

Case and Aspect

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Ling 315: Aspect

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1 General Remarks

- There seems to be a general connection between case and aspect — many languages display a complex interplay between case marking and aspectual meaning and marking.
- Examples which both use/extend Krikfa's system of mapping between objects and the progression of an event: Kiparsky (1998) and Ramchand (1997).
- Further examples from Urdu: 1) diachronic development of the accusative marker *ko*; 2) well-known correlation between ergative subjects and perfect marking.

2 Finnish Partitive Case — Kiparsky 1998

The Finnish partitive is a very famous case. It is called *partitive* because it generally denotes that an unspecific part of an object is involved (not the whole or a specific amount of the object).

(1) a. Ostin leipää
buy.Past.1.Sg bread.Part
'I bought (some) bread.'

a. Ostin leipän
buy.Past.1.Sg bread.Acc
'I bought the bread.'

But the distribution of the Finnish partitive is more complex and interacts with aspectual notions.

Kiparsky's (1998) analysis implicates aspectual *boundedness* as formalized by Krifka (1992). Two relevant examples are given in (2).

(2) a. Ammu-i-n karhu-n
shoot-Past-1Sg bear-Acc
'I shot the/a bear.' (Kiparsky 1998:267) Finnish

b. Ammu-i-n karhu-a
shoot-Past-1Sg bear-Part
'I shot at the/a bear (bear is not dead).'

(Kiparsky 1998:267) Finnish

In (2a), the bear has accusative case and the implication is that the bear has been shot and hit and is probably dead. In contrast, the partitive case on (2b) signals that the shot might have missed and that the bear definitely has not been killed. The difference is stated in terms of aspectual boundedness, because an event is considered to be telic or bounded when a change of state in the object has occurred. There is no tangible change of state in the bear in (2b), but there is one in (2a). Prior to (2a), the bear was alive and presumably healthy, but is now wounded or dead.

[see excerpts from Kiparsky 1998 for more data, discussion and analysis]

3 Scottish Gaelic Aspectual Marking on Objects — Ramchand 1997

Scottish Gaelic doesn't really have case marking, but it does have some "aspectual particles" that mark the object in certain contexts.

- (3) a. *tha Calum air na craobhan a ghearradh*
 be.Pres Calum Asp the trees.Dir OAgr cut.VN
 'Calum has cut the trees.' Scottish Gaelic
- b. *tha Calum a' ghearradh nan craobhan*
 be.Pres Calum Asp cut.VN the trees.Gen Scottish Gaelic
 'Calum is cutting the trees (no tree has necessarily been cut yet).'
- (4) a. *tha mi air am ball iarraidh*
 be.Pres I Asp the ball.Dir want.VN
 'I have acquired the ball.' Scottish Gaelic
- b. *tha mi ag iarraidh a'bhull*
 be.Pres I Asp want.VN the ball.Gen Scottish Gaelic
 'I want the ball.'

Ramchand (1997, 1998) argues for a tight interaction between syntactic structures and semantic interpretation. Ramchand argues that the distribution of the aspectual particles *ag* or *air* in (3) and (4) above is correlated with the structural position of objects and that this in turn is correlated with aspectual interpretation.

- In the aspectually unbounded interpretations, the object occurs postverbally.
- In the aspectually bounded cases, the object is situated preverbally.
- Object position, in turn, is correlated with the case marking (direct vs. genitive case).

Ramchand formalizes the aspectual semantic interpretation in terms of a combination of Krifka's (1992) and Verkuyl's (1993) insights.

4 Urdu ergative *ne* — Perfect/Perfective Morphology and Ergativity

- Urdu/Hindi is a morphologically split-ergative language along tense/aspect.
- The ergative appears on the subjects of transitive and unergative intransitive verbs when the verb is marked with “perfective” morphology (*-a/-e/-i/-î*).

- (5) a. ram gari cala-ta: (hε)
 Ram.M.Sg.Nom car.M.Sg.Nom drive-Impf.M.Sg be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘Ram drives a car.’
- b. **ram=ne** gari cala-yi (hε)
 Ram.M.Sg=Erg car.M.Sg.Nom drive-Perf.M.F.Sg be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘Ram has driven a/the car.’

- Many languages show this kind of split (impf=nominative/unmarked, perf=ergative).
- Despite much discussion, the split remains semantically not well understood. For an overview, see work collected in Plank (1979).

5 Urdu *ko* — From Spatial Marking to Specificity

Note: the data presented here were collected by Tafseer Ahmed.

5.1 Modern Distribution of Dative/Accusative *ko*

5.1.1 “Dative” Uses

Indirect Objects

- (6) anjum=ne saddaf=ko ciṭṭʰi d-i
 Anjum.F.Sg=Erg Saddaf.F.Sg=Dat letter.F.Sg.Nom give-Perf.F.Sg
 ‘Anjum gave Saddaf a letter.’ Urdu

Experiencer Subjects

- (7) a. nadya=ko ḍar laḡ-a
 Nadya.F.Sg=Dat fear.M.Sg.Nom be attached-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya was afraid.’ Urdu
- b. nadya=ko kahani yad a-yi
 Nadya.F.Sg=Dat story.F.Sg.Nom memory come-Perf.F.Sg
 ‘Nadya remembered the story.’ Urdu
- c. nadya=ko inam ml-a
 Nadya.F.Sg=Dat prize.M.Sg.Nom touch-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya received a prize.’ Urdu

5.1.2 “Accusative” Uses

ko marks animate objects as well as specific ones (marking is not obligatory for the latter).

- (8) a. *nadya=ne gari cala-yi he*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg car.F.Sg.Nom drive-Perf.F.Sg be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘Nadya has driven a car.’ Urdu
- b. *nadya=ne gari=ko cala-ya he*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg car.F.Sg=Acc drive-Perf.M.Sg be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘Nadya has driven that specific car.’ Urdu
- c. *nadya=ne yasin=ko dek^h-a*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg Yassin.M.Sg=Acc see-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya saw Yassin.’ Urdu
- d. **nadya=ne yasin dek^h-a*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg Yassin.M.Sg.Nom see-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya saw Yassin.’ Urdu

It also has *partitive* functions.

- (9) a. *nadya=ne pani pi-ya*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg water.M.Sg.Nom drink-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya drank (some) water.’
- b. *nadya=ne pani=ko pi-ya*
 Nadya.F.Sg=Erg water.M.Sg=Acc drink-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘Nadya drank the water.’

5.1.3 Spatial Uses

- (10) *saman g^har=ko paũc-a*
 luggage.M.Sg.Nom house.M.Sg=Dat/Acc reach-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘The luggage reached the house.’ Urdu
- (11) *kamra andar=ko he*
 house.M.Sg.Nom inside=Dat/Acc be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘The room is towards the inside.’ Urdu
- (12) a. *darya samandar=ko ml-a*
 river.M.Sg.Nom sea.M.Sg=Dat/Acc meet-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘The river met/touched the sea.’ Urdu
- b. *afisər logõ=ko ml-a*
 officer.M.Sg.Nom people.M=Dat/Acc meet-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘The officer met (with) the people.’ Urdu

5.1.4 Temporal Uses

- (13) *nadya caı bana-ne=ko he*
 Nadya.F.Sg.Nom tea.F.Sg.Nom make-Inf.Obl=Dat/Acc be.Pres.3.Sg
 ‘Nadya is about to make tea (lit. Nadya is at tea making.)’ Urdu
- (14) *cor rat=ko a-ya*
 thief.M.Sg.Nom night.F.Sg=Dat/Acc come-Perf.M.Sg
 ‘The thief came at night.’ Urdu

5.1.5 Summary

Presumably all these uses of *ko* are historically and semantically related, but how? What does specificity have to do with recipient or location semantics?

5.2 History of Urdu *ko*

5.2.1 Earliest Examples (1200)

- Beames (1872–79:§56) reconstructs the Urdu *ko* to the locative of Sanskrit *kaksha* ‘armpit, side’ → Old Hindi *kākha*, accusative *kākham* → *kahũ* → *kõ* → *ko*.
- According to Beames, the oldest documented examples of *ko* come from the writer Chand around 1200 (see also Kellogg 1893:130–131).
- This is about 200 years before the appearance of the first *ne* forms in Old Urdu/Hindi.
- **Examples of Use from Chand:**
 - a gift **to the Brahmins** (“dative”)
 - having made obeisance **to all** (“dative”)
 - **for the war** with Prithiraaj (“purpose”)
 - He seeks **one** of you. (“accusative”)
- **Further early examples** come from Baba Farid (1173–1266), a poet who wrote in Multan, now in Pakistan.

– “Dative” Uses

- (15) *farid mē janya duk^h mōj^h ko*
 Farid I know grief/pain I.Obl Acc/Dat
 ‘Farid, I know I have grief ... (lit. grief is to/at me)’ Old Urdu/Punjabi
 (Baba Farid, Verse 81, from Khan (2001:226))
- (16) *jindu kō samj^h aı*
 life Acc/Dat teaches
 ‘(it) teaches to life’ Old Urdu/Punjabi
 (Baba Farid, Verse 1, from Khan (2001:142))

– “Accusative” Uses

(17) $d^h\ddot{u}d\ddot{e}$ $d\ddot{i}ye$ $suhag$ $k\ddot{o}$
 seek give husband Dat/Acc
 ‘seeking a husband’ Old Urdu/Punjabi
 (Baba Farid, Verse 114, from Khan (2001:263))

(18) $j\ddot{m}d$... $ha\ddot{q}d\ddot{a}$ $k\ddot{o}$ $ka\ddot{r}kayi$
 life.F.Sg bone.F.Pl Acc/Dat rattle.Perf.F.Sg
 ‘Life ... rattled the bones.’ Old Urdu/Punjabi
 (Baba Farid, Verse 1, from Khan (2001:142))

- Baba Farid also used a *nū* form in dative and affected object contexts (‘do to a ship’, ‘catch a bird’).
- This form still persists in Punjabi as the dative/accusative marker *nu* (and is probably related to the Urdu ergative *ne*).
- Just a handful of the *kō* and *nū* forms can be found in the early authors.

5.2.2 Later Examples (1500)

- The use of *kō* to mark indirect and direct objects (all non-affected as far as we can tell) continued over the centuries.
- Additionally, some rare locative/possessive uses can also be documented.

(19) $burhanulmaluk$ us $k\ddot{o}$ $la\ddot{r}ka$ at^ha
 Burhan-ul-Mulk Pron.3.Obl Acc/Dat boy.M.Sg be.Past.M.Sg
 ‘Burhan-ul-Mulk, he has a son. (lit. A son is to/at Burhan-ul-Mulk)’. Deccani
 Urdu
 (Divan-e-Hasan Shauqi (1564), Jalibi (1971:79))

(20) na $band^h\ddot{i}ya$ $ka\ddot{d}^h\ddot{i}$ $zarah$ on $pe\ddot{t}$ $k\ddot{o}$
 not tie.Perf.M.Sg ever armour Pron.3.Gen belly Acc/Dat
 ‘(He) never tied armour to/on his belly.’ Deccani Urdu
 (Divan-e-Hasan Shauqi (1564), Jalibi (1971:112))

5.2.3 Almost Modern Examples (1800)

- The dative and object marking uses continue into modern times.
- In addition, around 1800 *ko* is also found systematically with directed motion verbs such as *cal* ‘walk/go’, *poāc* ‘reach’ and *ja* ‘go’.
- A close examination this corpus shows that *ko* is generally used with endpoints where there is no guarantee that they have been attained.
- **Past vs. Future Tense:**

(21) ek vilayat **mē** poāce
 one city in reached
 ‘reached a city’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

(22) is manzil **ko** kab poāco-ge
 this destination Dat/Acc when reach.2-Fut.Pl
 ‘When will (you) reach this destination?’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

• **Past/Perfect vs. Past Habitual:**

(23) dili **mē** ga-ye
 Delhi in go-Perf.M.Pl
 ‘(they) went to Delhi’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

(24) ek qafila sodagarō ka damiṣq **ko** ja-ta t^ha
 one caravan.M.Sg merchants Gen.M.Sg Damascus Dat/Acc go-Impf.M.Sg be.Past.M.Sg
 ‘A caravan of merchants used to go to Damascus.’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

• **Concrete vs. Abstract Endpoints:**

(25) ek goristan **mē** poāce
 one graveyard in reached
 ‘reached a graveyard’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

(26) apne haq **ko** poāc kar
 self right Dat/Acc reach having
 ‘after having attained one’s right’
 (Dehalvi 1804) Old Urdu

- Significantly, no instance of *ko* is found with *a* ‘come’. All of these examples are in the past tense, so the endpoint was attained.

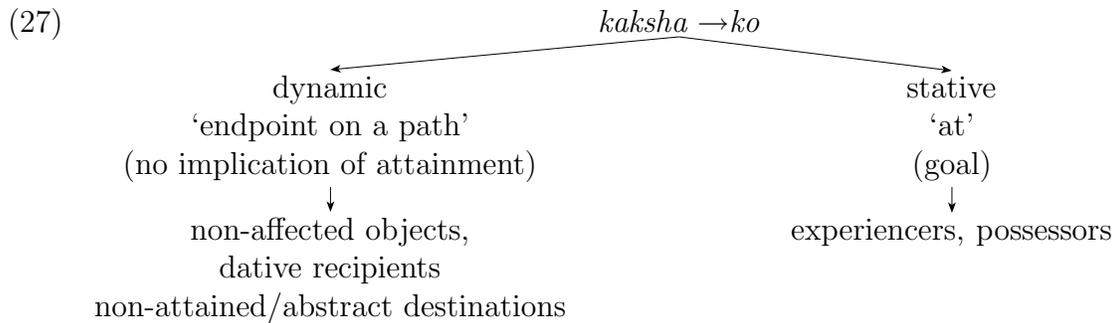
5.3 Summary

- The earliest instances of *ko* are documented around 1200.
- Early uses of *ko*:
 - “dative” (recipients), abstract locations (experiencers)
 - marking the object, but when the objects are not part of a bounded event, or denote unattained goals/endpoints (‘seek’).

- This pattern continues, with a handful of locative/possessive uses documented in the 1500s.
- Additionally, in the 1800s, *ko* appears with verbs of directed motion, but seems to be used when the attainment of the endpoint/goal is not certain or with abstract goals/endpoints.

5.4 Working Hypothesis for the development of Urdu *ko*

- *ko* is originally a postposition derived from Sanskrit *kaksha* ‘armpit, side’.
- It is drawn into the system of spatial postpositions to mean something like AT.
- In particular, the original meaning of ‘side’ gives a meaning of spatial proximity, but not necessarily one of total spatial coincidence.
- Clauses can either express stative or dynamic eventualities, this gives rise to different uses/interpretations of *ko*.



The functions of modern *ko* explained:

- Indirect Objects: endpoints on a path (which can be attained or not, i.e., the recipient might get the thing or not).
- Experiencer Subjects: abstract locations or endpoints.
- Spatial and Temporal Uses: locations or endpoints.
- Specificity: While an endpoint may not be attained, it is a specific endpoint that has been pointed to.
 - Suggestion here is that the use of *ko* to mark specific objects derives from its use to express endpoints that are abstract, but specific.
 - Note that modern *ko* does not express telicity or boundedness, which fits in with the not-necessarily attained endpoint analysis.

6 Homework

Icelandic groups verbs as follows.

(28)

kasta DAT ‘throw, fling, hurl’

þeyta DAT ‘fling, flow’

henda DAT ‘throw away, discard’

þrykkja DAT ‘kick or smash’

(29)

draga ACC ‘pull, drag, draw’

flytja ACC ‘move, transport, carry’

færa ACC ‘move, bring’

kækka ACC ‘raise’

lækka ACC ‘lower’

That is, there are some verbs which take a dative object and some verbs which take an accusative object.

Can you explain the reason behind the different object marking using aspectual notions? If so, how?