaphor *jo*. In Urdu stories only at four places anaphoric expression have been used to refer back to their antecedent.

Temporal anaphoric expression

Statement	Antecedent	anaphor
Seeni torium k ward m parhi rehti jaha unyn shohar or bacho ki fikkar lgi rehti		The time when she was in ward
Un ki maan pehly e marr chuki ti, ussi saal baap bhi chal basy		The year when his mother died was the year of his father's death

This table shows that at two places in two Urdu stories, temporal anaphoric expressions have been used. These are again very low in occurrence, which is why little work is done on other types of anaphoric expressions.

Anaphoric Expressions found in English stories

Table for anaphors of Nouns

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
"ONE DOLLAR AND EIGHTY-SEVEN CENTS. That was all."		That
"A furnished flat at \$8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description"	Furnishing flat	It
"Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called 'Jim'"	Mr. James	His
"Delia finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are."	Delia	Her
One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, pant-ing.	expenses	They
"Father Stenne was so fond of his boy!"	Della	Herself
"He followed the battalions of the quarter when they went to the fortifications."	Stenne	His
"Then the tall fellow lowered his voice"	battalions	They
"The old sergeant was there, busily engaged in posting his men,"	fellow	his
"He went down and joined the troops who were marching away in the darkness"	sergeant	his
"He was a child of Paris, sickly and pale, who might have been ten years old,"	troops	who
"The child stayed out of doors, wandering about until night. He followed the battalions of the quarter when they went to the fortifications,"	he	who
"Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed,"	child	he
"'Twenty dollars,' said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand. 'Give it to me quick,' said Della."	Jim	his
	dollars	it

The above table show the anaphoric expression of noun which are used to refer back to the antecedent. Anaphor of noun are frequently used in the two stories of English language.

Anaphoric Expressions of adjective

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
“now Della's beautiful hair fell about her, rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee”	Della's beautiful hair	It

These anaphors are used when an adjectival phrase is replaced by them or it. These are used few in a small number since adjective phrases are low in these two English stories.

Anaphoric expressions of verb

Statement	Antecedent	Anaphor
“Nothing was left to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it.”	Flop down	Did it

Here, this table shows the usage of an anaphor for a verb in a specific sentence or context.

This shows the rare occurrence of an anaphor for a verb.

Discussion

The comparative study of anaphoric expressions in Urdu and English narratives reflects that noun-based anaphors are highly predominant compared to verbal, adjectival, and temporal ones. It aligns with the theory of accessibility, which states that nouns are the most stable and cognitively accessible antecedent to discourse reference (Ariel, 2014; Gundel & Hedberg, 2017).

The comparatively low incidence of verbal and adjectival anaphors in both Urdu and English substantiates the argument by Kehler et al. (2008) that anaphora is not distributed across syntactic categories but influenced by discourse coherence relations. Since narrative texts are generally more focused on character and entities rather than processes or qualities, noun anaphors are likely to be the main referential device. This observation aligns with cross-linguistic evidence in Persian (Karimi & Nafisi, 2017) and other pro-drop languages, where nouns and pronouns are the main vehicles of reference, and anaphora involving verbs and adjectives occurs occasionally.

The Urdu texts contained only a few instances of temporal anaphora, with only two cases identified. These findings support the claim of Huang (2021), who pointed out that temporal reference is often expressed by deixis or explicit adverbs instead of anaphoric means. Additionally, the frequent appearance of noun anaphors in the two languages, in turn, proves the universality of the role of reference in textual cohesion and coherence (Mitkov, 2022). Notably, the Urdu data demonstrate how anaphoric reference is maintained over longer units of discourse, in many cases extending to the end of a scene or conversational unit. This implies that, unlike English anaphora, which often varies based on sentence-level dependencies, the narratives in Urdu have a tendency to have long referential chains, which is also the case with other South Asian languages (Irshad & Rehman, 2018). Therefore, despite the similarity of the base on noun anaphora, the distributional patterns used by both languages have slight differences in the discourse structure and narrative style.

The primary purpose of anaphora, both in English and in Urdu, is to avoid redundancy, to promote cohesion, and to allow interlocutors to retrieve previous ideas effectively. The prevalence of noun-based anaphora reflects the importance of participants and objects to the construction of narrative, whereas the minimal occurrence of verb, adjective, and temporal anaphors indicates a peripheral position in the discourse structure.

Conclusion

After analyzing the anaphoric expressions in both languages, it can be seen that noun-based anaphors are much more utilized than all other types. Other classes, including anaphoric forms of verbs, adjectives, propositional, deictic, and temporal references, are only infrequent. These results show that the most common type of reference in English and Urdu narratives is noun-

based. This dominance is explicable by the fact that everything we see around has a given name through which it conveys meaning and establishes reference. When telling a story or chatting, it would sound strange to utter the same name more than once when it is not needed. Speakers and writers use anaphors or referring expressions to identify the antecedents and subsequent mentions to ensure fluency and cohesion of the discourse and to avoid repetition. The rare occurrence of adjectival and temporal anaphors can probably be explained by the fact that speakers tend to use deictic terms to express qualities or temporal relations, not building full anaphoric links. Language is not made up purely of nouns; however, the interaction between various elements of language, including anaphoric devices, is what enables language to make a coherent and meaningful whole. This study proves that anaphoric expressions, particularly those related to nouns, are significant in terms of sustaining cohesion, preventing redundancy, and ensuring smooth discourse flow in both English and Urdu.

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