

## **Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations**

**Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics**

**Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics**

**Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil.**

**Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.**

=====

### **Abstract**

This study analyses and establishes the Argument structure of the Sindhi verbs in Sindhi language. The study attempts to answer the research question: What are the Argument/thematic structures of the Sindhi verbs? The study analyses the argument structure of the Sindhi verbs and also finds how and what theta roles are assigned by the Sindhi verbs to their arguments. Each verb phrase in our data is analysed and studied in terms of Argument structure to find theta roles in the Sindhi language. The data have been analysed on the basis of the Carnie's (2006) theoretical framework; 'Theta Roles and Thematic Relation'. The data come from natural spoken Sindhi. Towards the end, it is found that the Sindhi language has all the theta roles which are proposed by Carnie (2006). These theta roles are assigned by the verbs to their arguments in sentences. Thus, this study confirms the presence of theta roles/thematic relations in Sindhi language. This study also serves as a preliminary in the area; it gives way for conducting similar research at broader level on the area to find more theta roles in Sindhi or any other language in future.

**Key words:** *Argument Structure, Theta Roles, Thematic relations*

### **Introduction**

Languages can be the same in their basic purpose of sharing and transferring meaning, but all of them have different structure. Structure (syntax) differentiates one language from other languages. For example, the structure of the English language is different from the Sindhi language; they can be similar in their purpose (transferring meaning), but they can never be similar in their structure. The structure of the English language is: subject, verb and

object; while the structure of Sindhi is: subject, object and verb. Each language has its own features (morphological, phonological, semantic and syntactic) which make them unique.

Sindhi language is one of the richest languages of the world in terms of morphosemantic and syntactic features. The Sindhi language has three different written scripts with same pronunciation and vocabulary; Perso-Arabic script used in the Sindh Province of Pakistan, the Devanagari script used in India and the third one is Roman Sindhi used in computer, internet, mobile, etc. (Jatly, 2013).

There are a number of books on Sindhi Grammar, Sindhi Morphology, Phonology, Parts of Speech and Sindhi language, but very little work on Sindhi Semantics and Syntax (structure); no proper work has been done on Sindhi Syntax (Pitafi, 2009; Fahmida, 2011). On one hand, Sindhi language is known as the oldest and major language of Pakistan in general and Sindh province in particular, while on the other hand, its major part which is syntax (structure) has been ignored or left behind all this while. We can find lot of work on Sindhi grammar in general but less or no work on syntax in particular. Writers like Stack (1849), Trump (1872), Munshi (1892) and Baig (1916) have generally talked about morphology, phonology, grammar and parts of speech of the Sindhi language. None of them and their followers has talked about syntax of Sindhi language; either it had been ignored or these are the modern terms in language and at that time these were not well known to the writers/linguists. However; it is still being ignored by the present day writers (Majeed. 1987, Shazia. 2009, Fahmida. 2010, Rahman. 2010; Jokhio, 2012).

### **Aim of This Study**

The aim of this study is to analyse verb phrase in Sindhi language in terms of their Argument Structure and thematic relations. Therefore, keeping the research problem in mind, this research work has following objective:

The current study tries to answer the research question; “What are the Argument structures of the Sindhi verbs? Therefore, the objective of the study is to establish the Argument structure of Sindhi verbs. It aims to analyse the structure of arguments (Noun phrases: subjects, objects and other nouns) in the Sindhi sentences, and also to see the thematic structure which shows thematic relations of arguments in sentences.

## Literature

Verbs play a very vital role in a sentence; they show an action of a sentence. Verbs show what the subject and object are doing in the sentence. Verbs are called body of sentence. Jokhio (2011) defines Sindhi verb that anything which tells or shows something, any action, state or condition of someone in the sentence that is called a verb. Jokhio (2012) divides the Sindhi verbs into two types; main verbs and to be or auxiliary verbs. Main verbs are further divided into regular and irregular verbs and auxiliary verbs, which are further divided into free auxiliaries and linking auxiliaries. However; Baig (2006) argues the Sindhi verbs have been derived from imperative form. He argues Sindhi imperatives are Sindhi nouns but they do the function of verb and hence many other verb forms are derived from the imperative that is why they are called base forms in the Sindhi language. He further argues Nominative, accusative and state cases of noun are also derived from the imperatives.

Adwani (1985) defines irregular verbs are those whose objects do not come/link directly in the sentences. Arshad (1986) argues that regular verbs are those verbs which are derived from infinitives by adding suffixes “yo= يو or yal= يَلْ”. Baig (2006) argues that the Sindhi language has compound verbs which are made up of two or three verbs together as a verb phrase in a sentence. He argues compound verbs are created with the addition of suffixes in the main verbs of a sentence. He argues compound verbs are those verbs which are used together in a sentence.

Sindhi verbs have been divided into intransitive verbs and transitive verbs, and these are further classified into sub parts (See Khoso, 2005; Rashidi, 2007; Dada, 2010; Chano, 2011; Jokhio 2012; Jokhio, 2013; Baig, 2006; Adwani, 1985 & Allana, 2010.) Jokhio (2012) argues that Sindhi verbs need to be studied and carried out at M.Phil., PhD levels so that it could be studied in detail.

Luuk E. (2009) argues that that the predicate/argument structure of natural language is much more complex than that of first order predicate logic. He argues language has fossils and according to Jackendoff (1999) language has five fossils; by language fossils he means to say language structural features. He finds that linguistic predicate/ argument structure has universal approach in natural language syntax. He argues that linguistic arguments are universally marked by determiners, possessors and word order constraints, while linguistic predicates are universally marked by the tense, mood, aspect, voice and also word order

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

constraints. Besides; Verhoeven E. (2014) studies thematic prominence and animacy asymmetries cross linguistically in four heterogeneous languages namely Greek, German, Chinese and Turkish. According to him and others (Jackendoff, 1987, Grimshaw, 1990; Dik, 1978; Lavin and Rappaport, 2005) agent theta roles are higher than others because of the animacy effects. Towards the end, he finds that the experiencer-first effects are observed in Greek and German but not in Turkish and Chinese.

On the other hand, Harley (2012) studies external arguments (subjects) and the Mirror Principle. He asks two research questions: 1) what are arguments? 2) How are they suppressed? According to Mirror Principle (Baker, 1985), morphological derivations are syntactic derivations; meaning that morphology leads to syntax. He argues applied arguments come structurally between external and internal arguments. These arguments are beneficiaries and always come with ditransitive verbs; can be seen in the Hiaki language. The causative verbs introduce external arguments in Hiaki, and applicative morphemes introduce internal arguments. According to Rude (1996), applied arguments are structurally lower than external arguments, and structurally higher than internal arguments in a sentence (Holmberg & Roberts, 2012; Kratzer, 1996; Simpson A., Choudhury; Meno, 3013; Marantz, 2012; Veesar, Kadhim & Srinivass, 2015a & 2015b).

### **Thematic Relations and Theta Roles**

One way of encoding selectional restrictions is through the use of what are called *thematic relations*. These are particular semantic terms that are used to describe the role that the argument plays with respect to the argument. This section describes some common thematic relations (this list is by no means exhaustive, and the particular definitions are not universally accepted (Carnie, 2006).

The initiator or doer of an action is called the *agent*. In the following sentences, *Ryan* and *Michael* are agents.

Arguments that feel or perceive events are called *experiencers*.

Experiencers can appear in a number of argument positions including subject and object.

Entities that undergo actions, are moved, experienced or perceived are called *themes*.

The entity towards which motion takes place is called a *goal*. Goals may involve abstract motion.

There is a special kind of goal called *recipient*. Recipients only occur with verbs that denote a change of possession.

The opposite of a goal is the *source*. This is the entity from which a motion takes place.

The place where the action occurs is called the *location*.

The object with which an action is performed is called the *instrument*.

Finally, the one for whose benefit an event took place is called the *beneficiary*.

Notice that any given DP can have more than one thematic relation. In the following sentence, the DP *Jason* bears the thematic relations of agent and source (at the very least).

## **Methodology**

This research work is a qualitative research (Creswell, 2004; 2013 & 2014); it tries to explore the verbs and types of verbs in the Sindhi language. It will be explored to see the place/position, importance, function and relation of verb with other elements in the sentence. It will be seen how Sindhi verbs are formed and used in sentences.

The research design used in this research work is exploratory and descriptive (Creswell, 2004) and it uses qualitative method (Creswell, 2004; 2013 & 2014). The natural Sindhi language (spoken/oral form) has been selected to study nature and function of the Sindhi verbs. This research design helps us study verbs, its types and the theta-roles assigned by verbs in the Sindhi language.

The current study analyses verb phrases in Sindhi language in terms of their argument structure, theta roles and the thematic relations in Sindhi. The data for the study come from the native Sindhi speakers who have Sindhi as their first language or mother tongue. The data were collected through two interviews. Interviews were taken from the two native Sindhi speakers. The researcher asked them questions informally regarding their different things in order to make them confident enough to speak more freely and frankly about their lives in a natural way. The questions were regarding their personal lives, education (from primary to

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

university life), their current position and status, their family, their present life, previous life and future goals and intentions. The participants were given free atmosphere to speak freely in a natural way, as if they were talking to each other without being noticed and recorded.

The data have been analysed with the help of Carnie's theoretical framework (2006), which is also used as analytical framework in the current study. It has been tried to explore the Sindhi verbs and their types and also to see their function, position and importance in the sentences. It has been attempted to analyse how Sindhi verbs assign different theta-roles (also called theta relations) to their arguments (NPs) in sentences. The argument structure of the Sindhi verbs has been established in order to analyse the theta-roles in Sindhi language.

### Analysis and Discussion of Argument Structure in Sindhi

The data have been collected through informal interviews from the native Sindhi speakers. The data is comprised of two Sindhi sentences for each *theta-role* (total 09 theta-roles). The data have been analysed according to the Carnie's (2006) theoretical framework. The data have been taken from natural spoken version of the Sindhi language. In addition, there are certain places where one argument is having more than one theta role. We can see such analysis and discussion under the theta roles of Locatives, Goal, Source and Instrument.

#### ➤ AGENT THETA ROLE

**Example 01.** ء اچ اسان ٻئي گڏ ٿيا آهيون.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N6	Arabic script	ء اچ اسان ٻئي گڏ ٿيا آهيون.
	Roman script	Ain aj assan bhai gad thia aahyon.
	Transliteration	Ain=and; aj=today; assan=we; bhai=both; gad=together; thia=agreement; aahyon= are.
	Translation	And today we both have gathered. Or We both have gathered today.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subject:</b> اسان=assan=we, <b>Verb phrase:</b> گڏ ٿيا آهيون =gad thia aahyon= have gathered, <b>Adverbial Phrase:</b> اچ =aj= today, ٻئي =bai = both)

**Example 02.** مان توهان جي ٻولي رڪارڊ ڪندس.

S. NO/ coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N11	Arabic script	مان توهان جي ٻولي رڪارڊ ڪندس.
	Roman script	Maan tahan ji boli record kandus.
	Transliteration	Maan=I; tahan=you; ji=of; boli=language; record; kandus=do will.
	Translation	I will record your language.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subject:</b> مان= <i>maan</i> =I, <b>Object:</b> توهان جي ٻولي = <i>tahan ji boli</i> =your language, <b>Verb:</b> رڪارڊ ڪندس = <i>record kandus</i> = will record)

The verb phrase of the sentence (01) is “گڏ ٿيا آهيون=*gad thia aahyon*=have gathered”. The verb “گڏ=*gad*=gather” in Sindhi language is a transitive verb, but here it is used as an intransitive verb which does not need an object to pass action (from the subject to the object), because intransitive verbs do not pass their action from subject to object; they do not need an object in the sentence (Baig, 2006). Therefore, the sentence (01) has only one argument “اسان=*assan*=we” to talk about. It performs an action of “gathering” using present perfect tense. This argument does an action of ‘gathering’ that they have gathered somewhere for something. This argument is subject which initiates the work of gathering, and it is also the theme of the sentence. Therefore, it can be said that this argument is subject/agent of the sentence (because it is the performer or agent which does an action of gathering), and it has an AGENT theta role along with an agentive thematic relation in the sentence (01).

The verb phrase “رڪارڊ ڪندس=*record kandus*=will record” of the sentence (02) is a transitive verb and it has two arguments to discuss about. The first argument ‘مان=*maan*=I’ is a personal pronoun used at the place of proper noun (a person), and it has capability to do an action in the sentence. Therefore, this argument is subject of the sentence which performs an action of recording somebody’s (your) language in the future time. Thus, we can say that this argument is an agent of the sentence having an AGENT theta role with an agentive thematic relation in the sentence. The other argument “توهان جي ٻولي=*tahan ji boli*=your language” is an object of the sentence which undergoes an action of being recorded in the future. Therefore, we can say that this argument is the theme of the sentence (because it will undergo an action of the sentence) and has theme theta role in the sentence (02).

### ➤ EXPERIENCER THETA ROLE

**Example 03.** اُن ٿايم مونکي معنا ڏايو ڊپرييس فيل ٿيو.

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.



coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M582	Arabic script	ان ٿانيم مونڪي معنا ڏاڍو ڊپريس فيل ٿيو.
	Roman script	Una time mokhy mana dadho depress feel thio,
	Transliteration	Una=that; time; mokhy=I; mana=means; dadho = very; dipress=depress ;feel; thio =agreement,
	Translation	That time I felt very depressed. Or I felt depression at that time.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> مونڪي=monkhy=I/me, <b>Obj Compl:</b> ڊپريس=dipress=depress, <b>VP:</b> فيل ٿيو=feel thio=felt, <b>AdvP:</b> ان ٿانيم=una time=that time)

**Example 04.** اتي سائين اسان کي ڏاڍو ڪٽيائين ٻنهي کي.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N272	Arabic script	اتي سائين اسان کي ڏاڍو ڪٽيائين ٻنهي کي. (نزام)
	Roman script	Uty saaien assan khy dadho kutyaaien binhin khy.
	Transliteration	Uty=there; saaien=sir; assan=we; khy=have; dadho=very; kutyaaien=bate; binhin=both; khy=have.
	Translation	(He) beat us both there, sir.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> اسان=assan khy=us, <b>VP:</b> ڪٽيائين=kutyaaien=beat, <b>AdvP:</b> اتي=uty=there, ٻنهي کي=binhin khy=both/both of us)

We have two arguments with the verb phrase “*feel thio=felt*” in the sentence (03). The arguments are: “*monkhy=I/me*” and “*dipress=depression*”. Though the argument “*monkhy=I/me*” is the subject of the sentence with nominative case yet it does not do action but only feels something (depression); the subject/agent feels depressed. Therefore, it can be said that the argument “*monkhy=I/me*” is the experiencer of the sentence (03), because it experiences ‘depression’, and it has an EXPERIENCER theta role in the sentence. The other argument “*dipress=depression*” goes through an action (being felt by someone) of the sentence. Thus, it can be said that this argument is theme or object of the sentence.

The verb phrase of the sentence (04) is “*kutyaaien=bate*”, and it is a transitive verb. The argument of the sentence is: “*assan khy= us*”. This is the argument which undergoes an action of the sentence (being beaten by grandfather). We can therefore say that this argument is the theme or object of the sentence and it has the theme theta role. Besides, this is the argument which experiences the action of “beating”. This argument is beaten by the subject who is hidden in the surface structure of the sentence. Thus, it can be said that it is



also experiencer of the sentence (04), and it has the EXPERIENCER theta relation in the sentence.

### ➤ **THEME THETA ROLE**

**Example 05.** مان توهان جي ٻولي رڪارڊ ڪندس.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N11	Arabic script	مان توهان جي ٻولي رڪارڊ ڪندس.
	Roman script	Maan tahan ji boli record kandus.
	Transliteration	Maan=I; tahan=you; ji=of; boli=language; record; kandus=do will.
	Translation	I will record your language.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> مان=maan=I, <b>Obj:</b> توهان جي ٻولي=tahan ji boli=your language, <b>VP:</b> رڪارڊ ڪندس=record kandus=will record)

**Example 06.** ۽ انٽرويو اسان جو سنڌي ٻولي جي باري ۾ آهي.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N9	Sindhi in Arabic	۽ انٽرويو اسان جو سنڌي ٻولي جي باري ۾ آهي.
	Sindhi in Roman	Ain interview assan jo Sindhi boli je bary mei aahy.
	Transliteration	Ain=and; interview; assan=we; jo=of; Sindhi; boli=language; je=of; bary=about; mei=in; aahy=is.
	Translation	And our interview is about Sindhi Language.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subject:</b> zero, <b>Object Complement:</b> انٽرويو اسان جو= interview assan jo=our interview, <b>Prepositional Phrase:</b> سنڌي ٻولي جي باري ۾= Sindhi boli je bary mei= about Sindhi language)

The verb phrase “رڪارڊ ڪندس=record kandus=will record” of the sentence (05) has two arguments to discuss about. The first argument “مان=maan=I” is the subject of the sentence which performs an action of recording somebody’s language in future, and it has nominative case in the sentence. Thus, we can say that this argument “مان=maan=I” is an agent of the sentence and has an agent theta role in the sentence. The other argument “توهان جي ٻولي=tahan ji boli=your language” is an object of the sentence which undergoes an action of the sentence in the future. This is the argument that undergoes an action of the sentence (will be recorded by the subject) in the future. The argument ‘I’ is performing an action (of recording) in the sentence that is why we call it an agent, and the argument ‘your language’ undergoes an action (being recorded) of the sentence that is why we call it the theme of the sentence, it and has THEME theta role in the sentence.

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

The verb phrase of the sentence (06) is “آهي= *aahy*=have/has”, which is used to show state of something or somebody (a thing/ a person) in the present time (Rashdi, 2009). The verb phrase has two arguments to discuss about. The first argument is a noun phrase of the sentence “انٽرويو اسان جو= *interview assan jo*=our interview”. The context of the sentence shows that the whole sentence is all about the argument ‘our interview’. Thus, we can say that it is **THEME** of the sentence with theme thematic relation in the sentence. Second argument is a proper noun “سنڌي ٻولي = *Sindhi boli*=Sindhi language”. It is neither subject which does an action nor object which undergoes an action of the sentence, but this is the argument which takes benefit from the sentence. We can therefore say that it is beneficiary of the sentence.

### ➤ GOAL THETA ROLE

**Example 07.** واپس اچي گهر پوءِ بس ماني جو وارو هوندو آهي.

Coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M61	Arabic script	واپس اچي گهر پوءِ بس ماني جو وارو هوندو آهي.
	Roman script	Wapis achi ghar poi bus maani jo waro hoondo aahy.
	Transliteration	Wapis=back; achi=come; ghar=home; poi=then; bus=enough; maani=meal; jo=of; waro=turn; hoondo=will be; aahy=is.
	Translation	Having come back home then its (my) meal turn (cooking turn).
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj Compl:</b> ماني جو وارو = <i>maani jo waro</i> =meal turn, <b>VP:</b> هوندو آهي = <i>hondo aahy</i> =is/its)

**Example 8.** 2 بجي بابا سڌو اسڪول مان کڻندو هو گهر.

Coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M372	Sindhi in Arabic	2 بجي بابا سڌو اسڪول مان کڻندو هو گهر.
	Sindhi in Roman	2 baje baba sidho school maan khanando ho ghar.
	Transliteration	2 baje=2 pm; baba=father; sidho=direct; iskool=school; maan=from; khanando= will take; ho=was; ghar=home.
	Translation	Father would take (us) direct to home from the school at 2 pm.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> بابا = <i>baba</i> =father, <b>Obj Compl:</b> گهر = <i>ghar</i> =home, <b>VP:</b> کڻندو هو = <i>kanando ho</i> =used to take, <b>AdvP:</b> 2 بجي = <i>2 baje</i> =at 2:00 pm, <b>AdjP:</b> سڌو = <i>sidho</i> =direct, <b>PP:</b> اسڪول مان = <i>iskool maan</i> =from school)

The sentence (07) is a bit complex sentence as it does not have clear noun phrases (subject and object). This sentence is spoken in a passive voice form where subjects are usually hidden in the sentence which can be understood from the context of the sentence. The

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

verb phrase of the sentence (07) is “هوندو آهي=*hondo aahy*=is/ its”. The common noun ‘ماني=*maani*=meal’ in the prepositional phrase tells us that the sentence is all about the ‘dinner’. The argument ‘meal (dinner)’ is theme of the sentence having theme thematic relation. The simple meaning of the above sentence would be: ‘having come back home I cook meal’, where ‘I’ is the subject or agent and ‘meal’ is the object or the theme of the sentence. The common noun ‘گهر=*ghar*=home’ in the having clause is a word which shows a place or location. It shows that the subject comes back home and cooks meal. This argument is a locative in the sentence and it has locative theta role in the sentence. Besides, it also shows the destination of subject to come back and cook meal. It is the goal of the subject ‘I’ to come back to home. Thus, it can be said that ‘home’ is the goal of the subject having the GOAL theta role in the sentence.

The verb phrase “ڪٽندو هو=*kanando ho*=used to take” in the sentence (08) has three arguments to discuss about. The arguments are: “بابا=*baba*=father”, “گهر=*ghar*=home” and “اسڪول مان=*iskool maan*=from school”. The first argument “بابا=*baba*=father” is doing an action in the sentence, we can therefore say that it is the subject or the agent of the sentence. The second argument “گهر=*ghar*=home” is an object complement which is used to show the subject is taking to someone (the direct object). We can say that it is the GOAL of the sentence, because it shows the destination of the action of the subject in the sentence the sentence shows that the subject starts the action from the school and ends at the ‘home’.

### ➤ RECIPIENT THETA ROLE

**Example 09.** ته ان مان مونڪي پئسا ملندا آهن.

S. NO/ coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N177	Arabic script	ته ان مان مونڪي پئسا ملندا آهن.
	Roman script	Ta una maan mokhy pesa milana aahin.
	Transliteration	Ta=that; una=it; maan=from; mokhy=I; pesa=money; milana=will meet; aahin=are.
	Translation	I get money from it.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> پئسا= <i>pesa</i> =money, <b>Obj Compl:</b> مونڪي= <i>monkhy</i> =me, <b>VP:</b> ملندا آهن= <i>milanda aahin</i> =get, <b>PP:</b> ان مان= <i>una maan</i> =from it)

**Example 10.** هُتي مونڪي ايڊميشن هُنن ڏني چوڻين ڪلاس ۾.

S. NO/ coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M331	Arabic script	هُتي مونڪي ايڊميشن هُنن ڏني چوڻين ڪلاس ۾.
	Roman script	Huty mokhy admission hunan dini chothei class mei.
	Transliteration	Huty=there; mokhy=I/me; admission; hunan = they/them; dini=gave; chothei=fourth; class; mei=in.
	Translation	They gave me admission there in fourth class.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> هُنن=hunan=they, <b>Obj:</b> ايڊميشن=admission, <b>Obj Compl:</b> مونڪي=monkhy=me, <b>VP:</b> ڏني=dini=gave, <b>AdvP:</b> هُتي=huty=there, <b>PP:</b> چوڻين ڪلاس ۾=chothein class mei= in fourth class)

There are two arguments (noun phrases) and also an additional argument in the prepositional phrase in the sentence (09). The arguments are: “پيسا=*pesa*=money”, “مونڪي=*monkhy* me” and “ان مان=*una maan*=from it”. The first argument “پيسا=*pesa*=money” is the direct object having an accusative case or the theme of the sentence. The second argument “مونڪي=*monkhy*=me” is the one which receives “money”, and it has a dative case in the sentence, because it shows possession of money. However; the prepositional phrase “ان مان=*una maan*=from it” tells us that the argument “me” gets “money” from the argument “ان=*una*=it”; meaning that ‘I’ take ‘money’ from ‘it’. Therefore, it can be said that the argument “I/me” is the recipient and it has the RECIPIENT theta role in the sentence. We can also say that it is goal with goal theta role and the argument “ان=*una*=it” is the source with source theta role in the sentence with an ablative case (which shows source of something).

The verb phrase “ڏني=*dini*=gave” in the sentence (10) takes three arguments with itself. The arguments are: “هُنن=*hunan*=they”, “ايڊميشن=admission” and “مونڪي=*monkhy*=me”. The first argument “هُنن=*hunan*=they” is the subject or the agent of the sentence (10) and it has an agent theta role in the sentence. The second argument “ايڊميشن=admission” is the internal argument or the direct object having an accusative case or the theme of the sentence, because it is with verbal group, and it has the theme theta role with the theme thematic relation in the sentence. The third argument is “مونڪي=*monkhy*=me”, it is an indirect object having dative case. It can be therefore said that it is recipient of the sentence and it has RECIPIENT theta role in the sentence.

### ➤ SOURCE THETA ROLE

**Example 11.** ۽ مان بيسڪي ڀاڪستان مان آهيان .

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations

<b>Codig</b>	Arabic Script	ء مان بيسيكلي پاڪستان مان آهيان .
<b>N21</b>	Roman Script	Ain basically maan Pakistan maa aahiyan.
	Transliteration	<i>And basically I Pakistan from am.</i>
	Translation	And basically I am from Pakistan.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj Compl:</b> مان=maan=I, <b>VP:</b> آهيان=aahiyan=am, <b>AdvP:</b> بيسيكلي=basically, <b>PP:</b> پاڪستان مان=Pakistan maan=from Pakistan)

**Example 12.** 2 بجي بابا بيتو اسڪول مان ڪٽندو هو گهر.

<b>Codig</b>	<b>Sentence Description</b>	<b>Sentence</b>
<b>M372</b>	Arabic script	2 بجي بابا بيتو اسڪول مان ڪٽندو هو گهر.
	Roman script	2 baje baba sidho school maan khanando ho ghar.
	Transliteration	2baje=2pm; baba=father; sidho=direct; iskool = school; maan=from; khanando=will take; ho=was; ghar=home.
	Translation	Father would take (us) direct to home from the school at 2 pm.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> بابا=baba=father, <b>ObjCompl:</b> گهر=ghar=home, <b>VP:</b> ڪٽندو هو=kanando ho=used to take, <b>AdvP:</b> 2=2 baje=at 2:00 pm, <b>PP:</b> اسڪول مان=iskool maan=from school)

The verb phrase “آهيان=aahiyan=am” in the sentence (11) has two arguments to discuss about. The arguments are: “مان=maan=I” and “پاڪستان مان=Pakistan maan=from Pakistan”. The first argument “مان=maan=I” is the subject or the agent of the sentence. Prepositional phrase “پاڪستان مان=Pakistan maan=from Pakistan” has been used to do three functions; 1) it is used like an object complement (used to complete a sentence), 2) used to show the source of the subject (where the subject is from) and 3) it also shows the location or place of the subject in the sentence. It can be seen that the proper noun “پاڪستان=Pakistan” is the SOURCE of the sentence, because the subject comes from “Pakistan”.

The verb phrase “ڪٽندو هو=kanando ho=used to take/would take” in the sentence (12) has three arguments to discuss about. The arguments are: “بابا=baba=father”, “گهر=ghar=home” and “اسڪول مان=iskool maan=from school”. The first argument “بابا=baba=father” is doing an action in the sentence, we can therefore say that it is the subject or the agent of the sentence. The second argument “گهر=ghar=home” is the goal of the sentence, because it shows the destination of the action of the subject. The third argument “اسڪول=iskool=school” in the prepositional phrase is the source of the sentence, because it shows the source or starting point of the action.

## ➤ LOCATIVE THETA ROLE

**Example 13.** واپس اچي گهر پوءِ بس ماني جو وارو هوندو آهي.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M61	Arabic script	واپس اچي گهر پوءِ بس ماني جو وارو هوندو آهي.
	Roman script	Wapis achi ghar poi bus maani jo waro hoondo aahy.
	Transliteration	Wapis=back; achi=come; ghar=home; poi=then; bus=enough; maani=meal; jo=of; waro=turn; hoondo=will be; aahy=is.
	Translation	Having come back home then its (my) meal turn (cooking turn).
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj Compl:</b> ماني جو وارو= <i>maani jo waro</i> =meal turn, <b>VP:</b> هوندو آهي= <i>hondo aahy</i> =is, <b>AdvP:</b> پوءِ بس= <i>poi bus</i> =then)

**Example 14.** اسان اُن گونڻ رهون پيا.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N28	Arabic script	اسان اُن گونڻ رهون پيا.
	Roman script	Assan una goth mei rahon paya.
	Transliteration	Assan=we; una=that; goth=village; mei=in; rahon=live; paya=agreement.
	Translation	We are living in that village
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> اسان= <i>assan</i> =we, <b>Obj:</b> zero, <b>VP:</b> رهون پيا= <i>rahoon paya</i> =are living, <b>PP:</b> اُن گونڻ= <i>una ghoth mei</i> =in that village)

The sentence (13) is a bit complex sentence as it does not have clear noun phrases (subject and object). The verb phrase of the sentence (13) is “هوندو آهي=*hondo aahy*=is/ its”. The argument “ماني=*maani*=meal (dinner)” is the theme or object of the sentence with the theme thematic relation. The simple meaning of the above sentence would be: “Having come back home I cook meal”, where “I” is the subject or agent and “meal” is the object or the theme of the sentence. The common noun “گهر=*ghar*=home” in the having clause is a word which shows a place or location. It shows that the subject (مان=*maan*=I) comes back home and cooks meal. The argument “گهر=*ghar*=home” is a locative in the sentence (because it shows location), and it has LOCATIVE theta role in the sentence. Besides; it also shows the destination of subject to come back and cook meal.

The verb phrase “رهون پيا=*rahoon paya*=are living” in the sentence (14) has a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase, which are: “اسان=*assan*=we” and “اُن گونڻ=*una ghoth mei*=in that village”. The argument “اسان=*assan*=we” is the external argument or subject or agent who is

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations

doing action “living” “in that village”. Thus, we can say that this argument is subject/agent of the sentence with a nominative case, and it has the agent theta role in the sentence. The common noun “گوتھ=goth=village” in the prepositional phrase shows place/location where subject is living. We can therefore say that this argument is locative having the LOCATIVE thematic relation in the sentence.

### ➤ INSTRUMENT THETA ROLE

**Example 15.** ٺيڪسي جي ذريعي اسان جيڪو آهي سو يونيورسٽي ويندا آهيون.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N44	Arabic script	ٺيڪسي جي ذريعي اسان جيڪو آهي سو يونيورسٽي ويندا آهيون.
	Roman script	Taxi je zarie assan jeko aa so university weenda aahyon.
	Transliteration	Taxi; je=of; zarie=through; assan=we; jeko=that; aa=is; so=that; university; weenda=will go; aahyon=are.
	Translation	We go to the university through taxi.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> اسان=assan=We, <b>Obj Compl:</b> يونيورسٽي =University, <b>VP:</b> ويندا آهيون=weenda aahyon=go, <b>PP:</b> ٺيڪسي جي ذريعي =taxi je zarie=through taxi, <b>AdvP:</b> جيڪو آهي سو=jeko aahy so=that is that)

**Example 16.** ڪڏهن ڪڏهن نه ملندي آهي ته وري ساڳو ٺيڪسي.

coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N105	Arabic script	ڪڏهن ڪڏهن نه ملندي آهي ته وري ساڳو ٺيڪسي.
	Roman script	Kadahin kadahin na milandi aahy ta wari sago taxi.
	Transliteration	Kadahin=when; kadahin=when; na=not; milandi=will meet; aahy=is; ta=that; wari=then; sago=same; taxi.
	Translation	Sometimes (we) do not get (the bus) then again (we come) by taxi.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Sub:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> zero, <b>Obj Compl:</b> ٺيڪسي =taxi, <b>VP:</b> نه ملندي آهي =na milandi aahy=do not get, <b>AdvP:</b> ڪڏهن ڪڏهن =kadahin kadahin= sometimes)

The verb phrase “ويندا آهيون=weenda aahyon=go” in the sentence (15) has two noun phrases, one prepositional phrase and one adverbial phrase. The word “ٺيڪسي=taxi” in the prepositional phrase “ٺيڪسي جي ذريعي=taxi je zarie=through taxi” is a common noun and neither it does the action nor undergoes action of the sentence. However; it is being used as an instrument to do an action (of going) in the sentence. Therefore, we can say that the common noun “ٺيڪسي=taxi” is the instrument in the sentence, and it has the INSTRUMENT theta role.

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations



The sentence (16) is a complex sentence as it has neither subject nor object; both subject and object are hidden in the sentence. The verb phrase “نه ملندي آهي = *na milandi aahy*=do not get” of the sentence has one noun phrase “ٽيڪسي = *taxi*”. It is neither the subject nor the object of the sentence; it neither does an action nor undergoes an action of the sentence. This is the argument which is used as an instrument to do an action in the sentence (may be action of going or coming from one place to another). Therefore, we can say that this argument is instrument in the sentence, and it has the INSTRUMENT theta role with instrumental case in the sentence.

### ➤ BENEFICIARY THETA ROLE

**Example 17.** معنا ان جا پي ڪاغز جمع ڪرايا.

S. NO/ coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
N516	Arabic script	معنا ان جا پي ڪاغز جمع ڪرايا.
	Roman script	Mana una ja bhee kagaz jama karaya.
	Transliteration	Mana=means; una=him/his; ja=of; bhee=also; kagaz=documents; jama=submit; karaya=did.
	Translation	Means I submitted his documents too.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> ان جا = <i>una ja</i> =his, <b>Obj Compl:</b> ڪاغز = <i>kagaz</i> =documents, <b>VP:</b> جمع ڪرايا = <i>jama karaya</i> =submitted, <b>AdvP:</b> پي = <i>bhee</i> =also)

**Example 18.** مهراڻ جي اندر بلڊنگز ۽ ڊپارٽمينٽس ٺهيا پئي.

S. NO/ coding	Sentence Description	Sentence
M141	Arabic script	مهراڻ جي اندر بلڊنگز ۽ ڊپارٽمينٽس ٺهيا پئي.
	Roman script	Mehran je ander buildings ain department thahya pae.
	Transliteration	Mehran; je=of; ander=inside; bildings=buildings; ain=and; departments; thahya=built; pae=were.
	Translation	Buildings and departments were built inside Mehran (university).
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subject:</b> zero subject, <b>Object complement:</b> بلڊنگز = buildings ain departments=buildings and departments, <b>Verb Phrase:</b> ٺهيا پئي = <i>thahya pae</i> = were built, <b>Prepositional Phrase:</b> مهراڻ جي = <i>Mehran je ander</i> =inside Mehran (University))

The verb phrase in the sentence (17) is “جمع ڪرايا = *jama karaya*=submitted”. It has two arguments to talk about and the arguments are: ‘ان جا = *una ja*=his’ and “ڪاغز = *kagaz*=documents”. The argument “ان جا = *una ja*=his” is not an indirect object of the sentence; we can say that it is the object complement of the sentence which is used to give more information about the direct object. However; it can be said that this argument is the beneficiary with BENEFICIARY thematic relation in the sentence. It is used as an indirect

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

object, thus it has a dative case in the sentence; indirect objects have always dative cases. The direct object of the sentence (17) is “ڪاغز=*kagaz*=documents” is a direct object and thus it has an accusative case in the sentence.

There are two arguments with the verb phrase “ٺهيا پئي=*thahya pae*=were built” in the sentence (18). The first argument is a noun phrase “ڊپارٽمينٽس ۽ بلڊنگز=*buildings and departments*” and the other argument is “مهراڻ=*Mehran*=Mehran (University)”. The argument ‘buildings and departments’ is used at the place of subject, but it is not the subject/agent of the sentence, because it does not do action in the sentence. In fact, this argument is used as a direct object of the sentence which undergoes an action of the sentence (were being built). The argument which takes benefit from the action of the sentence is the “مهراڻ=*Mehran*” (University). It does not do any action in the sentence yet it takes benefit from the sentence; it is beneficiary of the sentence which benefits from the sentence. Thus, it can be said that it is beneficiary having the BENEFICIARY thematic relation in the sentence.

## Conclusion

This study analysed the Argument structure of Sindhi verbs with the help of the theoretical framework proposed by Carnie (2006). It is found from the data that Sindhi language has all the theta roles which are there in English language (those that are proposed by Carnie). The theta roles proposed by Carnie (2006) have been seen in the Sindhi language. There are nine (09) main theta roles and thematic relations in the Sindhi language, on the basis of Carnie’s nine theta roles. The examined and found theta roles are: *agent, experiencer, theme, goal, recipient, locative, source, instrument, and beneficiary*. Sindhi language is one of the languages which are known as agreement language languages (Chomsky, 1995). The verbs of the Sindhi language are mostly action verbs which need agents to do an action in sentences. An agent needs mostly a theme to undergo its action in a sentence. The Sindhi verbs have beneficiaries which benefit from the action of the agent and theme in a sentence. To sum up, it is recommended to conduct research at broader level than this paper (more speakers from different dialects of the Sindhi) to analyse the Argument Structure of the Sindhi verbs, and also to find if it has some other theta roles as well.

## Contribution and Implication

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations

The primary aim of this study is to apply the theta role theory on the Sindhi language verbs data using the framework proposed by Carnie (2006). This study has successfully applied the theory on the verbs of the Sindhi language. As we know from the literature, in Sindhi, thematic roles are not yet investigated using the theory applied to the current study. Thus, this study confirms the presence of theta roles/thematic relations in Sindhi language. This study serves as a preliminary in the area; it gives way for conducting similar research on the area in future. The same research can be replicated in the syntax of other languages in the world, especially in agreement languages. Finally, this research to the best of its capacity contributes toward the syntactic analysis of Sindhi VP and sentences using the projection principle.

---

### References

- Adwani, B. (1985). *وڏو سنڌي وياڪرڻ*. Jamshoro.: Institute of Sindhalogy, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan.
- Allana, G. A. (2010). *سنڌيڪا سنڌي گرامر*. Karachi.: Sindhica Academy, Karachi, Pakistan.
- Arshad, A. (1986). *Hala: International Academy, Hala, Sindh, Pakistan*.al.,.
- Baig, M. Q. (2006). *سنڌي وياڪرڻ* Hyderabad: Baig, M. (2006). *سنڌي وياڪرڻ* (J. Sindhi Adabi Board Ed.). Hyderabad.: Sindhi Adabi Board, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan.
- Carnie, A. (2006). *A general Introduction* (Second ed.). USA.: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Chano, M. I. (2011). *آسان سنڌي گرامر* Mehrabpur, Sindh, Pakistan.: M. Sindhi Sahat Ghar, Sindh, Pakistan. Ed.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structure*: The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Editorial. (2014). Argument structure in morphology and syntax: An introduction. *Lingua*(141), 1-7.
- Ezeizabarrena, M. J. (2012). The (in)consistent ergative marking in early Basque: L 1 vs child L 2. *Lingua*(122), 303-317.
- Grimshaw, J. (1990). *Argument Structure*: Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Hackl, M. (2013). The Syntax-semantics interface. *Lingua*(130), 66-87.
- Harley, H. (2013). External Arguments and the Mirror Principle: On the distinctness of Voice and v. *Lingua*(125), 34-57.

- Holmberg, A. R., I. (2013). The syntax-morphology relation. *Lingua*(130), 111-131.
- Jokhio, A. H. (2011). وياڪرڻ جي اهم جُز فعل جو مختصر اڀياس. *Sindhi Boli Tahqeeqi Journal, Sindhi Language Authority, Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.* , 2, 78-100., 78-100.
- Jokhio, A. H. (2012). جزم جي ڏرست استعمال جو مسعلو. *Sindhi Boli Tahqeeqi Journal, Sindhi Language Authority, Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan,* 68-90.
- Jokhio, A. H. (2013a). فعل لازمي ۽ فعل متعدي جو مختصر اڀياس. *Sindhi Boli Tahqeeqi Journal, Sindhi Language Authority, Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.*
- Jokhio, A. H. (2013b). وضاحت در وضاحت. *Sindhi Boli Tahqeeqi Journal, Sindhi Language Authority, Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.,* 160-162.
- Khoso, N. M. (2005). سنڌي گرامر. Kandyaro: Roshini Publication, Kandyaro, Sindh, Pakistan.
- Luuk, E. (2009). The Noun/Verb and Predicate/Argument Structure. *Lingua, 119,* 1707-1727.
- Marantz, A. (2013). Verbal argument structure: Evidents and participants. *Lingua*(130), 152-168.
- Okeke, C. O. (2012). Meaning and Thematic Roles in Igbo. Ujah: Unizik. *Journal of Arts and Humanities, 13*(2), 164-183.
- Radford, A. (2009). *Introduction to English Sentence Structure.*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rappaport, M. H. L., B. (2004). Deconstructing Thematic Hierarchies. *Architectures, Rules, and Preferences: Afrestschrift for Joan Bresnan* (pp. 451-468): Stanford, CA: CSL Publications.
- Rashidi, M. (2007). سوجهرو. Kandyaro: Roshini Publication Kandyaro, Sindh, Pakistan.
- Sindhi, D. (2010). سنڌيڪا سنڌي گرامر. Karachi: Sindhica Academy, Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan.
- Swart, P. d. e. a. (2008). Animacy. argument structure, and argument encoding. *Lingua*(118), 131-140.
- Wechsler, S. (2005). Thematic Structure *The Encyclopedic of language and Linguistics* (Second ed.): Elsevier.
- Veesar, Z. A., Kadhim, K. A., & Srinivass, S. (2015a). Establishing the Thematic Structure and Investigating the most Prominent Theta Roles Used in Sindhi Language. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 4*(4), 216-230.

Veesar, Z. A., Srinivass, S., & Kadhim, K. A. (2015b). A COMPARISON OF THEME THETA ROLES IN ENGLISH AND SINDHI. *LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION*, 2(1), 77-89.

---



Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Student  
Department of English  
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics  
University of Malaya  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia  
[linguistzav84@gmail.com](mailto:linguistzav84@gmail.com)

Kais Amir Kadhim  
Seniour Lecturer  
Department of English  
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics  
University of Malaya  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia  
[kaisamir@um.edu.my](mailto:kaisamir@um.edu.my)

Sardar Ali Shah  
Lecturer  
Faculty of Law  
University of Sindh  
Jamshoro  
Sindh  
Pakistan  
[sardar.shah@usindh.edu.pk](mailto:sardar.shah@usindh.edu.pk)

Rashid Ali Khuhro  
Lecturer  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
University of Sindh  
Jamshoro

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations

Sindh  
Pakistan  
[rashid.khuhro@usindh.edu.pk](mailto:rashid.khuhro@usindh.edu.pk)

**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 16:2 February 2016

Zahid Ali Veesar, Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, Kais Amir Kadhim, Ph.D. Linguistics, Sardar Ali Shah, M.Phil., and Rashid Ali Khuhro, M.A.

Argument Structure of Sindhi Verbs: An Analysis of Thematic Relations

303