

Understanding The Effect Of Anaphoric Expressions In Some Selected Iraqi Socio-Political Discourse On Social Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

In the philosophy of persuasive language, reference is a widely accepted global semantic notion that argues the relationship between a statement and its referent for meanings. This is to recognize and understand things in discourse, especially for persuasive ends in public discourse. The aim of this work then is to present a critical analysis to the effect of anaphoric expressions in some selected Iraqi socio-political discourse delivered on social media. The study highlights the effect of referential strategies on media discourse delivered during the time of COVID-19. The analysis limits itself to 20 videos, which are randomly selected from various YouTube channels. For doing so, the study incorporates some of the widely applied CDA analytical categories used in the DHA (Discourse-Historical Approach), including referential strategies¹ (Resigil & Wodak, 2001). This is to account for how the use of referential strategies / expressions can be used for persuasive ends, especially in /out group. The analysis of the selected data demonstrates that: social media in general and YouTube in particular have an exceptional and powerful impact on in/out group. Thereof, personal references are the most predominated cohesive device that employed in the selected data by which the speaker represents membership in the semantic categories of in-group and out group. Statistically, the analysis found that personal references are the highest percentage of the investigated data, while the demonstrative and comparative once are not utilized.

Key Words: anaphoric expressions, referential strategy, public discourse, CDA.

1. Introduction

In language of persuasion, reference is a widely accepted strategy in public discourse and social media in particular, behind which ideologies are delivered for persuasive ends (Katea, 2018).

Accordingly, the emerging social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram have been an area of interest for academic investigation. Social media substantially affected how people socialize and interact and how they maintain and

¹ The objective of this strategy is to construct social actors, objects, phenomena, events and processes, actions. It devices are membership categorization devices, deictics, anthroponyms, etc. metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions etc.

consolidate relationships as these soft tools have permitted new performative rituals to arise (van Dijk, 2009: P. 7). Nowadays, social media in general and YouTube in particular is a necessary and vital instrument for social interactions, to communicate with others especially in their social life. In this connection, voice, body movement, gesture, eye contact and energy play crucial role in the performance of a public speech (Nowak 2004: 5-55). As the focus of this research is only on the linguistic part of the performance of speech, speech and its components will be chosen for further discussion. In this connection, people either use verbal communication (i.e. speaking and writing) or non verbal communication (i.e. non-verbal communication). In verbal communication, speakers use different ties and signal to connect one sentence to another in order to constitute a recognizable and understandable discourse for certain purposes.

A discourse is not only a sequence of words or sentences for introducing random topics. Thereof, discourse should be combined in logical way to present meaning(s). Thus, cohesion represents a significant principle within the creation of a discourse. These ties connect its elements in order to manifest the interpretation of a textual element in a text (Khofidoh, 2017, p.2). Cohesion is defined as linguistic signals, i.e. the connections that link up the sentences in the discourse and help the hearers in coming up with an adequate mental representation of the hearer as the reaction of the speaker's utterances (Dooley & Levinson, 2001, p.15).

A good discourse requires certain various devices to refer to a single instance of cohesion to create a cohesive text. Cohesive devices are some linguistic features which link the pieces of text together in a specific way. According to Harmer (2004), the aim of using cohesive devices is to assist the reader understand the items pointed to and those which are replaced and even the items

are omitted (Azzouz, 2009, p.25). In social communication, using anaphoric references make the interaction clear and coherent in discourse. If interlocutors attend to describe everything explicitly, the discourse would become very complex, long and time-consuming. Furthermore, it confuses the participants and lead to potential misunderstandings (Khofidoh, 2017, p.2). People, through their speaking or writing, point out to other people, things, places, actions to which they referred to previously by using certain words. The context in which such references are used is named 'anaphora', and the words used to "refer" are named 'anaphors' including personal pronouns such as (he, she, it), demonstrative pronouns such as (this, that, these, those) and comparative references such as (more, less, better). The anaphoric references make social interactions more coherent and intelligible in which discourse is its battlefield. Therefore, this paper sheds light on the anaphoric expressions that employed mediated discourse.

3. Literature Review

Reference is regarded as a universal semantic concept that asserts the relation between an expression and its referent is significant for attaining the purpose of identifying entities in a written or spoken discourse (Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. XVII). In discourse analysis, reference is dealt with as an action on the part of the speaker or writer. That's to say, when people describe or introduce something they are doing something since reference presents the connection between the real situation and the entity. Interlocutors are unable to refer to something which does not exist in the real world. However, reference expressions do not have to match the grammatical class; they must have semantic properties yet. Accordingly, it represents one of grammatical cohesive devices types which results in an appropriate interpretation that joins between words or sentences which point out to any entity and

capable to force the interlocutors to perform an action as the speaker will (Yule, 1983, pp. 27-28).

Moreover, reference is viewed in terms of cohesion provided by the specific retrieved information which signals to the referential meaning. Cohesion takes place through the continuity of reference where the same thing occurs in the discourse for the second time (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.31). thus, a referring expression is defined as a piece of language that is utilized to combine link something outside language to certain living or dead entity or group of entities or concepts. (Gorjain, B. et al., 2015, p.17). Consequently, a reference should imply the use of language to refer to an entity (person, time, place, etc.) and join between sentences which point to anything by forcing the interlocutors to do something as the speaker desire.

3.1. Anaphoric References

Anaphoric reference is usually explained in terms of head (antecedent) relation. In other words, the interpretation of items in written or spoken text depend on something mentioned previously (Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. LII). All kinds of activities which involve looking back in texts to find the referent are called anaphoric relation. Furthermore, it refers to relations of any cohesive devices of references occur in the left; the antecedent has mentioned before (Azzouz, 2009, p.28).

3.1.1. Anaphoric Personal Reference

Personal reference, on one hand, represents a reference which function through the category of person. The personal reference category is classified into three classes: personal pronouns, possessive determiners, and possessive pronouns (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p.43)

Table 1: Personal Reference (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 38)

Semantic Categories	Existential	Possessive
Class	Pronouns	Determiner
Person:		
Speaker (only)	I me	mine My
Addressee(s)	you	yours your
Speaker and 3rd person (s)	we us	ours our
3 rd person, male	he him	his his
3 rd person, female	she her	her her
3 rd person/ other person, Object	they them	theirs their
Generalized person	it one	its its one's

Anaphoric personal reference, on the other hand, refers to the reference of any pronoun mentioned in an earlier text or spoken discourse. As a result, the reference of each anaphoric pronoun sometimes is determined independently of other pronouns in a text. Some anaphoric personal reference are shown below:

- I saw a man in the garden and when I came back, he disappeared.

-Look at the moon. It disappears quickly.

-Jane remembered her dead father. She was in tears.

(Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. LV)

3.1.2. Anaphoric Comparative Reference

Halliday & Hasan (1976, p.37, 39) state that the indirect reference by means of identity or similarity is referred to as comparative reference. They classify the comparative references as it is shown in (Table 2).

Table 2: Comparative Reference

Grammatical function	Modifier: Deitic/Epithet	Submodifier/Adjunct
Class	Adjective	Adverb
General Comparison:		identically
Identity	same, identical, equal	similarity, likewise, so,
General similarity	similar, additional	such differently, otherwise
Difference	other, different, else	
	better, more, etc.	
Particular Comparison	(comparative adjectives and quantifiers)	so, more, less, equally

Comparative items which have anaphoric reference are necessary for creating a cohesive discourse. They show similar possibilities to other forms of reference. The third person personals that imply a backward reference are typically anaphoric.

-Mary has just arrived. I was expecting someone else.

(Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. LIX)

3.1.3. Anaphoric Demonstrative Reference

Halliday & Hasan (1976, p.37-38) demonstrative reference is THE reference which is interpreted according to location, on a scale of proximity. They classify the demonstrative reference as in (Table 3).

Table 3: Demonstrative Reference

Semantic Category	Selective		Non-Selective
Class	Determiner	Adverb	Determiner

Proximity:		
Near	this, these	here (now)
Far	that, those	there, then
Neutral		The

Anaphoric demonstrative reference introduces items in statements mentioned previously in the text.

-**The student** who was rewarded yesterday is my relative. **That** boy is extremely intelligent. (Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. LXII)

Additionally, demonstrative reference as any other types of reference refers to persons and objects in semantic rather than grammatical terms. It requires an explicit repetition of the noun or some form of synonym in order to points out to the identity of specific reference in its anaphoric function. Sometimes, especially when there is no linguistic antecedent in the spoken or written text which displays that anaphoric reference, the demonstrative is assumed to be mentioned in a previous text. Such reference may appear in fragments of conversation.

- I can buy **that**, too.

-**That** must have cost a lot of money.

The examples above can be considered as anaphoric demonstratives due to the interpretation of the demonstrative that (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.65)

4. Reference in Arabic

Traditional grammarians of Arabic have been confused about introducing a well-established list of the parts of speech in Arabic. Some grammarians resort to form while others to meaning. Modern linguists of Arabic such as Anees (1958), Hasan (1975), Al-Saqee (1977)

try to add extra parts to traditional list (Hasan, 1975. Pp.86-89). The disagreement between Arabic linguists concerning the number of sections of the speech has been expanded to include referential expressions; they have not made a fixed list of definite Arabic references. Including most Arab grammarians. "Five forms of definite reference expressions are adopted by Seebawayhi (1317 A.H.) and Al-Jurjane (1982); pronouns, proper nouns, demonstratives, nouns identified by the definite article /al/ "the" and the genitive construct /idaafa/. Depending on the view that they differ in the degree of identification and that some of them have more identification power than the others, Kufa grammarians of Arabic render a different order of definite referring expressions. They argue that demonstratives are more identifiable than the proper names. The pronouns, the genitives and the nouns identified by the definite article are next. However the vast majority of modern Arabic grammarians seem to have been affected by the Basrah Traditional Grammar School by adopting the same types and order of definite reference expressions (Hasan, 1975, pp.211-217).

4.1. Anaphoric Reference

The interpretation of an item depending on its earlier mention in a text is called anaphoric reference. As with Crystal, anaphoric reference is defined as a term that is used to classify GRAMMATICAL description for the process of linguistic reference method or outcome. Return to a unit sense previously conveyed. "Anaphoric reference" is a way to mark the identity of what is

conveyed and what is already articulated (Crystal, 1983, p.17)

4.1.1 Anaphoric personal reference

Pronouns are used as replacements for the nouns and their usage is primarily defined by the hearers' ability to define the person to which they refer. They differ in their identification capacity. The pronouns that denote the speaker are defining rather than the pronouns that denote the addressee. Pronouns of the absentee /ḍamaaʔiru lḡaaʔib/ are less identifying than other personal pronouns since their referents are not present and quite unknown to the addressee unless further information is added by the speaker (Hasan, 1975, p.268). The personal relation in Arabic depends on the distinction made between the speaker's speech and other positions. In general, both free, bound and absent pronouns require certain explanations both from the speaker and from the addressee. Often it is difficult to perceive the pronoun of the absentee as the person or object for which the pronoun is not present (Hasan, 1975, p.255).

The anaphoric relation is typically obtained if an element in the previous text is used to interpret the pronoun. The pronoun of separation /ḍamiiru lfaṣli/ present excellent instances of anaphoric pronominal reference in Arabic since it can be utilized to explain a specific entity that is belong to. Omitting such pronoun may convert the sentence into a simple statement and thus it loses its emphatic power. Look at the following examples:

-/kaana zaydun huwa annaṣiiʔu/. "Zayd was an active person".

-/zaydun huwa annaṣiiʔu/ "Zayd, he, was the active person".

The pronoun in examples above correspond its antecedent in number and gender. One of the conditions of the anaphoric pronoun of separation is that it can denote a definite noun.

- /alJunuudu humu labʔaalu fi lHarbi/. "The soldiers, they, are the heroes in the war".

-/alummu hiya lmuṣidatu li abnaaʔihaa/. "The mother, she, is the counselor of her children". cf.

-/tu9addu ṣṣamsu maṣḍaran li nnuuri wa lHaraarati, wahiya aqrabu lkawaakibi ilaynaa/. "The sun is considered the source of heat and light, and it is the nearest planet to us".

In the mentioned examples, the underlined pronouns points out to the antecedents mentioned previously. (Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p. XCIV)

4.1.2. Anaphoric comparative reference

Comparative references in Arabic can be used to denote items found within a text, and thus can work anaphorically by interpreting items already described or cataphorically by interpreting the elements below. The relation can be categorized in two forms following Halliday and Hasan (1976:76): general comparison and precise comparison. The general comparison usually indicates references in terms of similarity or inconsistency without any specific quality being listed. A particular comparison, on the other hand suggests a specific consistency in terms of non-deictively used comparative types. In Arabic, comparatives fall into three main forms according to the shape: the first type is used in the comparative form of the pattern /af9al/. Comparison is made between two nouns that share one special characteristic. The first noun in the comparative structure exceeds the second in that property. The pattern used is /af9alu/ followed by the preposition /min/ which corresponds to the word "than" in the English comparison. The comparative word does not show any number or gender distinctions:

-/alwaladu aqwaa min albinti/. "The boy is stronger than the girl".

-/alwaladaani aqwaa mina lbintayni/ “The two boys are stronger than the two girls”.

- /arriJaalu aqwaa min annisaa?i/. “Men are stronger than women”.

Like the other types of anaphoric expressions, anaphoric comparatives, as other types of anaphoric expressions, indicate that the items referred to earlier in discourse. Expressions like /alaaxaru/ “the other one”; /aaxaru/ “else” provide good examples of anaphoric reference.

-/Jaa?a zaydun ilaa lmadrasati muta?axiran/. “Zayd has arrived at school late”.

-/kuntu atawaqqa9u šaxšan aaxara/. “I was expecting someone else”.

-/naJaHat faaFimatu fi limtiHaani/. “Fatima has passed the exam”.

-/laakinnanii Hasibtuhaa alfataata luxraa/. “But I thought her the other girl”. (p.CV)

4.1.3. Anaphoric demonstrative reference

Demonstrations are used as referential expressions for real-world entities. They are followed by movements that demonstrate where the referents are located. Some traditional and most contemporary Arabic grammarists offer two main categories of demonstrations: the closer and the more remote. It is based on the difficulty of finding a reference in a media distance from the speaker. Furthermore the option of one display or another to indicate the deixis may be related to the psychological condition of the person speaking, which cannot be defined too precisely.)

Demonstratives in Arabic can be used to satisfy the following functions:

1- To indicate a referent by a particular expression accompanied by a gesture.

- /uriidu haaḏaa/. (Pointing to a book). “I want this”.

-/haaḏaa zaydun/. “This is Zayd”.

2- To identify referents in terms of nearness or remoteness.

- /haaḏa rraJluu šuJaa9un/. “This is a brave man”. miratun/.0b. /tilka ššaJaratu mu “That tree is fruitful”.

3- To glorify referents by using a nearer or remoter demonstrative.

-/haaḏa llaḏi hazama la9daa?a/. “This (masc.) is the one who defeated the enemies”.

-/tilka llati naalat lJaa?izata/. “That (fem.) is the one who got the prize”.

4- To show some unfavoured characteristics of human referents, i.e., to dispraise them by identifying their weakness and their mean behaviour.

-/haaḏaa rraJulu laa yašluHu li šay?in/. “This man is good for nothing”.

- /a haaḏa llaḏii taxšaahu/. “Is this the one you fear”?

5- To show how much some individuals are careless or lazy.

-/haaḏaa huwa lqalamu llaḏi Jalabtuhu laka. Haaḏa huwa, unḌur ilayhi, ilmashu biyadika/. “This is the pencil that I brought to you. This is it, look at it, and touch it with your hands”.

Demonstratives may be used to indicate references mentioned in the text earlier. Anaphorical evidence can relate the text elements semantically and replace objects whose repeated appearance could damage the cohesive

or stylistic value of a text. The second occurrence of the noun in substantive phrases with two identical heads refers to the same item in the text. The demonstrative may therefore be used to indicate a phrase of reference co. regardless of the deletion process, which does not allow a second reading for the deleted head.

-/qara?tu riwaayatan fi lisbuu9i lmaadii. wakaanat tilka rriwaayatu mumti9atan/. “I read a novel last week and that was interesting”.

-S/qara?tu riwaayatan fi lisbuu9i lmaadii. wakaanat mumti9atan/. “I read a story last week and that was interesting” (Al-Dilaymy, 1998, p.CXIII).

5. Methodology

The present work focuses on the study of mediated speeches, which affects audience's attitude and behavior regarding some issues (i.e. Social, political, and medical). The study then used the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. This is to explore the social media in terms the factors like dominance, inequality, and subjugation. In doing do, 20 videos have been downloaded from YouTube. The internet was the main source of these data. These data have been downloaded from trustworthy and reliable websites that are about different issues and events concerning with socio-political issues. These issues are a lot in social media; however, the focus will be on current social and political situation in COVID-19.

Methodologically, the selected data were downloaded watched more than one time, and

then converted into text and finally analyzed according to the principles of nomination / referential strategies. The objective of this strategy is to construct social actors, objects, phenomena, events and processes, actions. For doing this is uses membership categorization devices, deictics, anthroponyms, etc. metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions etc. These strategies look at how social actors, objects, phenomena and events are named and referred to linguistically. This is to demarcate themselves from their opponents. One way to do that is through the use of in-groups and out-groups in a categorical way to affect audience's attitude and behavior regarding some issue and to impose their social power, ideology, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality (van Dijk 2001: 352). Public speech has been an area of study of discourse analysts. The purpose of CDA is to analyze and expose how social inequalities are enacted and expressed through language, and thus to generate consciousness and to bring about the change. Thus, it can be deduced that CDA is not neutral, unbiased and scientific as a CDA analyst often has clear social, economical or political motives (Wodak 2006: 4-5; Wodak & De Cillia 2006: 713-714). A CDA analyst approaches a text with a clear ideology and sees in the text only what he wants to see.

6. Data Analysis and Discussion

Table (4) Personal References with Percentages and Occurrences

Persona References	Frequency	Percentage
we	165	41%
I	125	31%

you	20	5%
They	18	4.5%
Your	14	3.5%
It	12	3.0%
Their	5	1.25%
Them	5	1.25%
Total	400	100%

After watching the videos, we analyze this interaction between different announcers and citizens (Iraqis) and from these interviews or interactions, we come up with certain analyses and interpretations that show how bad is the situation, and how those people have suffered. All of what has been said carry native implications towards the situations. The most prominent type of reference are personal as people refer to themselves with the first person pronoun “I” or “we”. The pronoun “we” tops the list; it is frequently used when people refer to a general problem that all people suffer from or face such as poverty or unemployment. However, the “I” is placed the second which is used when people refer to a specific problem that a specific person faces such demonstratives issue. The pronoun “you” place the third in the list which is used, in most cases, by the announcer when he poses or raises a question to the speakers or when they direct their speech to the government. The pronoun “they” is also used to refer to the members of Iraqi government. Furthermore, the reference “it” is sometimes used to refer to government as a whole or to a certain matter like the situation or ration card. The pronouns “them, your and their” are also used but rarely. Each pronoun is shown in the following examples:

ANNOUNCER: Speaking of 2020 demonstration, what do **you** think will these demonstration make any solution:

SPEAKER: an Iraqi citizen comments; directing his speech to the government: Why do **you** kill

innocents?; Why do **you** kill such beautiful young's?; there are thousands of solutions rather than this. **They** never appoint us, but **they** appoint their relatives and those who **they** are close to or know. Why do **we** always suffer?; when will **we** be like Qatar and Sudia Arabia. **I** want to live, but why do not **they** give attain me a house or land? **I** live in a rent house. How can **I** make living?

ANNOUNCER: okay, so what is **your** problem? Why are **you** demonstrate

SPEAKER: **I** have never drunk or eat since five days; **I** swear by God. Why do **we** sleep in the street? it is **me** who defended Iraq against ISIS in Alanbar and Mousal and now no one pays me any attention; **I** am unemployed, so tell me what shall **I** do.

ANNOUNCER: Speaking of COVID-19, as an Iraqi what is **your** complain about the situation:

S1: **we** know that it is contagious, but what shall **we** do? We have families to feed, **we** have to work daily. If **wedon't** do so **we** will die starving. **Wedon't** have salaries; no one would give us a penny if we do not work, so **we** should go out and work. **We** will never stay home.

S2: COVID-19 really exhausts; **we** are out of mood to go outside or visit relatives at all. **We** are psychologically collapsed. **We** are just staying at home and **we** are unemployed, so how can we get money. **We** are really so depressed.

S3: **we** are not used to staying at home or lock down, you know, **we** do nothing but sleeping and eating. In addition to, **we** know, COVID-19, is very dangerous disease, it considerably affects financially and psychologically. **You** are obsessed with the fact that **you** are going to be infected.

S4: **I** am not used to staying at home; **I** have been fighting in the house and laughing at the same time. However, **I** got depressed so much. **It** threatened our lives.

S5: there is no good procedure to be conducted; indeed, **they** are very classic ones. Pharmacies increase the prices of everything instead of decreasing it to help people.

ANNOUNCER: what is the reason that makes **you** say so ?

SPEAKER: At that time, for example, the ration card contains ten items per a month , but now **it** contains only three which are bad per three months.

ANNOUNCER: what is **your** opinion about the current political situation of Iraq?

SPEAKER: The current political situation is very bad.

As far as the comparative reference, sometimes, the speakers use such a type of reference when they want to compare or contrast as in words like better or different or dissimilar. The following example asserts the above claim:

ANNOUNCER: what is your opinion about the current political situation of Iraq?

SPEAKER: the people of government are thief's; there is peace and security. I think the situation under Sdam's reign is **better**. Let them say that I belong to Alba'ath party; Saddam is **better** than them.

ANNOUNCER: how do you see the Iraqi situation in COVID-19 in comparison to other states.

SPEAKER: ACTUALLY, I swear by Allah, we are at God's mercy. We are **dissimilar** from Qatar or UAE. There are no good procedures or medical protections. We are in a chaos.

Regarding demonstrative references, indeed the analysis shows that there are no demonstrative references at all. This is due to the fact that people refer to themselves only or to the government with personal references and avoiding uses demonstratives like that or those. They want to direct their message to the government and speaking to it clearly as in person and/or a person.

6. Conclusion

A critical reading to some selected Iraqi socio-political speeches delivered on YouTube during the period of Covide 19 shows that language is not only a matter of structure, but a matter of reference and cohesion. Personal References are the most predominate cohesive category employed throughout the investigated data and shares the highest percentage within all instances of analysis. The analysis shows that first personal pronouns "we and "you" top the list with a percentage of (72%/ 190) for both where (41%/165) for 'we' and (31%/ 125) for 'I'. On the opposite, third and second person pronouns such as they, it and you rank as the lowest in most of occurrences within the sample because speakers reveal their suffering to the unknown in most cases without directing their message in some cases. In terms of issues or topic raised and debated or argued, it is concluded that the people talk about different issues such as 2020 demonstration, the situation in COVID-19 or criticizing the political system. Other types of anaphoric references such as demonstrative are used less or never. This is due to the fact that people direct their message to the addressees who are the member of the government. Hence, they never use pronouns such as that, this or those etc.

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The Samples of Data Analysis are Retrieved from the Following Links on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/Yx-o0Q-gxD0>

<https://youtu.be/65-PFwfOJPI>

https://youtu.be/tV_7WA-nHzg

<https://youtu.be/zQRaqbQkBd8>