

‘Subject’ in English is *abhihita*

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It is well-known that though Pāṇini composed his grammar for the then prevalent Sanskrit language in the form of Aṣṭādhyāyī, this work has provided lot of insights and concepts for language analysis to the modern linguistics.

There have been notable efforts of composing grammar of the prākṛta or modern languages following Pāṇinian Grammar formalism. Bāla-vyākaraṇamu of Telugu, Mahārāṣṭra-prayoga-candrikā of Marathi are some such examples. Interestingly, during Akbar’s reign, there was an attempt to write a Persian Grammar based on Pāṇinian Grammar(PG).

The suitability of PG for the modern computational technology has attracted the attention of computer scientists towards the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition. Parsers based on dependency grammars are being preferred over those based on the constituency grammars because of their suitability to Natural Language Processing.

PG is known for its brevity. In order to develop efficient dependency parsers based on PG, it is necessary to develop grammars for these languages based on Pāṇinian Grammar formalism(PGF).

To develop a grammar based on PGF for English, correlation of concepts in English Grammar with those in PG is an important step. The notion of ‘subject’ in English Grammar is an important notion. We look at various definitions and properties of ‘subject’ and examine various instances of the ‘subject’, in order to understand the notion of ‘subject’ in English and then show how the concept of ‘subject’ in English grammar is close to the concept of ‘*abhihita*’ in PG. Further we show that, in modern English, since the ‘subject’ occupies a fixed position, it imposes certain restrictions on the sharing rules, and thereby on certain syntactic constructions. For example, Sanskrit allows the sharing of *kartā* in passive absolutive constructions, whereas English does not allow such constructions.