

## The Most Prominent Theta Roles in the Sindhi Language: The Hierarchy

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### Abstract

This paper focuses on the most prominent theta roles used in the Sindhi language. The study attempts to answer to the research question, ‘How are theta roles prominently used in the Sindhi language?’ The data come from the young native Sindhi speakers. Each verb phrase in the data is examined with the help of Carnie’s (2007) ‘Theta Roles and Thematic Relations’ in order to find the prominent theta roles in the Sindhi language. The study finds six prominent theta roles in Sindhi; namely, *agent*, *theme*, *beneficiary*, *recipient*, *goal* and *locative*. According to the findings of Rappaport Hovav (2007), the hierarchy of the theta roles in English is: Agent>Recipient>Experiencer/Goal>Instrument>Patient/Theme>Place; while, the hierarchy of the prominent theta roles in the Sindhi language is: *agent*>*theme*>*beneficiary*>*recipient*>*locative*>*goal*. This finding is not, however, definitive, i.e. broader studies are to be carried out to find the precise hierarchy of the theta roles in Sindhi.

**Key words:** Syntax, semantics, Theta roles, prominent Theta roles, English, Sindhi

### Introduction

Theta-role ( $\theta$ -role) is a bundle of thematic relations associated with a particular argument (Carnie, 2006). Theta- Criterion is Lexical information. According to the Theta-Criterion, each argument is assigned one and only one theta-role and each theta-role is assigned to one and only one argument. For example, the verb phrase in the following example has three arguments having three theta roles and five thematic relations:

#### **Ali gave a gift to Peter.**

Ali is an agent who is doing an action of giving a gift to Peter. It is also a source in the sentence. The context of the sentence shows that ‘a gift’ goes from Ali to Peter. Thus, keeping this reason in mind, Ali is also a source in the above sentence. Theme of the sentence is ‘a gift’ which undergoes an action of the sentence; it is being given to Peter. ‘Peter’ is a person who receives a gift from Ali. Peter is, therefore, recipient of the gift in the sentence. Peter is also goal in the sentence, i.e. a gift comes from Ali to Peter. Peter is the termination or destination of the gift to reach.

Carnie (2006) defines theta role as a semantic relation between the argument and the predicate (verb phrase). Besides, Radford (2009) argues that theta-roles are used to describe the semantic roles played by arguments in the sentences.

**They] arrested [her].**

In this example, the argument (noun phrase) ‘they’ is an agent who is doing an action of arresting ‘her’. The second argument ‘her’ is a theme which undergoes an action of being arrested by them. Theta roles are the names of the participant roles associated with a predicate. The predicate may be a verb, an adjective, a preposition, or a noun. The participant is usually said to be an argument of the predicate.

**Problem**

There is no comprehensive work on the Sindhi Syntax (Pitafi, 2009; Fahmida 2011). Sindhi is known as the oldest and major language of the sub-continent, but its major part, syntax, has been ignored since olden times. A number of books can be found on Sindhi grammar in general but less or no work on syntax in particular. Past writers like Stack (1849), Trump. (1872), Munshi (1892) and Baig (1916 & 2006) have written generally about morphology, phonology, grammar and parts of speech of the Sindhi language. But, nobody has written about the syntax of this language in specific terms. It is still being ignored by the present day writers (Pitafi, 2010; Fahmida, 2010; Rahman, 2010).

**Objective**

The current study seeks to investigate the prominent theta roles and their hierarchy in the Sindhi language. It attempts to answer the following research question:

Q. How are theta roles prominently used in the Sindhi language?

**Sindhi Verbs**

Anything which tells or shows something, any action, state or condition of someone in the sentence is called a verb (Jokhio, 2011). Sindhi verbs are divided into two types; main verbs and ‘to be’ or auxiliary verbs (Jokhio, 2012). Main verbs are further divided into regular and irregular verbs and auxiliary verbs, which are further divided into free auxiliaries and linking auxiliaries. Sindhi verbs are derived from imperative form (Baig, 2006). The Sindhi imperatives are Sindhi nouns but they do the function of verbs and hence many other verb forms are derived from the imperatives, that is why they are called base forms in the Sindhi language. The nominative, accusative and state cases of noun are also derived from the imperatives. Irregular verbs are those whose objects do not come/link directly in the sentences (Adwani, 1985). Regular verbs are those verbs which are derived from infinitives by adding suffixes (Arshad, 1986). The Sindhi language has compound verbs which are made up of two or three verbs together as a verb phrase in a sentence. Compound verbs are created through the addition of suffixes in the main verbs of a sentence. Compound verbs are the verbs which are used together in a sentence (Baig, 2006). Sindhi verbs have been divided into intransitive verbs and transitive verbs, and these are further classified into sub parts (Jokhio 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Baig, 2006; Allana, 2010).

**Hierarchy of theta roles**

Every linguistic expression has syntactic organization principles and semantic interpretation principles which help understand the structure and meaning of the expression/ clause/sentence (Hackl, 2013). The meaning of an expression depends on syntactic properties and function of these properties in expressing meaning. Syntactic organization of words forms the meaning. The displacement phenomenon is a syntactic property of an expression, which can be either overt or covert.

The predicate/argument structure of natural language is much more complex than that of first order predicate logic (Lukk, 2009). Language has fossils, and according to Jackendoff (1999), language has five fossils. By language fossils he means language structural features. According to Luuk, linguistic predicate/argument distinction is universal. A correspondence can be established between linguistic argument (LA) and linguistic predicate (LP). The linguistic predicate/argument structure has universal approach in natural language syntax. The 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 constraints.

One argument can have more than one theta roles (Dowty, 1991). However, two arguments cannot have the same theta role. Dowty's purpose is to build a methodological groundwork or studying thematic roles, to propose a new account of theta roles and to invent and explore the new theories of thematic roles. Dowty proposes a Thematic Proto-Role Theory based on prototypes; features of roles to realize arguments through proto-roles-entailments; proto-agent properties and proto-patient properties. He states that 'thematic role is a set of entailments of an group of predicates with respect to one of the arguments of each'. It is the proto-roles and argument selection principle which help us in identifying the thematic roles and their hierarchy/prominence.

According to Verhoeven (2014), agent theta roles are higher than others because of the animacy effects. The transitive verbs take experiencer theta role as subject and intransitive verbs take it as object. Experiencers can stand at the position of agents, but the difference between them is that the former has control on event while the latter does not have control on the event in the sentence. The experiencer-first effects are observed in Greek and German but not in Turkish and Chinese. The animacy effects in arguments are not universally accepted; they differ from language to language (Jackendoff, 1987, Grimshaw, 1990; Dik, 1978; Lavin and Rappaport, 2005; Veasar, Kadhim & Srinivass, 2015a & 2015b).

The semantic roles are studied and analysed at three levels; namely, participant roles, thematic roles and syntactic relation (Lehmann, 2005). Lehmann calls these participant roles macroroles. Macroroles, he argues, are central participant functions, where an actor has control on event, hence it is an Agent; an undergoer is controlled, thus it is a Theme; and an indirectus is neutral, hence it is a Recipient. The theta roles are assigned according to the situation and structure of the expression. The participants/arguments cannot be analysed alone; they have relation with other parts as well, and they can bear one or more than one relations.

According to the Theta-Criterion Theory, 'each argument bears one and only one theta-role, and each theta-role is assigned to one and only one argument' (Radford, 1997 & 2009). A verb can be one-place-argument (intransitive verb) and two-place-argument (transitive verb). A verb can have external argument (i.e. subject) and internal argument (i.e. object). Some verbs can have two arguments and some others can have three arguments with three different theta roles. *Love* and *cut*, for example are two-place relations: they take two arguments. However, *cut* can have three arguments in case of instrumental case, e.g. *he cut his finger with a knife*. On the other hand, *give* is a three place relation which takes at least three arguments in a sentence. Therefore, it can be said that verbs differ in terms of taking arguments and assigning theta roles to them (Williams, 1987). Thematic relations relate situation to their participants. They show relation between participants and situations, and they are interface between syntax and semantics (Davis, 2009).

Rappaport Hovav, & Levin (2007) argue that the hierarchy of theta roles is a ranking of a set of semantic roles. There are problems in the thematic hierarchies, because it is not universal, i.e. different writers give different hierarchies.

- a. Agt > Th/Pat > G/S/L (Baker 1997)
- b. Agt > Exp > Th (Belletti & Rizzi 1988)
- c. Agt > Ben > Rec/Exp > Inst > Th/Pat > L (Bresnan & Kanerva 1988)
- d. Agt > Pat > Rec > Ben > Inst > L > Temp > (Dik 1978)
- e. Agt > Exp > Inst > Pat > G/S/L > Time (Fillmore 1971)

It can be seen that all of the above writers/linguists propose different hierarchies of the theta roles. The prominence of theta roles differs from language to language. According to Dowty (1991), semantic elements help realize the arguments and assign the theta roles to them accordingly. He rejects the Fillmore's well-known subject selection paradigm.

There are external and internal arguments in an expression. English language takes Agents as subjects and Patients as objects, where subjects are higher than objects (Baker, 1996). English has some verbs which take only one argument and some others which take two arguments, while there are some verbs like 'give' which take three arguments. Baker gives the thematic hierarchy proposed by Larson (1988) as follows:

Agent > Theme > Goal > Obliques (manner, location, time, ...)

Baker suggests creating a new thematic hierarchy which has universal approach to all languages. He argues that Theme theta role is higher than Goal theta role, and thus he rejects Grimshaw's (1990) theory of thematic hierarchy where she places Theme lower than Goal. The thematic roles are semantic roles, while aspectual roles are completing events of the verbs.

### Thematic Relation and Theta Roles

The initiator or doer of an action is called the *agent*. In the following sentences, *Ryan* and *Michael* are agents. Agents are most frequently subjects, but they can also appear in other positions.

(1) *Ryan* hit Andrew.

Arguments that feel or perceive events are called *experiencers*. Experiencers can appear in a number of argument positions including subject and object.

(2) *Lea* likes cookies.

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

(3) *Alyssa* kept *her syntax book*.

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

(4) *Doug* went to *Chicago*.

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

(5) *Mikaela* gave *Jessica* the book.

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

(6) *Bob* gave Steve the Syntax assignment.

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

(7) *Andrew* is in *Tucson's finest apartment*.

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

(8) *Chris* hacked the computer apart *with an axe*.

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

(9) He bought these flowers for *Aaron*.

### Methodology

The present study is a qualitative research study which attempts to establish the Argument/Thematic structure of the Sindhi verbs. It analyses and investigates the prominent theta roles used in this language. The processes and relations of Sindhi verbs will be explored based on Carnie's (2006) theory of Theta-roles.

### Research Design

The research design used in this research is exploratory and descriptive. It uses a qualitative method (Creswell, 2004; Kumar, 2011; Neuman, 2006) to study the nature and function of the verbs in natural spoken Sindhi. This design helps us study verbs, their types and the theta-roles assigned to their arguments in Sindhi language.

### Data Collection

The current study analyses Sindhi verbs in terms of their argument structure, theta roles and particularly the most prominent theta roles. The data for the study came from the native Sindhi speakers who have Sindhi as their first language. The data were collected through two interviews. The researcher asked the participants questions regarding different things in order to make them speak more freely and frankly about their lives in a natural way. The questions were about their personal lives, education (from primary to 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 as if they were talking to each other without being noticed and recorded.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed based on Carnie's (2006) theta roles and thematic relations. It was attempted to see how Sindhi verbs assign different theta-roles (also called theta relations) to their arguments (NPs) in sentences. The argument structure of the Sindhi verbs was established in order to see the theta-roles and the most prominent theta roles in this language.

### Analysis and Discussion of Theta-roles

This section analyses and discusses the prominent theta roles in Sindhi. The analysis of the data reveals six prominent theta roles as follows:

#### 1.1. Agent Theta Role

According to Carnie (2006), the initiator or doer of an action is called the *agent*. Tables 1 and 2 show examples of the agent prominent theta roles in Sindhi.

**Table 1.** Agent Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S.NO	Sentence Description	Sentence
N176	Arabic script	ته ان جي ڪري معنا مان هتي جوڀ ڪندو آهيان.
	Roman script	Ta una je kary mana maan hity job kando ahyan..
	Transliteration	Ta=that; una=that; je=of; kary=do; mana=means; maan=I; hity=here; job; kando=will; ahyan=am.
	Translation	That is why I do job here.

Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> مان=maan=I, <b>Obj:</b> ڄوب=job, <b>VP:</b> ڪندو ته اُن جي ڪري =kando aahiyan=do, <b>AdvP:</b> ڪندا هون مان=ta una je kary mana=that is why, هتي=hity=here)
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**Table 2.** Agent Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S.NO	Sentence Description	Sentence
M204	Arabic script Roman script Transliteration	اسان انهن ٻنهي شين تي ڪنٽرول ڪندا هون. Assan inhan binhi shayun ty control kanda hon. Assan=we; inhan=these; binhi=both; shayun=things; ty=on; control; kanda=will do; hon=are.
	Translation	We control on these two things.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> اسان=assan=we, <b>Obj:</b> zero, <b>VP:</b> ڪنٽرول ڪندا هون =control kanda hon=control, <b>PP:</b> انهن ٻنهي شين تي =inhan binhee shayun ty=on these two things)

The example presented in table 1 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘مان=maan=I’ as a subject, ‘ڄوب=job’ as an object and ‘ڪندو آهيان=kando aahiyan=do’ as a verb. The argument ‘مان=maan=I’ is the first person singular pronoun which is used at the place of a proper noun (a person). It has capacity to do action in the sentence. It is the subject or doer of an action in this sentence. It performs the action of ‘doing’ something (a job) in the sentence. It is subject or an agent of the sentence that performs action of doing a job. The context of the sentence shows that there can be three reasons behind using Agent theta role prominently. Firstly, the verb phrase ‘ڪندو آهيان=kando aahiyan=do’ is a transitive verb which needs minimum two arguments (subject and object) to give complete meaning of the sentence. Thus, in this way, verb phrase makes the speaker use subject/agent prominently to show action in the sentence. Secondly, this verb is an action verb which requires an agent to do action; that is why the speaker uses Agent prominently. Thirdly, it is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker use Agent prominently to show the action of the sentence. Thus, it can be said that it is the context of the sentence which pushes the speaker to use agent theta role prominently in order to show agent theta role as the prominent theta in the sentence.

The example presented in table 2 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘اسان=assan=we’ as an agent, ‘انهن ٻنهي شين=inhan binhee shayun =these two things’ as a theme and ‘ڪنٽرول ڪندا هون=control kanda aahyon=control’ as a verb. The verb ‘ڪندا هون=kanda hon=do’ is a transitive verb in the Sindhi language which requires a subject and object to give the complete meaning of the sentence; that is why its argument ‘اسان=assan=we’ is prominent in the sentence. The speaker uses agent theta role prominently because of the transitive verb in the sentence; it is the verb which makes him use agent theta role prominently. The verb of this sentence is also an action verb which requires an agent to do action in the sentence; that is why the speaker uses agent theta role prominently. Besides, if we see the context of the sentence and also the context of the interview, we come to know that it is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker to use agent theta role prominently and to show it as a prominent theta

role in the Sindhi language. The speaker does not have a variety of theta roles but only one to use agent theta role prominently in the sentence. The use of the verb shows that the argument ‘اسان=assan=we’ has been used as a prominent theta role in the sentence; it is more prominent than other theta roles in the sentence.

### 1.2. Theme Theta Role

The entities that undergo actions are moved, experienced or perceived and are called *themes* (Carnie, 2006). Tables 3 and 4 below show the examples of the theme prominent theta roles.

**Table 3.** Theme Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S.NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
M830	Arabic script	ته آء انهي شيء كي هي فالو ڪندس.
	Roman script	Ta aon unhe shae khy he follow kandus.
	Transliteration	Ta=that; aon=I; unhe=that; shae=thing; khy=have; hee=also; follow; kandus=do will.
	Translation	I will follow only that thing.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> آء=aaon=I, <b>Obj:</b> انهي شيء=unhe shae=that thing, <b>VP:</b> فالو ڪندس=follow kandus=will follow, <b>Conj:</b> ته= ta=that, <b>AdvP:</b> هي ڪي=khy hee=also)

**Table 4.** Theme Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N11	Arabic script	مان توهان جي ٻولي رڪارڊ ڪندس.
	Roman script	Maan tahan ji boli record kandus.
	Transliteration	Maan=I; tahan=your; 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)

The example presented in the table 3 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘آء=aaon=I’ as an agent, ‘انهي شيء=unhe shae that thing’ as a theme and ‘فالو ڪندس=follow kandus=will follow’ as a verb. The argument ‘آء=aaon=I’ is the agent or the subject of the sentence and it has an agent theta role with an agentive thematic relation in the sentence. The second argument of the verb phrase ‘انهي شيء= unhe shae=that thing’ is the object or the theme with an accusative case in the sentence with the theme theta relation in the sentence. This verb always requires two arguments to do action in the sentence. The verb tries to show that someone is following somebody/something. The context of the sentence shows that this verb is a transitive verb which requires minimum two arguments (NPs) to show action and to give the complete meaning of the sentence. If we write one argument let’s say subject/agent and omit object/theme, we will have incomplete meaning; the sentence will not clarify who is following

what/whom. If we omit subject/agent from the sentence, we will not understand who the follower (agent) is in the sentence. Thus, it can be said that it is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker use agent and theme theta roles prominently. However, the speaker focuses on the theme theta role to show the particular thing that is being followed in the sentence. It is the context that pushes speaker to use theme theta role prominently.

The example presented in the table 4 shows the sentence structure where the speaker uses ‘مان=maan=I’ as an agent, ‘توهان جي ٻولي=tahan ji boli=your language’ as a theme and ‘رڪارڊ ڪندس=record kandus=will record’ as a verb. The argument ‘مان=maan=I’ is subject or agent with agent theta role in the sentence. The other argument ‘توهان جي ٻولي=tahan ji boli=your language’ is theme of the sentence and has theme theta role in the sentence. The verb shows some action of doing something. It shows that someone is going to record someone’s language; that is why it needs a person (an Agent) to do action and a Theme to undergo an action in a sentence, which makes speaker to use Agent and Theme theta roles prominently. The verb is a transitive verb which needs at least two arguments (subject and object) to show action and to give the complete meaning of the sentence. This verb is an action verb which attempts to show some action going on in the sentence. It also requires an agent to do an action in the sentence. The context of the sentence shows that it is the context which makes the speaker to use such a verb phrase to show agent and theme prominently in the sentence. However, the speaker focuses more on the theme in order to show the theme/object of the sentence. The theme theta role is more prominent in order to show the thing (object/theme) which is going to be recorded in the sentence. Besides, the context of the sentence does not show that the speaker has varieties of theta roles to use. It shows that it is because of the situation of the conversation that the speaker uses such a verb phrase to show the theme role prominently.

### 1.3. Recipient Theta Role

A special kind of goal that involves a change of possession in the sentence is termed as recipient (Carnie, 2006). The examples are presented in tables 5 and 6.

**Table 5.** Recipient Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
M395	Arabic script	انهي کان پوءِ بابا کي وري ۱۹۹۸ ۾ آرڊر ملي ويو ايج ايس ٿي جو.
	Roman script	Unhe khan poi baba khy wari 1998 mei order mili wayo HSC jo
	Transliteration	Unhe=that; khan=from; poi=then; baba=father; khy=have; wari=again/then; 1998 mei=in 1998; arder=order; mili=meet; wayo=went; HSC; jo=of.
	Translation	Then father got an order of HSC in 1998.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> آرڊر=aader=order, <b>Indirect Obj:</b> بابا=baba=father, <b>VP:</b> ملي ويو=mili wayo=got, <b>PP:</b> ۱۹۹۸=1998 mei=in 1998, ايج ايس ٿي جو=HST jo=of HST, <b>AdvP:</b> انهي کان=unhe khan poi=then, وري=wari=again)



**Table 6.** Recipient Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N693	Arabic script	ٻنهي ڀائرن کان پئسا مان ورتا.
	Roman script	Binhee bhairan khan pesa maan warta uty.
	Transliteration	Binhe=both; bhairan=brothers; khan=from; pesa=money; maan=I; warta=took; uty=there.
	Translation	I took money there from both brothers.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> مان=maan=I, <b>Obj:</b> پئسا=pesa=money, <b>VP:</b> ورتا=warta=took, <b>PP:</b> ٻنهي ڀائرن کان=binhee bhairan khan=from both brothers)

The example presented in the table 5 shows the sentence structure where the speaker uses zero/null agent, ‘آرڊر=aaader=order’ as a direct object, ‘بابا=baba=father’ as an indirect object, ‘ملي ويو=mili wayo=got’ as a verb and two prepositional phrases: ‘ايج ايس ٿي جو=HST jo=of HST’ and ‘۱۹۹۸=1998 mei=in 1998’. The verb shows action of getting something from someone; it shows that someone (father) receives a job order from someone else (may be government), that is why the verb needs an argument/a person (a recipient) who receives the job order in the sentence, which makes the speaker to use the recipient theta role prominently. The context of the situation shows that the speaker tries to say that his father got a job order from the government; where ‘his father’ is recipient, ‘government’ is an agent and ‘a job order’ is the theme of the sentence. The context shows that ‘father’ receives ‘a job order’ from someone in the sentence. The sentence has been used in a passive voice in order to make theme theta role more prominent than that of agent theta role, while the receiver of the job (father) has been used to make recipient theta role more prominent than that of theme theta role. Therefore, it can be said that it is the context of the sentence and situation of the conversation which make the speaker to prominently use the recipient theta role.

The example presented in the table 6 shows the Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘مان=maan=I’ as a subject, ‘ڀائرن=bhairan=brothers’ as an indirect object, ‘پئسا=pesa=money’ as a direct object and ‘ورتا=warta=took’ as a verb in the sentence. It is a transitive verb whose action passes from the subject to the object of the sentence. Therefore, it always needs subject and object to show complete action and give complete meaning in the sentence. This verb is an action verb which needs an agent to do action in the sentence. The verb shows the action of getting something from someone; it shows that someone (the speaker) receives money from his brothers, that is why the verb needs an argument/a person (a recipient) who receives money in the sentence, which makes the speaker to use the recipient theta role prominently to show the recipient of the sentence. The context of the sentence shows that the speaker tries to say that his elder brothers support him; he takes money from them. It shows that the speaker is getting money from his brothers; where ‘I’ is the agent of the sentence, ‘money’ is direct object or theme and ‘his brothers’ is an indirect object. We can thus say that it is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker to prominently use the recipient theta role in the sentence.

#### 1.4. Locative Theta Role

The place where action occurs is termed as locative (Carnie, 2006). Examples in tables 7 and 8 explain locative prominent theta roles in Sindhi.

**Table 7.** Locative Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N106	Arabic script Roman script Transliteration Translation Syntactic Analysis	ء اسان رھون پيا پٽتائي ھلپارڪ ۾. Ain assan rahon paya pantai hillpark mei. Ain=and; assan=we; rahon=living; paya=are; pantai hillpark; mei=in. and we are living in Pantai Hill park. ( <b>Subj:</b> اسان=assan=we, <b>Obj:</b> zero, <b>VP:</b> رھون پيا=rahon paya=are living, <b>PP:</b> ۾ ھلپارڪ ۾=pantai hillpark mei=in Pantai Hill park, <b>Conj:</b> ۽=ain=and)

**Table 8.** Locative Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N347	Arabic script Roman script Transliteration Translation Syntactic Analysis	گوت پڇي آيس مان. Goth bhaji aayus maan. Goth=village; bhaji=run; aayus=came; maan=I. I came to the village. ( <b>Subj:</b> مان=maan=I, <b>VP:</b> پڇي آيس=bhaji aayus=came, <b>AdvP:</b> گوت=goth=village)

The example presented in the table 7 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘اسان=assan=we’ as a subject, ‘پيا رھون=rahoon paya=are living’ as a verb along with a prepositional phrase ‘۾ ھلپارڪ ۾=pantai hillpark mei=in Pantai Hill park’. The context of the sentence shows that the speaker is trying to show that the speaker and his friends are living in a place called Pantai Hillpark. The context of the sentence pushes the speaker to use such a verb which shows action and location of action in the sentence. This verb is an intransitive verb in Sindhi language; thus, it does not need object/theme in the sentence. However, such verbs do need any arguments which show the location of action in the sentence. Here, in this sentence, the speaker is trying to show that they are living in Pantai Hillpark, where ‘we’ is the agent/subject of the sentence and ‘Pantai Hillpark’ is the locative of the sentence. Therefore, it can be said that it is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker to use a verb which shows prominently the locative theta role in the sentence.

The example presented in the table 8 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘مان=maan=I’ as a subject, ‘گوت=goth=village’ as a location and ‘پڇي آيس=bhaji aayus=came’ as a verb in the sentence. The first argument ‘مان=maan=I’ is the subject or the agent of the sentence who is doing the action of coming (from somewhere to his village). It has an agent theta role with an agentive thematic relation in the sentence. It has a nominative case in the sentence. The other argument ‘گوت=goth=village’ is the locative of the sentence having locative theta role. The verb shows the action of coming from somewhere to some other place; it shows someone (the speaker) is coming from somewhere to his village, that is why he uses such a verb which needs an argument/a place (a village) to be shown as location of action in the

sentence. It is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker to prominently use the locative theta role in the sentence to show the location of the action.

### 1.5. Beneficiary Theta Role

The entity for whom the action occurs in the sentence is a beneficiary (Carnie, 2006). Tables 9 and 10 present the examples of beneficiary prominent theta roles.

**Table 9.** Beneficiary Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N381	Arabic script	پوءِ هُنَ جيڪو آهي سو مونکي پاڻ سان گڏ کنيو.
	Roman script	Poi hun jeko aahy so monkhy pan saan gad kanyo.
	Transliteration	Poi=then; hun=him; jeko=that; aahy=is; so=that; monkhy=me; pan=himself; saan=with; gad=together; kanyo=took.
	Translation	Then he took me together with himself.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> هُنَ=hun=he, <b>Indirect Obj:</b> مونکي=monkhy= me, <b>VP:</b> کنيو=kanyo=took, <b>AdvP:</b> پوءِ=poi=then, سو جيڪو آهي=jeko aahy so=that, پاڻ سان گڏ=pan saan gad=together with himself)

**Table 10.** Beneficiary Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N383	Arabic script	ته اتي هو مونکي گڏ وٺي ويو.
	Roman script	Ta uty hoo monkhy gad wathee wayo.
	Transliteration	Ta=that; uty=there; hoo=he; monkhy=me/I; gad=together; wathee=take; wayo=went.
	Translation	That he took me there together.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> هو=hoo=he, <b>Indirect Obj:</b> مونکي=monkhy= me, <b>VP:</b> وٺي ويو=wathee wayo=took, <b>AdvP:</b> ته=ta=that, اتي=uty=there, گڏ=gad=together)

The example presented in table 9 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘هُنَ=hun=he’ as a subject, ‘مونکي=monkhy=me’ as an indirect object and ‘کنيو=kanyo=took’ as a verb in the sentence. The first argument ‘هُنَ=hun=he’ is the subject or agent having a nominative case in the sentence, with an agent theta role in the sentence. The second argument of the verb phrase is ‘مونکي=monkhy=me’, the beneficiary of the sentence, with a beneficiary theta role in the sentence. The adverbial phrases are used to qualify the action of the sentence. It is a transitive verb which needs two arguments, subject and object, to show a complete action in the sentence. It is an action verb which requires an agent to do action in the sentence. The verb shows some action of an agent; it shows someone is taking someone else to some place, that is why the verb needs two persons (an Agent and a beneficiary) to show the

action of the sentence. The context of the sentence makes the speaker to prominently use the beneficiary theta role in the sentence.

The example presented in table 10 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘هُو=hoo=he’ as a subject, ‘مونڪي=monkhy=me’ as an indirect object and ‘وٺي ويو=wathee wayo=took’ as a verb in the sentence. It is a transitive verb (Allana, 2010) which needs two arguments, subject and object, to do the action in the sentence. It is an action verb which requires an agent to do the action. It is the context of the sentence and situation of the interview which make the speaker to prominently use the agent and beneficiary theta roles in the sentence, in order to show the beneficiary theta role as a prominent theta role. The argument ‘هُو=hoo=he’ is a subject or agent of the sentence, with an agent theta role in the sentence. This argument has a nominative case in the sentence. The second argument of the verb phrase is ‘مونڪي=monkhy=me’, the beneficiary of the sentence, with a beneficiary theta role.

### 1.6. Goal Theta Role

The entity towards which motion takes place is called a *goal* (Carnie, 2006). The examples are presented in tables 11 and 12 below.

**Table 11.** Goal Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
M372	Arabic script	۲ بجي بابا سڌو اسڪول مان ڪٽندو هو گهر.
	Roman script	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 directly take (us) to home from the school at 2 pm.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> بابا=baba=father, <b>Obj Compl:</b> گهر=ghar= home, <b>VP:</b> ڪٽندو هو=kanando ho=would take, <b>AdvP:</b> ۲ بجي=2 baje=at 2:00 pm, <b>AdjP:</b> سڌو=sidho=direct, <b>PP:</b> اسڪول مان=iskool maan=from school)

**Table 12.** Goal Prominent Theta Role in Sindhi

S. NO.	Sentence Description	Sentence
N107	Arabic script	ته اتي اچي ويندا آهيون گهر پنهنجي.
	Roman script	Ta uty achi wenda aahyon ghar pahinje.
	Transliteration	Ta=that; uty=there; achi=come; wenda=will go; aahyon=are; ghar=home; pahinje=our/own.
	Translation	Then (we) come (back) there our home.
	Syntactic Analysis	( <b>Subj:</b> zero, <b>Obj:</b> zero, <b>VP:</b> اچي ويندا اچي=achi wenda aahyon=come, <b>AdvP:</b> ته اتي=ta uty=then, <b>PP:</b> گهر پنهنجي=ghar pahinje=our home)

The example presented in the table 11 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘بابا=*baba*=father’ as a subject, ‘گھر=*ghar*=home’ as an object complement ‘اسڪول=*iskool*=school’ as a source and ‘ڪٽندو هو=*kanando ho*=would take’ as a verb in the sentence. The verb of the sentence shows the action of taking someone to somewhere; it shows that someone (father) is taking someone (his son) to their home that is why the speaker uses a verb which requires an argument /a place to be shown as goal of the agent of the sentence. The speaker is trying to show that his father used to take him home from the school at 2 pm; where ‘his father’ is the agent/subject of the sentence and ‘home’ is the goal of the sentence. We can thus say that the context of the sentence makes the speaker to prominently use the goal theta role.

The example presented in the table 12 shows the structure of a Sindhi sentence where the speaker uses ‘گھر پنهنجي=*ghar pahinje*=our home’ as an object complement and ‘اچي ويندا آهيون=*achi wenda aahyon*=come’ as a verb in the sentence. The verb shows the action of coming somewhere by someone; it shows someone (the speaker) is coming home, that is why he uses this verb that needs an argument/a place (the home) to be shown as goal in the sentence. The speaker is trying to show that he and his friends come home, where ‘he’ is the agent/subject of the sentence and ‘home’ is the goal of the sentence. It is the context of the sentence which makes the speaker to prominently use the goal theta role.

### Conclusion

The number of theta roles differs from language to language; every language has certain number of theta roles and thematic relations. This study attempted to analyze and investigate the prominent theta roles. It was found that the Sindhi language has all the theta roles which are proposed by Carnie (2007). The analysis of the data showed that there are six prominent theta roles in the Sindhi language. They are: *agent, theme, beneficiary, recipient, locative* and *goal*. Sindhi language is one of the languages which are known as agreement languages (Baig, 2006). Based on the study by Rappaport Hovav (2007), the hierarchy of the prominent theta roles in Sindhi is: *Agent>theme> beneficiary>recipient>locative>goal*. However, this is not definitive; broader studies are to be carried out to find the exact hierarchy of the theta roles in Sindhi.

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