

**Apposition in English:
A syntactic Study in Narrative and Scientific Texts**

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ABSTRACT

Apposition is a construction in which two elements are placed consequently as explanatory expressions. These elements appear with simple and complex structures represented by single words, phrases and clauses. Concerning the major types of apposition, there is a significant distinction between full and partial, strict and weak, and restrictive and non-restrictive apposition. Since apposition is a consequence of elements and such consequence is either continuous or discontinuous, the relationship between the appositive elements are sometimes implicit for the non native learners of English language. This study is a syntactic analysis aiming at understanding how the appositions are constructed and how they function within a sentence. Besides, It measures the frequent use of appositive classes and functions drawing examples from the Narrative and Scientific texts (henceforth NTs and STs texts) to compare between their various frequencies in use.

1. The concept of apposition:

Apposition is a term used to refer to the sequence of units which are constituents at the same grammatical level having similar identity

(Crystal,2003:30) Thus, both units would not stand in appositives unless their referents have to be understood as identical. Syntactically speaking , the constructions handled with apposed elements can be demonstrated according to their functions and classes as well. Concerning the classes of apposition, the abbreviated symbols are used to represent the following:

NP(noun phrase), PP(prepositional phrase), Adj.P(adjective phrase), Adv.P(adverb phrase),VP(verb phrase) and Cl(clause),

The linguist Hockett (1955:99-102) affirms that appositives have the shared linguistic feature that is the double head, and each head must belong to the same form class. The latter criterion is refuted by other grammarians; both Meyer and Quirk et al.(1987:101-2 and 1985:1303)

who consider that units in apposition belong to the same or to different form classes. Such remark is well proved in the following patterns with their exemplification:

- 1- NP + NP : New forms of steel, the high-tensile steels, have also been developed in recent years.
- 2- PP + PP : Human happiness reminded her of her own loneliness, of her solitary.
- 3- PP + NP : He threw over her shoulders the garments.
- 4- NP + Adj. P: The boy, wide-awake and quite in his bed, was thinking of the stranger and his stories.
- 5- Adj.P + Adj. P: They were followed by a stout, middle-aged lady.

- 6- Adv. P + Adv. P : The stationmaster came out on the platform.
- 7- NP + PP: The suspension bridge, in which the deck is suspended from cables, is not modern in concept.
- 8- NP + Cl.: The cables, which are in tension, are usually made of wires.
- 9- Cl. + NP: But as ammonia gas has a pungent smell, it would be both wasteful and unpleasant to use it directly as a fertilizer.
- 10-Cl. +Cl.: See, how sweet and inviting that little copse looks!
How nice those solid telegraph posts are!
- 11-PP+ Cl.: What would be the cost of a suitable dress, which you could use on the other occasions as well, something very simple?
- 12-VP +VP : He stopped, stupefied and utterly at a loss.
- 13-Of structure: The simplest of all is the gas methane, the molecule of which has one carbon atom.

Obviously, the previous patterns clarify that the relation between appositives take place mainly between noun phrases. The heads in such phrases may appear with simple structure as: noun , proper noun , personal pronoun , demonstrative and indefinite or complex structure with the form of clauses(Dolores and Penas,1994:87,89).

Meyer (1992:34) , on the other hand, asserts that the two units of apposition have the same function represented by the structure of :subject, subject complement, direct object, indirect object, object complement, complement of preposition and adverbials as illustrated below :

- 14-Subject: Small box, an epidemic disease, is endemic in only a few countries.
- 15-Subject complement: The commonest source of phosphatic fertilizers is calcium phosphate, an insoluble rock.
- 16-Direct object: Framton wondered whether Mrs. Sappleton, the lady, came into the nice division.
- 17-Indirect object: Sasha gave her sister, a young girl, a wonderful necklace .
- 18-Object complement: It has given me everything I asked it for.
- 19-Complement of preposition: As evaporation of water requires the absorption of its latent heat, both the surface of the ocean and the air above it are cooled as water evaporates.
- 20-Adverbials:
- a-Time: But it must have been late, near midnight.
- b-Place: He preferred going out where the rain could drench him .

2. The types of apposition:

Apposition, as stated by Quirk et al. (1985:1302-4), has been distinguished with three main types: Full and partial apposition, Strict and weak apposition ,and Restrictive and non-restrictive apposition.

2.1Full and partial apposition:

To distinguish between both types, Quirk et al.(Ibid) have mentioned three conditions in terms of omission, having the same function and the same reference. In full apposition, the deletion of each apposed unit will not affect on the acceptability of the sentence as in:

21-A neighbor, Fred Brick, is on the telephone.

a-A neighbor is on the telephone.

b-Fred Brick is on the telephone.

Thus, the absence of one of the juxtaposed units doesn't affect on the resultant structure and what remains will still be grammatically acceptable.

The second condition applied is that each element fulfils the same syntactic function. In sentence (21), both noun phrases function as subjects, such noun phrases have the same reference in both original and resultant sentences in terms of the third condition. With the absence of one of the previous conditions, it turns to be partial apposition as below:

22- Norman Jones, at one time a law student, wrote several best-sellers.

Obviously, in partial appositives the units do not indicate the same subjects nor the same reference.

2.2 Strict and weak apposition:

When the apposed units are identical in their classes, the construction is named strict apposition as in (23), otherwise it is called weak apposition because the units are members of different syntactic classes(Ibid:1303) as shown in(24):

23- What charmed him most, what drew him with resistless power, was a tall, blue flower.

24- Primary distillation, which yields several fractions, is carried out.....

2.3 Restrictive and non-restrictive apposition:

To differentiate between these types, grammarians like : Coline (1961:217), Curme (1947:129.131) and Matthews(1981:292)

state that restrictive apposition or close apposition is known as ‘identifying apposition’ because the second element identifies or characterizes the previous element, whereas non-restrictive apposition is named ‘descriptive apposition’ or ‘loose apposition’ because the second element describes the first one and its absence will not affect on the meaning of the whole sentence as in:

25-My friend Alice.

26-My wife, a nurse by training.

Thus , the word ‘Alice’ in the first example is specified to denote the speaker’s friend, while ‘a nurse by training’ in the second example provides additional information about the first expression. Moreover, most grammarians adopt another distinction; thus, non-restrictive apposition is written between commas and provided by tone units or intonation.

3.Linear structure of apposition:

The criterion that apposed units must belong to the same syntactic class is refuted by the grammarians such as Dolores and Penas(1994:86).Both units in apposition, as they expressed, may belong to different structures, that is to say, the structure of the second unit may be realized by the form of single words, phrases and clauses as illustrated below.

3.1 Single words:

As regard with apposition, the units in consequence take the form of single noun, pronoun ,demonstrative ,adjective ,verb or adverb as in :

27-I saw his son, John this morning.

28 -It’s you they have come to see!

3-2 Phrasal apposition:

Grammarians are in agreement that apposition takes place mainly between phrases and the most common type, as mentioned by Dolores and Penas (1994:86), is with noun phrases. The appositional constructions with types of phrases are mentioned on page (1,2).

3.3 Clausal apposition:

Clauses in apposition are identified by finite (relative) clause and non-finite clause. The former appears with (that clause and wh/ clause) ,while the latter is formed by (to infinitive and participles) as shown in the following examples:

29-There is the salmon and sardines that were sent from town.

30-The appeal to give blood received strong support.

31- Sasha, turning his head away to hide his angry despairing face, struggled to give a note of cordial welcome to his voice. .

4.Continuity vs. discontinuity:

Generally speaking ,both units in apposition tend to be juxtaposed occurring side by side(Matthews,1981:233).Meyer(1987:116-17),unlike Matthews, observes that apposition is not a type of juxtaposition or what is being called continuity since it is possible for many units in apposition not to be juxtaposed. So discontinuity of two appositives is attributed to the following reasons :

a-The principle of end-focus or emphasis: The units in apposition are discontinued in order to emphasize the second unit by placing it at the end of sentence as in:

32 - She rapidly spotted the book right on my desk that I had been desperately searching for all morning.

b-The achievement of stylistically well-balanced sentence: Such principle cannot only be used to avoid unacceptable long expression , but also to get balance between a subject and its predicate as shown below:

33 -The time had come to stop spending money foolishly and to put something away for the future.

c-The presence of appositional markers. Non-restrictive apposition may include certain expression like { namely, in other words, such as, of, including, especially, particularly . . . etc.}, such expressions function as appositive indicators. Their appearance between appositive units are obligatory and their absence may result ungrammatical constructions as follows:

34 -People love this one ,especially woman.

*-People love this one , woman.(Quirk et al.,1985:1398)

5. Data analysis : Narrative and Scientific texts

The present study is an attempt to analyze the structure of appositive units in both variations: Narrative and scientific texts(henceforth NTs and STs) by calculating their frequent occurrence in each type in terms of their classes and functions. The texts have been selected from :

1-The scientist speaks, written by BBC/British Council,1967.

2-Short stories,www.Literaturecollection.com.,20011. Six texts from each variety have been chosen randomly. Related examples ,which are amounted by hand, have been drawn from each text type representing the data analysis to achieve the results.

As the syntactic classes are concerned , table(1) presents the distribution of the grammatical units of apposition found in both types of texts:-

Syntactic classes	NTs		STs		Total
	F	RF	F	RF	
NP + NP	24	13.11	45	27.95	69
NP + PP	7	3.83	13	8.07	20
NP + Cl	57	31.15	48	29.81	105
NP + Adj	4	2.19	4	2.48	8
Cl + NP	1	0.55	2	1.24	3
Cl + Cl	7	3.83	4	2.48	11
PP + NP	1	0.55	2	1.24	3
PP + Cl	12	6.56	3	1.86	15
PP + PP	15	8.20	12	7.75	27
Adv + Adv	15	8.20	2	1.24	17
VP + VP	1	0.55	2	1.24	3
Adj + Adj	5	2.73	2	1.24	7
Of structure	28	15.30	22	13.66	50
Total	177	100%	161	100%	338

Table (1) The classes of apposition

The table, in general, shows that appositives in both varieties belong to similar and different structures. Scrutinizing the table vertically, the recurrence of the whole classes in each type text differs in number. Thus, in NTs, the frequent use of apposition is totally amounted (183) , whereas the total number is (161) in STs. Besides, the commonest use in NTs appears in the form(NP + Clause) recurred (57) encountered by the structure (NP + NP) counted (45) in STs.

Horizontally, the structure (NP + Clause) in both types reaches the highest number (105) , but the lowest uses for both

variations represented by (Cl + NP, PP+ NP, VP + VP) amounted (3) respectively.

With regard to the syntactic function of apposition, table (2) represents the probable functions for the apposed units in NTs and STs :

Syntactic function	NTs		STs		Total
	F	RF	F	RF	
Subject	34	21.79	46	42.59	80
Subject complement	27	17.31	9	8.33	36
Direct object	15	9.62	13	12.04	28
Indirect object	3	1.92	1	0.83	4
Object complement	21	13.46	1	0.83	22
Complement of preposition	36	23.08	32	29.63	68
Adv of place	15	9.62	2	1.85	17
Adv of time	5	3.21	4	3.70	9
Total	156	100%	108	100%	264

Table (2) The functions of apposition

Functionally, the differences between the whole frequencies of appositions in both types are considerable. The total number of appositives in NTs is totaled (156) while (108) examples are totaled in STs. Horizontally speaking, the function of the subject is highly accounted reaching (80) for both types and encountered by (4) examples for the (indirect object) function.

6. Conclusions:

According to what has been mentioned previously , one can draw the following results:

- 1- Apposition is a grammatical construction including two units. These elements may indicate the same reference or identity. Besides, they have the aspect of interchangeability which considers a distinctive factor used to discriminate between full and partial apposition. In full apposition, both units can exchange their places with each other without affecting on the resultant construction as illustrated in example(21). On the contrary , partial apposition is called so because their mutual roles will affect on the interpretation of the resultant expression as in (22).
- 2- Appositive relation is highly found in the syntactic class noun phrases which are demonstrated by the form of simple and complex structure as well.
- 3- Appositives are not restricted with fixed consequences, but they occur in various places in the utterance. They are discontinued and this discontinuity ascribes to three factors:
 - End-weight ,as Quirk et al. called, is used for the speaker or writer's emphasis by putting the second part of apposition at the end of the sentence.
 - Balanced-structure is the purpose behind discontinuity when the structure of the subject is long and the predicate is short.
 - The third factor is represented by the insertion of appositive markers as mentioned previously.
- 4- In literary and scientific texts , the use of appositive classes, in one hand, is approximately equal , despite their numerous differences in the frequent uses in each variety. Appositive classes in NTs is totally amounted (177) whereas they recurred (161) in

STs. The frequencies of appositional functions, on other hand, record great differences between both types in use. In TNs there are (156) examples while the appositive functions totaled (108) in STs. As a result, frequencies in apposition is mostly existed in narrative texts.

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