

PARTICIPANT REFERENCE IN SARNAMI HINDUSTANI

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As in all languages the means of reference to participants in Sarnami Hindustani narrative follows certain rules. These rules include the absence of overt reference to a participant at certain places. The reasons for not referring to a participant are various, but are all transparently logical.

The purpose of this paper is primarily to demonstrate that the absence of reference to the subject in Sarnami Hindustani is not sloppiness on the part of the narrator, nor does he choose the places of omission at random. On the contrary, there is a reason behind every absence of subject. By studying these reasons, a set of principles can be established to determine when the subject is to be left out.

Since the system of reference to participants in any language is obviously connected with the number of persons distinguished by the inflection of the verb, the basic conjugation of the Sarnami Hindustani verb is here presented.

In the present tense and the "short" resultative form of the verb (cf. Bosch, forthcoming) the first person is different from the second and third person, but number is not distinguished, (e.g., soetiela, soetie 'I/we are sleeping'; soete hai, soete 'you/he/she/they are sleeping'). In the past tense and the future tense, however, there are separate inflections for all three persons, though once again number is not distinguished, (e.g., soetlie 'I/we slept'; soetle 'you slept'; soetal 'he slept').

1. As in most languages, the subject is normally omitted in connection with the use of an imperative, the context invariably indicating to whom the command is addressed.

In the following example a "joker" wanting to play a trick is walking stealthily behind a woman and her child, who is in turn being lead by her husband. On their arrival at a 'T' junction, the woman follows her husband around the corner (cf. Dihal 1976).

Example 1 (imperative underlined)

Tab dielagiebaadj bole hai: "Oedhar kaha dja hai? Iedhar tjal!"

then joker says there where go here walk

'Then the joker said: "Where are you going there? Walk this way!"'

(The context here obviously excludes the husband, who is too far ahead and already around the corner, and the child, who is being carried by his mother and doesn't walk.)

The next example is from the same story.

Example 2

Koetjh doer gail dielagiebaadj tab aurat se bole hai kie:

some far went joker then woman to says that

"Ab ie baat na bolal keriehe."

now these words not be-said will-do

'When they had gone a little farther the joker said to the woman:

"Now don't let such words be said anymore!"'

However, there are instances when the subject is stated in connection with the imperative in Sarnami Hindustani. We distinguish three reasons for doing so.

- 1.1 If the speaker wishes to contrast the person to whom he addresses the command with somebody else, he uses the subject pronoun toe 'you' or toeloo 'you (pl.)'.

This is shown clearly in the following example. In the story of the joker (Examples 1,2), the policeman seeks to determine which of the two men is the husband of the woman. He first tells one man to call the child, but the child does not respond to him. Then he turns to the other man:

Example 3 (subject underlined)

Tab ekwa mard se bolies: "Toe bolaaw."

then other man to said you call

'Then (he) said to the other man: "You call him!''

- 1.2 Comparable to the use of the subject with an imperative to contrast the addressee with another participant, is the employment of the pronoun toe 'you' in a sentence anticipating a reciprocal response: 'You help me and I'll help you.'

The example that follows is from the story of the lion and the mouse (cf. Dharampal & Moella 1976). The lion has caught the mouse and is about to eat him. Then the mouse says:

Example 4

Ab ke baar toe hamme na kha!

now of time you me not eat

'Don't eat me this time!'

(Implying: 'Later maybe I'll be able to help you.')

- 1.3 The subject is mentioned along with the imperative to underline the authority of the speaker, as can be seen in the following example.

The policeman says:¹

Example 5

Tor biehuta ie hai, ekre sanghe toe dja.

your husband this is him together you go

'This is your husband; you (are to) go with him!'

2. The subject usually is omitted in the second half of compound sentences, provided that the subject is the same as in the first half of the sentence. The clauses of these sentences may be connected by aur 'and', bakie 'but', tab 'then' or they may simply be juxtaposed.

The following example is from the story of the twenty golden coins (Dihal, 1976). A man tells his wife to go and fetch him a golden coin from a certain place (the conjunction is underlined):

Example 6

Tab aurat gail mohar khodje bakie na paais.

then woman went coin seek but not found

'Then the woman went to look for the golden coin but (she) didn't find it.'

Comparable to the omission of the subject in the second half of a compound sentence is its omission in two juxtaposed sentences which form a 'couplet'. A couplet is here defined as a pair of propositions, each of which presupposes the other. In Sarnami Hindustani, this is

shown by the absence of a connective between the two sentences and (provided that the subject of the second sentence of the couplet is the same as that of the first) by the absence of reference to the subject in the second sentence.

2.1 The clearest types of couplets are Question Answer pairs. The question-answer couplet may be a real question.

Example 7

"Oe bolies hai?"	"Ha, bolies hai."
she said has	yes said has
"Did she say it?"	"Yes, (she) said it."

However, it may be a rhetorical question which the speaker answers himself, as in the following example in the story of the joker. The woman has just commented to her husband that she did not see any jokers at all when passing by the village. Then follows:

Example 8

Etne me ek dielagiebaadj oe gauw wala soenies aur ka karies?
 such in a joker that village one heard and what did

Koetjh miethaai kienke aurat ke pietje pietjhe tjale lagal ...
 something sweet bought-and woman of behind behind walk began

'At this point a joker of that village heard it and what did (he) do?
 (He) bought something sweet and began to walk behind the woman ...'

2.2 A second type of "same subject" couplet consists of an introductory proposition which, at least in context, anticipates a further proposition. For instance, if a participant verbally agrees to perform some action (first part of the couplet), then one anticipates the performance of the action (second part of the couplet).

Example 9

1) Tab B bole: "Ha."

then B says yes

2) Gail laawe.

went to-bring

'Then B said: "Yes (implying: I'll go and bring it)", and she went to bring it.'

In the following example, taken from the story of the twenty golden coins, the statement "his father thought of a trick", because of its position near the beginning of the story, "cries out" for further comment, and the absence of the connective, together with the omission of reference to the subject, indicates that what he says to his son constitutes the second half of a couplet, matching the content of the first.

Example 10

Tab okar baap ek tjalaakie sotjies. Bole: "Beta,

then his father a trick thought said son

djaane ka? ...

know what

'Then his father thought of a trick. (He) said: "Son, do you know what?":'

Occasionally, one couplet overlaps with another, in which case (provided that the subject remains the same throughout the couplet), it is omitted in the second half of both the first and the second couplet.

In the Sarnami Hindustani version of the "Hole in the bucket" story, participant B is requested to go and fetch water. The first couplet consists of her verbal assent to go, plus the action of fulfilling the request (sentences 1 and 2 - cf. Example 9). The second couplet consists of her going to bring the water (sentence 2) and her return (aail 'came' - sentence 3).

Example 11

- 1) Tab B bole: "Ha."
then B said yes
- 2) Gail laawe.
went to-bring
- 3) Aail bole: "Hol baltie me."
came said hole bucket in

'Then B said: "Yes." She went to bring it. She came and said:
"There is a hole in the bucket."'

- 3. The forms of reference to participants in the quote margins introducing reported speeches involving two people are now considered.

It is necessary to distinguish between reported speeches in a narrative which lead to an action performed by the addressee ("Speech-Action" couplets), and reported conversations between two participants in which the conversation is an end in itself (basically consisting of "Speech 1 - Speech 2" couplets).

If the narrative in which a speech is reported is concerned primarily with the actions performed by the participants, then the interest of the listener is directed to the action resulting from the speech. Typically in such "Speech-Action" couplets, the identity of both the speaker and the addressee is established at the beginning of the couplet, in the one case by overt reference to the subject of the "say" verb in the quote margin introducing the speech, and in the other, either by expressing the indirect object of the "say" verb in the quote margin (Example 12), or by means of a vocative in the speech itself (Example 13).

In Example 12, taken from the story of the twenty golden coins, the father orders his wife to go and bring a coin. The listener's attention is directed, not to the speech itself, but to the actions resulting from that speech.

Example 12 (references to participants underlined)

Ab baap bole hai aapan aurat se kie: ...

now father says his woman to that

'Now the father says to his wife: ...'

Earlier in the story, the parents and the child are together when the father thinks of something, then follows:

Example 13 (vocative underlined)

Bole: "Beta, djaane ka? ..."

says son know what

'(He) says: "Son, do you know what? ..."'

In the case of a series of "Speech-Action" couplets, in which the same participant is the speaker, it is not necessary to make further reference to him (but see below).

In Example 14 below, taken from the story of the joker, the addressee changes for each "Speech-Action" couplet, and is referred to by expressing the indirect object of the "say" verb in the quote margin. The policeman (overtly stated) has said to every one in general (no indirect object stated), that he will decide who the woman's husband is. He puts the child in the middle. Then follows:

Example 14 (references to participants underlined)

Couplet 1:

(Speech) ... aur ek mard se bolies: ...

and one man to said

'... and (he) said to one man: "Call the child!"'

(Action) (The man calls the child, who doesn't respond.)

Couplet 2:

(Speech) Tab ekwa mard se bolies: ...

then other man to said

'Then (he) said to the other man: "You call him!"'

(Action) (The man does so, and the child responds.)

The final "Speech-Action" couplet of this series is the climax to the story, which is marked in the quote margin, as in many other languages, by overt reference to the subject (cf. Hinds, forthcoming on this phenomenon in English, and Levinsohn, forthcoming on Inga (Quechuan)).

Example 14 (continued)

Climactic Couplet:

(Speech) Siepaahie bolies aurat se kie: ...

policeman said woman to that

'The policeman said to the woman: "This is your

3.2 If the reported conversation between two participants is an end in itself, as in the Sarnami Hindustani version of the "Hole in the Bucket", in which the cycle of commands and responses is central, then typically the two speakers are introduced as subjects in the quote margins of successive speeches, and no reference to the indirect object is made. (Overt reference to the indirect object thus appears to direct the listener's attention to the following action to be performed by the addressee.)

Example 15 (subjects underlined)

A bole kie: "Tanie se paanie laai daihe."

A says that little water fetch will-give

Tab B bole: "Ha."

then B says yes

'A said: "Fetch me some water." Then B said: "Yes."'

In succeeding "Speech 1 - Speech 2" couplets, however, only the subject of the quote margin for the opening speech of the couplet is stated (but see below).

Example 16

Tab A poetjhe: "Kaisan baltie hai? Plastiek ke kie tien wala?"

then A asks how bucket is plastic of or metal one

Tab bole: "Plastiek wala hai."

then says plastic one is

'Then A asks: "What kind of bucket is it? A plastic one or a metal one?" Then (B) says: "A plastic one."'

The above pattern:

A says: "Speech 1"

∅ says: "Speech 2"

is broken if the second participant gives an unexpected response, e.g., one signalled by "No!". In this case, overt reference is made to the second participant.

Example 17

Tab A bole: "Toe oke banaai sake. Tjaahie galaai ke."

then A says you it make can necessary melt to

Tab B bole: "Na, oman tab aagie tjaahie aur gasbom don hoi gail."

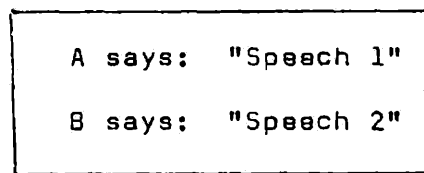
then B says no that-in then fire necessary and gas finish became went

'Then A says: "You can mend it. It needs to be melted." Then B says:

"No, then we need a flame in it and the gas cylinder is empty."

Every time that the expectancy chain is broken because the second participant does not respond according to the first participant's suggestion, overt reference to the second participant as subject occurs.

(The time comes, however, that the "unexpected response" becomes "expected", in which case the pattern reverts to:



where Speech 2 is the "expected unexpected response"!)

3.3 In summary, we can represent diagrammatically the means of reference to participants in the "Speech-Action" and "Speech 1 - Speech 2" types of exchanges between participants as follows (in the examples given above, further couplets always occur, so that the actual patterning is invariably more complex than the basic types described here):

"Speech-Action" couplets

Introduction
of participants:

A says to B
∅ acts

Further couplets:

∅ says to C
∅ acts

Climactic couplet:

A says to D
∅ acts

"Speech 1 - Speech 2" couplets

Introduction
of participants:

A says
B says

Further couplets:

A says
∅ says

Expectancy reversal
within couplet:

A says
B says

4. To conclude, the factors recognized in this paper which affect the reference to a participant in Sarnami Hindustani stories are listed as follows:

contrast with another participant (sections 1.1, 1.2)
the relative authority of the speaker (1.3)
the position of the clause in a compound sentence or a couplet
in which the same subject is maintained throughout (2.)
"Speech-Action" versus "Speech 1 - Speech 2" couplets (3.0)
initial versus subsequent versus climactic couplets (3.0)
expectancy reversal (3.2).

Though the above factors co-occur, thereby making the absence and presence of references to a participant a complex matter, the native speaker of Sarnami Hindustani does not mention a participant or fail to refer to a participant at random; rather, he makes use of a very logical set of underlying principles.

Footnotes

¹Possibly comparable to Example 5, though difficult to know how to interpret, are the words of a neighbour, illustrated below, who obviously was not in a position to enforce her command. Nevertheless, it is likely that in fact she acted as though she had authority, in an effort to get her own way.

Example: Tab bromfiets leike toelag dhakelke dja daam par.
then motorbike take-and you pl. push-and go road on
'So you (should) take your motorbikes and push them
onto the road.'

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