Contrastive Study of English and Standard Urdu-Hindi Languages

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Abstract

The present paper attempts to present a contrastive analysis of English and Urdu-Hindi Languages. Contrastive analysis plays a very significant role in second language learning and teaching. Language learning involves the "transfer of habits" of the native language. It is necessary for the programme planners, material producers and language instructors to study and understand the similarities and differences between source and target languages.

This study makes a contrastive analysis of English and Urdu-Hindi languages at various levels of Phonological, morphological and syntactic such as sound pattern, allophonic variation, consonant clusters, Syllabic Structure, plural formation of word and morphological processes and also syntactic structures of sentences.

Introduction:

According to *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* (1999), a contrastive analysis describes the structural differences and similarities of two or more languages. As an area of enquiry, contrastive Analysis is concerned with the principles and uses of such descriptions (Johnson, K. & Johnson, Helen, 1999:203). Crystal (1992) has defined as Contrastive Analysis or Contrastive Linguistics as the identification of points of structural similarity and difference between two languages (Crystal, 1992:83).

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When the child learns his native language, he develops his native language behaviour. Gradually this becomes stronger and stronger. In learning the second language, the learner is influenced very much by his native language behaviour. Where the structure of two languages is the same, no difficulty is anticipated. Where the structure of the second language differs from the native language, we can expect both difficulties on learning and error in performance.

The bigger the difference between the languages, the greater the difficulties will be in learning a second language. Learning a language then is visualized essentially learning a process to overcome these difficulties. In other words, learning a second language means changing one's native language behaviour to that of the speaking of the target language. Here the contrastive analysis will be useful. It will discover the differences between languages and will predict the difficulties that the learner will have. Teaching will then focus on those points where there are structural differences; this in turn determines what the learner has to learn and what the teacher has to teach.

Comparatives Study of Various Linguistics Levels:
Phonological Levels:

Phonology concerns itself with the analysis and description of the meaningful sounds that human beings make. It is the study of pronunciation, the system of spoken sounds in a particular language. Consider the sound /p/ in the case of English language. This sound has at least three manifestations. When it occurs in the initial position of a word, it becomes aspirated [p^h] as in words like *pen, place, pan, pack, pit, peak*, etc. If this sound occurs in the medial position [-p-] as in *span, paper, happy, speak, supper, repel* etc., its manifestation becomes open or released [p=]. If the same sound /p/ occurs in the final position of the word like *cap, tap, map, top, rip, tripe,* etc, it becomes a complete stop. Such differences are not noticeable in Urdu and Hindi languages.

Consonant Sound System

Sound patterns

For a Hindi-Urdu speaker who is learning English, the teacher has to provide contrastive data at all levels. If the teacher is teaching Urdu-Hindi sound he has to provide the following data. These sound patterns are shown below.

The pattern of stop/plosive sounds in English is /p t k / and / b d g/. Here, the contrast is between voiceless and voiced (voicing). Secondly, there are three points of articulation bilabial, alveolar and velar. In Urdu-Hindi the sound pattern of stops is

P t ṭ c k	[प त ट च क]	Voiceless unaspirated stop
p^h ṭ^h ṭ^h c^h k^h	[फ थ ठ छ ख]	Voiceless aspirated stop
b d ḍ j g	[ब द ड ज ग]	Voiced unaspirated stop

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b^h d^h $ḍ^h$ j^h g^h [भ ध ढ झ घ]   Voiced aspirated stop

Here the contrast is between (voicing) voiceless and voiced and between aspirated and unaspirated sounds. Secondly, there are five points of articulations Bi-labial, Dental/Alveolar, Retroflex, Palatal and Velar.

In English /p/ and /b/ make a pair. But in Hindi the bilabial sound has four manifestations: /p, p^h, b, b^h/. For instance Phoneme /p/ is voiceless, unaspirated, bi-labial, stop. It occurs in all the three positions (initially, medially and finally) in words. Phoneme /p^h/ is voiceless, aspirated, bi-labial, stop. For example, Phoneme /p^h/ as **(फल)** [P^hə l]   'fruit'

Phoneme /p/ in **(पल)**   [pəl]   'moment'

In Urdu-Hindi /p/ contrasts with /p^h/ but in English it does not contrast with /p^h/. These two sounds are simply allophonic variations.

In English, /p/, /t/, /k/ are aspirated such as ([p^h], [t^h], [k^h]) when they occur initially in stressed syllables.
       A **Phoneme** is minimal significant contrastive units in the phonological system of a language and **Allophones** are positional variants of a phoneme. In other words phoneme is the minimum sound unit that can change one utterance into another in a language.

Phoneme: **Allophones**

[p-] voiceless bi-labial stops aspirated, when it occurs initially in stress syllables (not necessary syllable word initial. It may be word- medial, but syllable-initial).

/ p/   [-p-] voiceless bi-labial stops un aspirated ,when it occurs in medial position.

[-p] voiceless bi-labial stop unreleased, when it occurs in final position (It is not released audibly).

       In an allophonic or narrow or phonetic transcription, the symbols used to represent this allophone is
       [p^h-] as in pen, pin, paint, please, pure, etc.
       [-p-] as in span, spin, space, upper, speech, speak, etc.
       [-p=] as in cup, pipe, peep etc.

       Hence, in English, the value of phoneme /p/ is different from the phoneme /p/ in Urdu-Hindi languages. Therefore, the systematic distribution in both the languages is different. Similar is the case with phonemes /t/ and /k/.

       In English, phoneme /t/ → [t^h] is aspirated when it occurs initially in a stressed syllable as in word like *ten, tin, tie, town, ton, tune, team, term*, etc.

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In English, phoneme /t/ →[-t-] is unaspirated when it occurs in unaccented syllables and in accented syllables preceded by /s/. For example, phoneme /t/ in unaccented syllables: *utter, daughter, latter, water,* etc. Phoneme /t/ preceded by /s/ in *stain, stamp, and steam*.

In English, phoneme /t/ →[-t] is not released audibly if it occurs finally in a word. Such as *neat, net, cut, pocket, bet, heart, late, set, seat,* etc.

Similarly, in English, Phoneme /k/ in such a way [kʰ] is aspirated when it occurs initially in a stressed syllable. For example *can, cap, cave, class, coal, cat, cash,* etc.

In English, Phoneme /k/ →[-k-] is unaspirated when it occurs in unaccented syllable (i.e. medial position in a word) e.g. *scan, scale, skin, uncle, particle, weaker, market, lacking* etc.

In English, phoneme /k/ →[-k] is not released audibly when it occurs in word final (final position) e.g. *back, black, bank, lack, weak, work, thick, pick, lake, lock, dock,* etc.

Phonemes in Continuation

Now we come to another aspect, i.e., **Consonant cluster**, a sequence of two or more consonants made without an intervening vowel. Here we study the possible positions of consonant clusters and also the positions where clusters are missing in Urdu.
Clusters are of two types:

(a) Permissible sequence of phonemes in a given language.
(b) Non-permissible sequence of phonemes in a given language   For example, *sk* /skri:m/ in *scream* is permissible consonant cluster   but not a permissible consonant cluster in*/zgri:m/.

In Hindi-Urdu, sk→ /səkul/   /iskul/ 'school'

Consonant cluster /sk/ has written the addition of short vowel /i/ before a consonant cluster in standard Urdu. For example, English word 'school' is spoken in Urdu language as /iskul/ but Kashmiri Urdu speakers commonly speak /səkul/. In fact, consonant cluster generally breaks in Urdu language; those words borrow from Persian and Arabic. It makes insertion of short vowel /ə/ between consonant clusters. For example, /qədr/ 'respect' is spoken as /qədər/ and /sədr/ 'president' is spoken as /sədər/.

Syllabic Structure

For a study of the phonetic and phonological structure of the word in Urdu, it is expedient to divide the sentence in segments corresponding to the pulses, i.e., syllables. We propose to take every word under study as used in a sentence in 'isolative style'. The structure of the syllable as well as that of monosyllabic words may show difference in quick speech. The immediate

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'auditory basis' of syllables is 'relative sonority and duration' which show marked fluctuations in slow and quick styles of speech.

In general, in phonetics term, the following types of consonant sounds are heard at the beginning of a syllable in Urdu: No initial consonantal cluster is possible in Urdu. All the consonantal clusters of the Sanskrit 'tatsama' words are broken up. Reduction of initial consonantal clusters is a special feature of Urdu (Khan, 1999: 38)

Sanskrit	*Urdu*
brahmen	bəra:hmen
Prečar	pəreča:r

Even the English loan-words are modified according to this pattern:

School	iskul or sikul or səkul
Station	isteshen or siteshen

There are, however, instances of consonantal clusters with the semi-vowels. The number of such words is very limited but these words form the most important part of the vocabulary:

*/k*ya:/ (what) ; /*k*yõ/ (why), /xya:l/ (thought) , /zya:da:/ (more)

The palatalization is not well marked with z and x (fricatives) as with the semi-vowels in *k*ya:, *pya:r,* etc. In the Devanagari script, these clusters are denoted as syllabic but the Urdu orthography does not to express their original nature and treats them as pIar, kIa.

Following are the consonant sounds which occur at the end of the last syllable of a word in Urdu language:
      a)   CVC contains by far the largest number of monosyllabic words and is the backbone of the language. The following observations may be made regarding these:
          1)   It never begins with /R/ or /R^h/.
          2)   It does not end in / ḍ /, /ḍ^h/ and /p^h/ (with few exceptions and the English loan-words).

      b)   VCC structure is possible only in the Arabic, Persian and the Sanskrit ('tatsamas') loan-words, and may be treated as one of the criteria of loan-words.

A syllable is a phonological unit consisting of one or more segmental sounds. The basis of the unit is a vowel. There are several different types such as monosyllables, bi-syllables, tri-syllables, poly-syllables, etc.

Monosyllabic Words

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Urdu-Hindi		English
V	आ, ऐ, ओ a: e, o	/a:/ /æ/ /o/ in ah, oh
VC	अब, इस əb, Is	/æt/ /æn/ in at, an
VCC	अबर, इतर əbr, Itr	/ænd/ /a:sk/ in and, ask
CV	का, की, को, से ka: ki: ko, se	/sɔ:/ /si:/ in saw, see
CVC	नाम, काम na:m, ka:m	/ kæt/, /mæt/, / kæn/ in cat ,mat, can
CVCC	सबर कदर səbr qədr	/tent/ in tent
CCV	कया गया kya gya	/pleI/ /kraI/ in play, cry
CCVC	पयार, पयाज pyar pyaz	/kri:m/ in cream

Vowel Sound System

There are ten vowel sounds in Hindi-Urdu languages including diphthongs whereas in English language 20 vowel sounds including diphthongs (12 has pure vowels and 8 has diphthong sounds).

A study of the differences in Urdu and English vowel-systems would help in diagnosing problematic sounds for Urdu speaking learners of English.

Differences in Vowel Systems

The English /I/ is pronounced with considerable muscular tension whereas in the Urdu /I/, the tongue is relaxed.

The Urdu /i/ is further back as compared to the English /i/ and /e/ it is a little higher in Urdu than in English. It occurs in all positions in both the two languages.

Morphological Level:

Morphology is the study of the relationship between the structure / shapes of words and their meanings. We need to compare the structure of forms (words). We need to also compare word classes in contrastive analysis, among other things.

Similarities and dissimilarities of English and Urdu-Hindi languages are found in prepositions and postpositions. English language uses preposition whereas Hindi language uses postpositions. But Urdu language has both prepositions and postpositions.

Prepositions in Urdu language include /fi:/ in /fi:səd/ 'percent', /fi:lha:l/ 'present', /bi/ in /bilkul/ 'completely', /bər/ in /bərəɔks/ 'on the contrary' /ba:/ 'with', 'alongwith' in /ba:əxla:q/ 'moral', /be/ 'with, by' in /din be din/ 'day by day', and /əz/ 'from', 'of', 'by' in /kəm əz kəm/

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'lesser', /əz xud/ 'of one's own accord', etc. These prepositions are adopted from Arabic and Persian languages and they are used less frequently in Urdu.

English preposition	Urdu-Hindi Postposition
/of/	/ka: ki: ke/
/to/	/ko/ [dative construction]
/from/	/se/
/in/	/mei/
/at/	/ pər/ /pe/
/for/	/liye/
/into/	/mei/
/with/	/ke sa:th/ , /se/ etc.

Similarly we need to compare various morphological processes such as affixation, internal charge, suppletion, reduplication, zero modification, etc.

In Urdu and Hindi, /-õ/, /- e/ and /-iyã:/ and /a:/ are the usual plural markers in common words. In English we have /-s~ -z ~ -Iz/ as plural markers.

In Urdu-Hindi languages the root word ends with /-a / in masculine. Singular becomes plural if the ending is changed to /-e /. The feminine word ends with /-i / in singular number. It becomes plural /iyã:/, when the terminal vowel is nasalized.

	Direct Case		Oblique Case	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Masculine				
	/ləRka:/	/ləRke/	/ləRke/	/ləRkõ/
	/a:dmi:/	/a:dmi:/	/a:dmi:/	/a:dmiyõ/
	/ča:qu:/	/ča:quě:/	/ča:quě:/	/ča:quõ/
	/ghər/	/ghər/	/ghər/	/ghərõ/
Feminine				
	/ləRki:/	/ləRkiyã:/.	/ləRkiyã:/	/ləRkiyõ/
	/həwa:/	/həwa:ě:/	/həwa:ě:/	/həwa:õ/
	/bəhu:/	/bəhuě:/	/bəhuě:/	/bəhuõ/
	/kita:b/	/kita:bě:/	/kita:bě:/	/kita:bõ/

Terminations

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Masculine Word ends with vowel sound	Direct Case	Direct Case	Oblique Case	Oblique Case
	Singular Number	Plural Number	Singular Number	Plural Number
a:	-a:	-e	-e	-õ
i:	i:	i:	i:	-iyõ
u:	u:	-ĕ:	-ĕ:	-õ
Masculine Consonant ending	---	---	---	-õ
Feminine word ends with vowel sound	Singular Number	Plural Number	Singular Number	Plural Number
i:	i:	iyã:	iyã:	Iyõ
a:	a:	-ĕ:	-ĕ:	-õ
u:	u:	-ĕ:	-ĕ:	-õ
Feminine Consonant ending	--	-ĕ:	-ĕ:	-õ

Here plural formations of vocative case are not discussed.

In English language, we add the suffix /-s/, /-z/, or /-Iz/ to form plurals.

Singular	Plural
boy	boys
girl	girls
dog	dogs
rose	roses

The affixes can be divided into two types: those that are derivational in nature which helps in the formation of new words. The /-t/, in height and the termination of noun word /-er/ in *worker* as well as degree of adjectives /-er/ to form comparative degree in *higher* are derivational, whereas plural morphemes /-s/ in *books* and /-z/ in *dogs*, /Iz/ in *roses* are inflectional. Inflectional affixes are markers of grammatical categories. Concepts like Inflection and Derivation are important for word building or generation of words. For example the word *decipherable* is adjective in usage. It is very important learners to know these rules and internalize them.

 N > cipher
V > de+cipher
A > de+cipher+able
N > de+cipher+able+ity
N >N, V, A   boy-hood, motor-ise, boy-ish, childish
V >N, V, A   actor, re-write, read-able
 A >N, V, A mad-ness, shorten, unhappy
Notation used here N for Noun, V for Verb A for Adjective

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Learners may be asked to analyze the words into morphemes and explain their structure in terms of derivation, inflection, compounding, affixation and conversion using words such as *operability, disloyalty, happier, rowing, boats, cats*, etc.

Syntactic Level:

It is generally said that human languages are alike at the level of conception structure and are different at the level of surface structure. Every language has a set of rules which are used by its speakers. These rules differ from language to language. Consider the following examples.

At the level of syntax, sentence structure (pattern) of Urdu or Hindi is SOV whereas in English the structure or pattern is SVO. It is commonly called *Word Order* of a sentence.

Deep Similarities	Realization	Differences among languages (e.g.)
Statements (Assertive)		
Hindi-Urdu	$NP_1 + NP_2 + Mv + Aux.$	ra:m ne a:m kha:ya: hæ
English	$NP_1 + Aux + Mv + NP_2$	Ram has eaten mango
Hindi-Urdu	$NP_1 + NP_2 + Mv + Aux.$	aslam ne roTi: kha:i: hæ
English	$NP_1 + Aux + Mv + NP_2$	Aslam has eaten bread
Hindi-Urdu	$NP_1 + NP_2 + Mv + Aux.$	tum ne kha:na: kha:ya: hæ
English	$NP_1 + Aux + Mv + NP_2$	You have eaten/taken food.
Questions (Yes/No types)		
Hindi	$NP_1 + NP_2 + Mv + Aux$	Kya: ra:m ne a:m kha:ya: hæ?
English	$Aux. + NP_1 + Mv + NP_2$	Has Ram eaten mango?
Urdu-Hindi	$NP1 + NP2 + Mv + Aux$	Kya: mai a:p ki mədəd/səha:yeta: kər səkta: hŭ:?
English	Modal $Aux. + NP_1 + Mv + NP_2$	Can I help you?

Notation Used:
     Here NP is noun phrase.
     Aux. is auxiliary verb.
     Mv. is main verb.

Comparisons of Verb Agreement
Verb agreement of Urdu-Hindi languages plays a very important role. In Urdu-Hindi languages verb agree with subject as well as object, but it is not common in English language. For example, in Urdu-Hindi

(a) / ra:m ne a:m kha:ya: hæ/ 'Ram has eaten mango'

(b) / ra:m ne roTi: kha:i: hæ/   'Ram has eaten bread'

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Here in sentence (a) verb /kha:na:/ 'eat' past participle /kha:ya:/ 'eaten' agree with subject /ra:m/ whereas in sentence (b) verb /kha:na:/ 'eat' past participle /kha:i:/ agree with object /roTi:/. In fact, Urdu-Hindi verb agree with number, person and gender but in English verb agree with number and person.

Conclusion:

Contrastive analysis is based on the similarities and the differences between two or more languages. At the same time, it takes into account a number of axioms about learning behavior. Contrastive study of English, Urdu or Hindi language systems shows that Hindi-Urdu differs from English in their sound patterns: number and kinds of consonants and vowels; consonant clusters. They also differ from each other at the morphological, lexical and syntactic levels. Urdu and Hindi speakers of English may benefit by an explicit knowledge of these differences between their languages and English. Course designers and materials producers who design course and produce materials for Urdu speakers learning English as a second or a foreign language would also be benefited by the results of this study.

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