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Punjabi *nuN* and Urdu *ko*: A Morpho-Semantic Analysis

Mubashir Iqbal, Riaz Ahmed Mangrio; ***Raza E Mustafa

Abstract

Urdu and Punjabi case markers are important to create a syntactic configuration, and they play a vital role in portraying their semantics. In different contexts, they expose different semantics. Urdu ko is equivalent to Punjabi nuN and they mostly perform the same function in both languages. Data are taken from Punjabi and Urdu speakers. Punjabi nuN, like Urdu ko, reveals a contrasting semantics in active and passive sentences, because it can be used as dative and accusative. Dative nuN and accusative nuN being different case markers show distinctive functions, they sometimes show semantic ambiguity in the active and passive construction in the same sentence. This paper nullifies Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari's (2009) claim that "... the inanimate object ... takes accusative case marker [ko] only because of demonstrative is 'this' which precedes it", by bringing evidence against them. However, it approves their findings for the ambiguous role of Urdu ko in active and passive sentences by bringing the same results for Punjabi nuN.

Keywords: Case markers, Dative and Accusative *ko* and *nuN*, Semantics, Syntax

Introduction

This study attempts to investigate the syntactic similarities and differences of Punjabi *nuN* and Urdu *ko*. Besides, it also tries to compare the semantic features of Punjabi *nuN* and Urdu *ko*. Urdu *ko* can be used as dative as well as accusative. However, since it is homophonous, it is very complex in its usage as accusative and dative (Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari, 2009). Urdu *ko* used as dative and accusative changes the semantics of active, passive sentences and causative constructions. It plays an ambiguous role in active and passive sentences (ibid). Causee, in causative, is

accusative affected object with an accusative *ko* and it receives the action. However, causee performs action passively with dative *ko*. Punjabi *nuN* is also homophonous and its use as accusative and dative similarly creates semantic ambiguity in active and passive sentences.

Before presenting data analysis, a brief account of Urdu and Punjabi case system is provided in the following section.

Urdu and Punjabi Case System

Case (Blake, 2001) is a system which marks dependent nouns for the type of relationship they have with their heads. It is “a grammatical category that shows the function of the noun or noun phrase in a sentence” (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Case was marked by morphological inflections in Old Indo-European languages. Sanskrit, for example, had eight cases: Nominative, Dative, Accusative, Ablative, Instrumental, Genitive, Vocative and Locative (ibid). There are two main systems of case in which world languages are divided: Nominative-accusative (or accusative) languages and ergative-absolutive (or ergative) languages.

In accusative languages, for example English (Khan, 2009), the subject of intransitive verb and the agent/subject of transitive verb are in the same case, but object/patient of transitive verb is in a different case. Khan (2009) presents following examples from English in this regard:

1a. I arrived.

b. He saw me.

The subject of intransitive (1a) and transitive (1b) verbs in the above sentences is in the same case, but the object of transitive (1b) is in different case.

The following examples from Urdu and Punjabi languages also illustrate this phenomenon.

Table 1: Urdu and Punjabi as Accusative Languages

Urdu	Intransitive Verb	<i>bāṭṭṭa</i> Sub.m.s.Nom Child Child Cries.	<i>roṭa</i> Vs.pres.Ind cry	<i>hæ.</i> be.pres.3.s
	Transitive Verb	<i>haḍī</i> Agnt.m.s.Nom Hadie Haadie catches	<i>kābutar-ko</i> Obj.m.s. Obl. acc. pigeon the pigeon.	<i>pakṛta</i> Vs.pres.Ind catch <i>hæ.</i> be.pre.3.s
Punjabi	Intransitive Verb	<i>bāṭṭa</i> Sub.m.s.Nom Child Child Cries.	<i>ronḍa</i> Vs.pres.Ind cry	<i>æ.</i> be.pres.3.s
	Transitive Verb	<i>haḍī</i> Agnt.m.s. Nom Hadie Haadie catches	<i>kābutar-mī</i> Obj.m.s. Obl. acc. pigeon the pigeon.	<i>lapḍa</i> Vs.pres.Ind catch <i>æ.</i> be.pre.3.s

The above example from Urdu explains the point clearly that the subject of intransitive verb *i.e.* *bāṭṭṭa* ‘child’ and the agent of the transitive verb *i.e.* *hāḍī* ‘Proper name’ are in same case *i.e.* nominative case, and object/patient of the transitive verb *i.e.* *kābutar* ‘pigeon’ is in a different case *i.e.* oblique case. Similarly, the Punjabi example also exhibits the same phenomenon that subject of intransitive verb *bāṭṭa* ‘child’ and the agent of transitive verb *hāḍī* ‘Proper name’ are in nominative case, while patient of transitive verb *i.e.* *kābutar* ‘pigeon’ is in oblique case. Thus, from

The above Urdu example demonstrates that argument/subject of the intransitive verb *i.e.* *bāl t̪ʃt̪ʃa* ‘child’, and the patient/object of the transitive verb *i.e.* *kābut* ‘pigeon’ are nominative case, both are in same case. However, the agent/subject of the transitive verb *i.e.* *hā dī -nā* ‘Proper name’ is in oblique case. It is in different case from “subject of the intransitive verb” and “object of the transitive verb”. The same phenomenon can be observed in the Punjabi example. Thus, both languages are the instances of ergative languages. Ergative languages are mostly found in Indian subcontinent, Caucasus, some parts of North America and Australia. Pashto, Balochi, Georgian, Chechen, Mayan and Dyirbal etc. are some of the ergative languages.

Many linguists (e.g., Bashir, 1999; Butt, 1995, 2005; Butt & King, 2005; Mirdeghan, 2005; Butt & Ahmed, 2006; Ahmed, 2007 & 2009; Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari, 2009) have discussed case system of Urdu. Ahmed (2007) documents some features of Punjabi. Some languages from ergative group such as Indo-Aryan languages show split-ergativity; they have the properties of both groups of languages. From the examples given in Table 1 and Table 2, it is learnt that Urdu (Butt, 1995; Ahmed, 2007; Bukhari, 2009) and Punjabi are accusative as well as ergative languages. Therefore, both of them are split-ergative languages. A verb takes ergative marking in the perfective aspects, while it takes accusative marking in imperfective aspects. Agents, in other words, of transitive verbs—either it is mono-transitive or di-transitive verbs—show ergative case marking, while agents in other situations shows nominative case marking.

An account for Urdu and Punjabi case markers is given in the next section.

Urdu and Punjabi Case Markers

A list of Urdu and Punjabi case markers is given below:

Table 3: Case markers in Punjabi and Urdu (Ahmed, 2007)

Case	Punjabi	Urdu	Grammatical Function
Nominative	⚡	⚡	Sub/obj
Ergative	nā̃a:/i/æ	nā̃	Sub
Accusative	nũ	ko	Obj
Dative	nũ	ko	Sub/Obj
Instrumental	na:l	sae	Sub/obli/adjunct
Ablative	-ũ, tũ	sae	
Genitive	ḡa/ḡi/ḡæ (M)/(F)/(Obl)	ka/ki/kæ (m)/(f)/(obl)	Sub/specifier
Locative	it̪ʃ, vit̪ʃ, ...	mā̃, par, ...	

Urdu and Punjabi nouns show case in the following three different forms:

- Nominative
- Oblique
- Vocative

Nominative—direct case—is phonologically null as it does not take any clitic. It can appear in the subject position as well as in the object position (Kachro, 1980 in Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari, 2009). Oblique form is always followed by a case marker/clitic. It can also be used in the subject and object position. Vocative case is used to address someone.

Consider the following examples for the illustration of nominative and ergative:

3a. munda	kʰanā	kʰanda pja	æ
Boy-nom	food-nom	eat-prog	be
The boy is eating food.			
b. bərra-næ	qələm	kʰəndi:ja	
Bareerah-erg	pen-nom	buy.pst	
Bareerah bought a pen.			
c. bərra-næ	ləkə-nū	marja	
Bareerah-erg	boy-acc	beat.pst	
Bareerah beat the boy.			

In sentence (3a), both the subject and object are in nominative case. In (3b), subject is in ergative case, while object is in nominative case. In (3c), subject and object both are in ergative case.

Nominative plural masculine nouns and oblique singular masculine nouns can be identical. Look at the following example:

4a. <i>mʊndæ</i>	<i>kəbʌddɪ</i>	<i>kʰæd ræ</i>	<i>næ̃</i>
boy-nom.pl.m	kabaddi-nom.m	play.prog.pl.m	be.pre.pl
The boys are playing kabaddi.			
b. <i>mʊndæ-dɪ</i>	<i>səlaːh</i>	<i>tʃʌŋɪ</i>	<i>ai</i>
boy.s.m.obl-gen.	advice.f.s.	good.f.s	be.pst.3.f.s
The boy's advice was good.			
c. <i>ohn-næ̃</i>	<i>mʊndæ-nuː</i>	<i>marja</i>	<i>si</i>
s/he.def-erg.	boy.s.m.obl.m-acc.	beat.s.def.pst	be.pst
S/he beat the boy.			

The subject *mʊndæ* ‘boys’ in (4a) is plural while it is singular in (4b). The phenomenon, thus, shows that the oblique forms of singular masculine nouns and the plural masculine noun are identical in Punjabi. They, however, show a difference in agreement pattern. In (4a), the subject is nominative because verb agrees with it. While in (4b), the verb does not agree with the subject as it takes a clitic. The verb, as a result, agrees with *səlaːh* ‘advice’ which is the object of the sentence. A common feature of most of the Indo-Aryan languages is that the verb always agrees only with the uppermost nominative argument. In (4c), both arguments i.e. subject and object, take case markers. The verb, therefore, does not agree with any of them and it shows default case.

Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) discuss that oblique subjects (e.g. instrumental and genitive) do not permit accusative case markers for inanimate direct objects. They further suggest that sometimes using a demonstrative adjective with direct object can also bear accusative marker. Consider the following examples:

- 5a. Wania-ne Azan-ko piita:
Wania.f.3.s-erg. Azan.s.m-acc beat.m.s.perf
‘Wania beat Azan.’
- b. Azan-ne kitab pəṭʰi
Azan.m.3.s-erg. book.f.s-nom read.f.s.perf
‘Azan read the book.’
- c. Azan-ne is kitab-ko pəṭʰa
Azan.m.3.s-erg. this book.f.s-acc read.m.s.perf
‘Azan read this book.’

Source: Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009)

The present study disagrees with Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) at this point. The accusative can be used with both animate and inanimate objects in the presence or in the absence of demonstrative adjective. Animacy criterion isn’t the condition for an accusative to be appearing with direct object. The accusative *-ko* can be used with the inanimate objects, and sentence remains acceptable. The use of accusative *-ko* with inanimate isn’t novel for speakers of Urdu, and this type of structure is frequently used in daily conversation. Following example can illustrate this structure:

- 6a. ha:di -ne kitab-ko pəṭʰa
Haadie.m.3.s-erg. book.f.s-acc read.m.s.perf
‘Haadie read the book.’
- 4b. ha:di -ne kitab pəṭʰi
Haadie.m.3.s-erg. book.f.s-nom read.f.s.perf
‘Haadie read a book.’

The use of accusative with inanimate direct objects is normal, but the semantics in the presence of accusative *-ko* is different from the semantics when it is absent. The use of

accusative *-ko* with inanimate direct objects shows the emphasis and definiteness, as it can be noticed in example (6a) and (6b). In (6a), presence of accusative *-ko* shows the emphasis and definiteness, whereas the absence of it in (6b) shows no emphasis and the object is not definite too. Similarly, Punjabi accusative *-nuN* can also be used with animate and inanimate objects like that in Urdu, and it gives the same semantics. Consider the following example for illustration:

- 7a. *bær:ra-næ* *tʃadər* *vətʃʰai*
 Bareerah.f.3.s-erg. sheet.f.s-nom spread.f.s.perf
 Bareerah spread a sheet.
- b. *bær:ra-næ* *tʃadər-nu:* *vətʃʰaja*
 Bareerah.f.3.s-erg. sheet.f.s-acc spread.m.s.perf
 Bareerah spread the sheet.
- c. *bær:ra-næ* is *tʃadər-nu:* *vətʃʰaja*
 Bareerah.f.3.s-erg. this sheet.f.s-acc. spread.m.s.perf
 Bareerah spread this sheet.

The syntactic structure in the absence or in the presence of accusative remains grammatical. Without accusative, there is no emphasis as in (7a), but insertion of accusative put emphasis on the statement, and make the object definite as in (7b). The use of demonstrative with direct object as in (7c) make the object definite and shows more emphasis as compared to (7b).

In Urdu, a singular noun form is different in form—whether it is nominative, oblique or vocative— from its plural noun form, but the forms of singular nouns in vocative and oblique are identical to the plural form of nominative. Oblique and vocative forms of plural nouns are always different from their singular nouns and from each other; however, oblique and vocative forms of singular nouns can be identical to each other. The oblique plural forms end with the nasalized vowel *õ*, while vocative plural forms are not nasalized. Mohanan (1990, p.80) shows the difference of these three forms for a masculine noun *bʌ tʃʰtʃa* ‘child’.

Table 4

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	bʌtʃtʃa	bʌtʃtʃæ
Oblique	bʌtʃtʃæ	bʌtʃtʃō
Vocative	bʌtʃtʃæ	bʌtʃtʃo

Singular and plural nominative forms of a masculine noun can be identical to each other and to oblique and vocative singular forms, but the plural forms of oblique and vocative are always different from each other and the only difference is of nasalization. Oblique plural forms always show nasalization of the vowel sound at the end, while vocative forms end without the nasalization of the vowel sound as is illustrated in table 5 for the word *bʰ a I* ‘brother’.

Table 5

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	bʰaɪ	bʰaɪ
Oblique	bʰaɪ	bʰaɪ̃
Vocative	bʰaɪ	bʰaɪo

Urdu feminine nouns are more interesting. See the following tables for the words *bʌ tʃ tʃ I* ‘daughter’ and *bʰ æ hʌ n* ‘sister’ respectively.

Table 6

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	bʌtʃtʃɪ	bʌtʃtʃijā
Oblique	bʌtʃtʃɪ	bʌtʃtʃijō
Vocative	bʌtʃtʃɪ	bʌtʃtʃijo

Table 7

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	b ^h æhʌn	b ^h æhnæ̃
Oblique	b ^h æhʌn	b ^h æhnõ
Vocative	b ^h æhʌn	b ^h æhno

The singular forms of nouns in Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7 are the same in nominative, vocative and oblique forms. Two things can be noted from these tables: Firstly, the singular masculine nouns can show variation—they can be identical or have different forms in nominative to oblique and vocative, and secondly, the singular feminine nouns are identical in nominative, oblique and vocative forms. However, the plural nominative, vocative and oblique forms show different endings. Unlike some masculine nouns e.g. *b^h a ɪ* ‘brother’ which is identical in nominative singular and plural forms, plural forms of feminine nouns are different from their singular forms. Similarly, the plural nominative feminine nouns are also different from their oblique and vocative forms unlike masculine nouns. The feminine plural oblique forms of nouns have nasalized endings, while vocative plural forms do not have nasalized endings.

Urdu is the offspring of Punjabi (Sheerani, 1928), therefore, Punjabi is considered the sister language of Urdu, but it shows interesting variation in the forms of nouns. The difference among the forms of Punjabi masculine noun *mʊndʌ* ‘boy’ is shown in the following table.

Table 8

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	mʊndʌ	mʊndæ̃
Oblique	mʊndæ̃	mʊndɪjǎ
Vocative	mʊndɪjʌ	mʊndɪjo

In Urdu, masculine singular nouns can be identical or different in nominative, oblique and vocative forms; at least in oblique and vocative forms they are always identical to each other and to the plural nominative. But, in Punjabi, the phenomenon is interestingly different. Punjabi singular noun *munda* ‘boy’ is different in all the three forms as is shown in Table 8. Only the plural nominative is identical to oblique singular. The plural nouns are also different in all the three forms (nominative, oblique and vocative). But, the difference between plural oblique and vocative is of nasalization like Urdu language. An oblique Plural noun ends with the nasalized vowel, while vocative ends without the nasalized.

Case forms of Punjabi feminine noun for the word *kurī* ‘girl’ are given in the following table.

Table 9

Function	Singular	Plural
Nominative	kurī	kurījā
Oblique	kurī	kurījā
Vocative	kurījæ	kurījo

Feminine nouns show more interesting variations. Singular feminine nominative and oblique are identical, but are different from vocative and nominative plural. The plural feminine nominative and oblique are interestingly identical. Vocative singular and plural forms are different from all. Like those in Urdu, the oblique and vocative plural forms have the difference of nasalization. The oblique plural form ends with a nasalized vowel ‘ā’, while vocative plural form ends without a nasalized vowel as shown in Table 9.

Nominative case (in both languages) is phonologically null, while oblique and vocative forms bear case markers (e.g. ergative *nā̃/nā̃*, dative or accusative *ko/nuN* and genitive *ka/ki/kæ/dā/dā* / *ī* / *dā*) in both languages. Some case markers, in certain contexts, mark a semantic difference. As said, this paper concerns only dative/accusative *nuN*.

The replacement of dative *nuN* with ergative *nā̃* sometimes changes the semantics of the structure. This phenomenon is briefly discussed in the following section.

Alternation of Ergative *nǣ* with Dative *nuN*

Ergative *nǣ* needs more attention due to its complexity. In transitive and intransitive sentences, it can alternate with nominative or absolutive. In Urdu, ergative *nǣ*, shows semantic feature of volitionality (Butt & King, 2005), and the same is the case in Punjabi. In transitive sentences, the subject always shows ergative marking. Many intransitive verbs can also take an ergative marker but the verb, in this case, is oblique. This phenomenon is shown below:

- 8a. *bǣr:ra-nǣ* *vəsi lǣji*
 Bareerah.f.s-erg yawn.s.perf.obl
 Bareerah yawned
- b. *munḁǣ-nǣ* *kʰʌŋgeja*
 boy.f.s-erg cough.s.perf.obl
 Boy coughed.

Butt & King (2005) discuss a replacement of an ergative/dative of Urdu. The sentence in Urdu shows desire, when the subject takes ergative case marker and an infinitive, but the subject with dative and an infinitive shows an obligation. Punjabi also shows the same phenomenon. The subject with ergative and infinitive shows desire, whereas with a dative case marker and an infinitive, it depicts obligation. The following examples illustrate this phenomenon:

- 9a. *bǣr:ra-nǣ* *kʌr* *dʒanǎ* *ǣ* (Desire)
 Bareerah.f.s-erg home.m.s.obl go.inf.m.s be.pres.3.s
 Bareerah wants to go home.
- b. *bǣr:ra-nuN* *kʌr* *dʒanǎ* *ǣ*
 (Obligation)
 Bareerah.f.s-dat home.m.s.obl go.inf.m.s be.pres.3.s
 Bareerah has to go home.

Case markers dative *nuN* and the accusative *nuN* are homophonous, but they depict distinction in semantics, as shown in the following section.

Dative and Accusative *nuN*

In many Indo-Aryan languages (like Urdu & Punjabi), accusative and dative case markers are homophonous (Kiparsky, 1987). According to Beames (1872), Urdu *ko* is used to indicate the recipient goal, when the verb is di-transitive. Since dative *ko* is the part of the action, so its usage with subjects is obligatory. Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) illustrates this point in (10).

- 10a. *vanjã - ko* *phəl* *kʰanã* *hæ*
 Wania.f.s-dat. *fruit.m.s.* *eat.inf.m.s* *be.pres.3.s*
 ‘Wania has to eat fruit.’
- b. **vanjã* *phəl* *kʰanã* *hæ*
 Wania.f.s-nom. *fruit.m.s.* *eat.inf.m.s* *be.pres.3.s*
 ‘Wania has to eat fruit.’

Source: (Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari,
2009)

Although Punjabi is the sister language, yet it differs in the phenomenon explained in example 10. The insertion of dative *nuN* with the subject produces ungrammatical sentence. The sentence 11(a) is ungrammatical because of the insertion of the dative *nuN*. Despite the phenomenon being opposite, there is no change in the semantics.

11a. *bərra-nuː	roʃi	kʰənĩ	æ
Bareerah.f.s-dat.	bread.m.s.	eat.inf.m.s	be.pres.3.s
Bareerah has/wants to eat bread.			
b. bərra	roʃi	kʰənĩ	æ
Bareerah.f.s-nom.	bread.m.s.	eat.inf.m.s	be.pres.3.s
Bareerah has/wants to eat bread.'			

Dative *ko* is only followed by abstract or concrete goals (Mohan 1994). Ahmed (2007) also supports this view that dative *ko* has the core sense of goal. The following example from Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) explains this point in (12).

12a. vanjā-ko	inam	mila.	(Goal)
Wania.f.s-dat.	prize.m.s.	get.m.s.perf	
'Wania got the prize.'			
b. *vanjā	inam	mila.	(Goal)
Wania.f.s-nom.	prize.m.s.	get.m.s.perf	
'Wania got the prize.'			

Source: (Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari 2009)

The Punjabi dative *nuN* is also obligatory for the goal, as shown in the following example:

13a. bərra-nuː	mobæl	mɪʃa.	(Goal)
Bareerah.f.s-dat.	prize.m.s.	receive.m.s.perf	
Bareerah received a mobile.			
b. *bərra	mobæl	mɪʃa.	(Goal)
Bareerah.f.s-dat.	prize.m.s.	receive.m.s.perf	
Bareerah received a mobile.			

Punjabi dative *nuN* is more complex than Urdu dative *ko*. *nuN*, unlike *ko*, does not need concrete or abstract nouns to appear with the subject, but it does need some goal as explained in (11) & (13).

Urdu accusative *ko*, which depicts the direct object, comes with mono-transitive verbs. However, this rule is optional. The verb agrees with the subject in progressive and imperfective aspects, but it does not agree with the subject in perfective aspect. The verb shows default case in perfective aspect and receives masculine morphology when accusatives *ko* is present, but it shows agreement with the object when accusative *ko* is absent.

14 a. <i>vanijā -nāē</i>	<i>ḡasṭavizāt-ko</i>	<i>ḡæk^{ba}a</i>	
Wania.f.s-erg	documents.f.pl-acc	see.m.s.perf	
'Wania saw documents.'			
b. <i>vanijā -nāē</i>	<i>ḡasṭavizāt</i>	<i>ḡæk^{bi}i</i>	
Wania.f.s-erg	documents.f.pl	see.f.pl.perf	
'Wania saw documents.'			
c. <i>vanijā</i>	<i>ḡasṭavizāt-ko</i>	<i>ḡæk^{bi}ti</i>	<i>hæ</i>
Wania.f.s-nom	documents.f.pl-acc	see.f.s.imp	pre.3.s
'Wania saw documents.'			
d. <i>vanijā</i>	<i>ḡasṭavizāt</i>	<i>ḡæk^{bi}ti</i>	<i>hæ</i>
Wania.f.s-nom	documents.f.pl-	see.f.s.imp	pre.3.s
'Wania saw documents.'			

Source: (Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari, 2009)

In the above examples, it is obvious that accusative *ko* is optional. Nevertheless, 14(a) & (b) are in perfective aspect and the verb does not agree with the object in the presence of accusative *ko*. However, in its absence, the verb agrees with the object. In 14(c) & (d), the verb is not in perfective aspect and it shows agreement with the

subject. Here, accusative *ko* causes no effect whether it is present or absent, so it is optional.

One thing which Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) don't discuss is the semantics of the sentence. The presence of the accusative *ko* shows more focus. In the above example, when accusative *ko* is present, *ḍaekʰna* should be translated as 'watch' instead of 'see'. Punjabi accusative *nuN* depicts the same phenomenon as Urdu accusative *ko* does.

- 15 a. *bərra-næ̃* *kagʱzaṭ-nũ* *vækʱja*
 Bareerah.f.s-erg documents.f.pl-acc see.m.s.perf
 Bareerah watched documents.
- b. *bərra-næ̃* *kagʱzaṭ* *vækʱæ*
 Bareerah.f.s-erg documents.f.pl. see.f.pl.perf
 Bareerah saw documents.
- c. *bərra* *kagʱzaṭ-nũ* *vækʱdi æ*
 Bareerah.f.s-nom documents.f.pl-acc see.f.s.perf pre.3.s
 Bareerah watches documents.
- d. *bərra* *kagʱzaṭ-* *vækʱdi æ*
 Bareerah.f.s-nom documents.f.pl- see.f.s.perf pre.3.s
 Bareerah sees documents.

However, like *ko*, Punjabi accusative *nuN* is obligatory to specific animate objects and optional to non-specific animate objects.

16a. bərr:ra-næ̃	ha:di-mũ	buləja
Bareerah.f.s-erg	Haadie.m.s-acc	call.perf.m.s
Bareerah called Haadie.		
b. *bərr:ra-næ̃	ha:di	buləja
Bareerah.f.s-erg	Haadie.m.s-acc	call.perf.m.s
Bareerah called Haadie.		
c. bərr:ra-næ̃	(*ʔaɪʃa)/kuɾi	vækʰi
Bareerah.f.s-erg	(*Ayesha)/girl.f.s-acc	see.perf.m.s
Bareerah saw (*Ayesha)/girl.		
d. bərr:ra-næ̃	kuri-mũ	vækʰja
Bareerah.f.s-erg	girl.m.s-acc	see.perf.m.s
Bareerah saw girl.		

The example in (16a) shows that the object Haadie is specific, therefore it is compulsory to mark it with accusative *nuN*. If it is not marked with accusative *nuN*, the sentence becomes ungrammatical as shown in (16b). (16c) & (16d) depict a different situation. In (16c), the sentence remains grammatical even in the absence of accusative *nuN* if the object is animate but not specific (kuɾi). However, if we replace animate but not specific (e.g. kuɾi) with specific animate object e.g. Ayesha in the same sentence (16c), the sentence becomes ungrammatical in the absence of accusative *nuN*. In (16d), sentence is grammatical due to the presence of accusative *nuN*. (16c) & (16d) make the point clear that accusative *nuN* is obligatory only with specific animate objects, and optional for non-specific animate objects. The only difference in (16c) and (16d) is that the act of seeing the animate object is intentional in the latter, and unintentional in the former. So, it is noticeable that the presence and absence of accusative *nuN* changes the semantics of the sentence in terms of its volition.

Dative *nuN* and accusative *nuN* have distinct features but, interestingly they give ambiguous interpretation of the same sentence in active and passive voice. The following section explains this point.

Ambiguous role of Dative *nuN* and Accusative *nuN* in Active & Passive Voice

Because of being homophonous, dative *nuN* and accusative *nuN* can give ambiguous interpretations in different syntactic environments. The homophonous nature creates differences in semantics and grammatical expressions. The case marker *nuN* can play dative as well as accusative role in a single sentence. In the presence of subject (agent), it is accusative, and the accusative NP is indirect object in active sentence. Notice the following sentence:

17. *sanō* *bārī:ra-mū* *səbəq* *pāḥanā* *æ*
 We.obl.pl.nom Bareerah.f.s-acc lesson.m.s.obl teach.inf.m.s be.pres.3.s
 We have to teach Bareerah a lesson.

Notice the presence of the subject *sānō*, the NP Bareerah is an accusative NP and it receives the action of teaching the lesson. By removing the subject *sānō*, the sentence can give ambiguous interpretation. The case marker *nuN* is dative in this sentence and dative NP Bareerah is the subject of this sentence. Observe the example once again:

18. (*sanō*) *bārī:ra-mū* *səbəq* *pāḥanā* *æ*
 (We.obl.pl.nom) Bareerah.f.s-dat/acc lesson.m.s.obl teach.inf.m.s be.pres.3.s
 i) Bareerah has to teach a lesson. ii) Bareerah has to be taught a lesson (by us).

A sentence becomes ambiguous, when the subject is removed or when the active sentence is changed into passive one. The above sentence after removing the subject gives contrasting meanings. When *nuN* is considered as a dative case marker, the dative NP functions as the subject which shows the action performed by that NP. However, when *nuN* is taken as accusative case marker, the subject accusative NP receives the action and it carries a role of patient. The sentence is in passive voice when *nuN* is accusative, thus it creates ambiguity. In order to understand the semantics of this sentence, we need to know the voice of the sentence which can only be known in the context in which sentence is used. Nevertheless, some conditions need to be fulfilled for a sentence to be ambiguous or to create double meanings. The double meaning is bound to di-transitive verbs, and there are specific structures in which verbs show object movement from one place to another. For example, the verb *pā ḥānā*

‘to teach’ shows its object *səbəq* ‘lesson’ to move its position from one place to another. Secondly, the double meaning is restricted to infinitive verb which shows obligation and advice by using the modal *chai da* ‘should’. Examine the following sentence:

19. (tʌnmū) bəri:ra-mū səbəq pʌʈhanā tʃai dæ
 (you.obl.s.nom) Bareerah.f.s.acc/dat lesson.m.s.obl teach.inf.m.s should.mod
 i) Bareerah should be taught a lesson (by you). ii) Bareerah should teach a lesson.

The structure given in (18) & (19) is frequently used in Punjabi language. Understanding such utterances or inferring the intended meaning is not difficult for the native speakers of Punjabi language. They can judge whether an utterance is active or passive from its use in a specific context. In the absence of a particular context, the sentence will remain grammatically correct, but it will be difficult to infer whether it is active or passive. However, there exists a passive structure which exhibits a unique feature. This type of passive structure shows a complete disambiguation. Examine the following sentence with accusative *nuN*:

20. bəri:ra-nu səbəq pʌʈhaja dʒanā æ
 Bareera.f.s-acc lesson.m.s-nom teach.be.perf.s.m go.inf.
 be.pres.3.s.m
 Bareerah has to be taught a lesson.

But this type of structure is rarely used in practical life especially in spoken language. The double meaning of the sentence is only possible with only infinitive form of verb. This is explained in the example below:

21. (asen) bəri:ra-mū səbəq (i) pʌʈhanā / (ii) pʌʈha ræ an
 (We.obl.pl-nom) Bareerah.f.s-acc lesson.m.s.obl
 (i)teach.imp.m.pl/(ii)write.prog.m.pl be.pre.pl
 (i) We teach a lesson to Bareerah. (ii) We are teaching a lesson to Bareerah.
 i) *Bareerah is taught a lesson. (ii) *Bareerah is being taught a lesson.

The imperfective and progressive use of both verbs can be noted in the 21(i) and (ii), which depicts the subject-verb agreement. Subject can be understood even if it is missed or not used through the markers of tense and aspect. The specification of the subject whether it is masculine/feminine or singular/plural causes the limitation of double meaning with any type of verb but not with infinitive.

Conclusion

Urdu and Punjabi case markers can be used in different environments, and they depict different semantics in different contexts. The Punjabi dative *nuN* and the accusative *nuN* are equivalent to the Urdu dative and accusative *ko*, as they (dative and accusative *nuN*) perform the same function as the Urdu dative *ko* and accusative *ko* do. The dative *ko* is considered the part of the action and is obligatory with the subject, but in Punjabi it is not obligatory in all the conditions, because in some situations, the insertion of dative *nuN* makes the sentence ungrammatical. Punjabi *nuN* in dative case, like Urdu *ko*, marks the endpoint or goal. The use of Punjabi *nuN* creates the ambiguous meaning in active and passive utterances. Taking *nuN* as dative depicts the opposite meaning to that of taking it as accusative. This study supports Islam, Akhtar & Bukhari (2009) that Urdu *ko* in dative case has different semantics to accusative *ko*. The same case is obvious in this paper for Punjabi language: dative *nuN* and accusative *nuN* are not same. They depict different semantics.

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