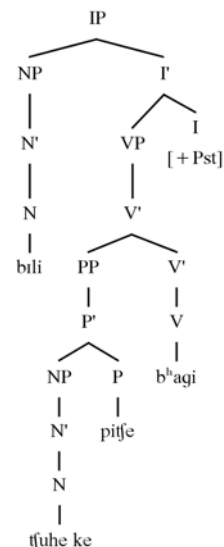
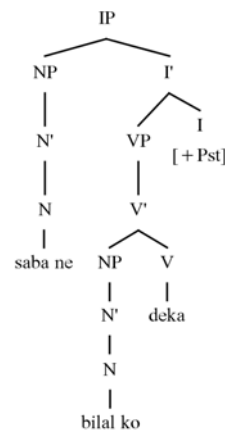


24.900: Fieldwork Component of Homework 9  
November 21, 2007  
Nada AMIN

**Task 1: basic clause structure**

I collected a few declarative sentences that establish the basic phrase structure of Urdu. I immediately noticed that Urdu is head-final like Japanese (though it gets more complicated in CPs as we'll see in Task 3). Urdu has case morphology. Urdu doesn't use determinants like the 'a' and 'the' of English. Interestingly, the verb is sometimes inflected to agree with the subject and the object, but not always. For example, /deka/ 'saw' shows no inflection at all (it doesn't indicate the gender nor singularity of the subject nor the object) while /kaĩ/ 'ate' indicates that the object is plural (but says nothing about the subject) and /gi/ 'will' indicates that the subject is female. Because verb inflection isn't systematic, I wasn't surprised to discover that Urdu explicitly make use of pronouns (see sentences 4 and 5). I couldn't see a rule in the declination of the subject: for example, both /mɛ/ 'I' and /mʊɖʒhe/ 'I' are used for the first-person subject but I couldn't detect a pattern as to when one form was used vs. the other. I discovered an interesting parameter of Urdu, different from anything seen in class: it creates insistence on a modifier by switching its position with that of the complement (compare sentences 2 and 3). I elicited examples that use auxiliary verbs in sentences 7 and 8, which led me to conclude that the I head comes after its VP complement – as it should in a head-final language.

1. saba ne bilal ko deka  
Saba SU Bilal OB saw  
'Saba saw Bilal'
2. saba ne sʌɽʌk pe bilal ko deka  
Saba SU street on Bilal OB saw  
'Saba saw Bilal on the street'
3. saba ne bilal ko sʌɽʌk pe deka  
Saba SU Bilal OB street on saw  
'On the street, Saba saw Bilal'
4. saba ne os ko deka  
saba SU him OB saw  
'Saba saw him'
5. os ne os ko deka  
s/he SU him/her OB saw  
'She saw him'
6. bili ne tʃuhe ke pitʃe bʰagi  
cat SU mouse OB after ran  
'The cat ran after the mouse'

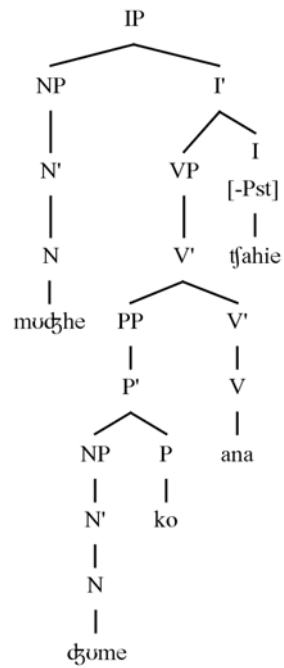


7. mɛ ɖʊmɛ ko aũŋ gi  
I Friday on come will  
'I will come on Friday'

8. muɖʂhe ɖʊmɛ ko ana tʂahie  
I Friday on come should  
'I should come on Friday'

9. mɛ ʂadi pe Tohfa laji  
I wedding to present brought  
'I brought a present to the wedding'

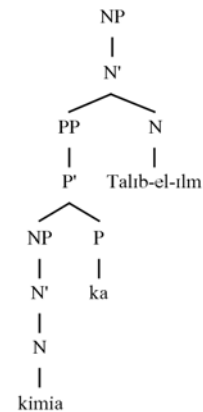
10. batʂe ne kane pe apni sabziã kaiĩ  
child SU dinner at his vegetables ate  
'The child ate his vegetables at dinner'



### Task 2: structure of complex NPs

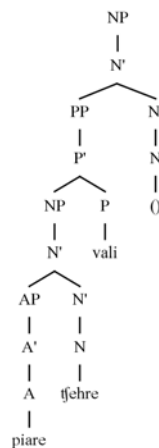
I collected NPs that illustrate complements as well as adjectival and PP modifiers. Urdu doesn't seem to use PP modifiers with NPs. Instead, it has this strange construction using /vala/ 'the one with' (male) or /vali/ 'the one with' (female) which can stand on its own or be used as a modifier to an NP. For example, /piare tʃehre vali/ 'the one with the pretty face' can be used as a modifier to /lɪɾki/ 'girl' in / piare tʃehre vali lɪɾki/ 'the girl with the pretty face'. I can reconcile the /vala/ or /vali/ construction with the seeming requirement that modifiers to NPs are PPs or APs by postulating that the /vala/ or /vali/ is the head of a PP that can be silently transformed into an NP with an empty head. Here, Urdu still looks like a purely head-final language (which won't be the case in Task 3), as complements and modifiers precede the head noun, the complement being closer to the head.

1. kimia ka Talib-el-ilm  
chemistry of student  
'the student of chemistry'

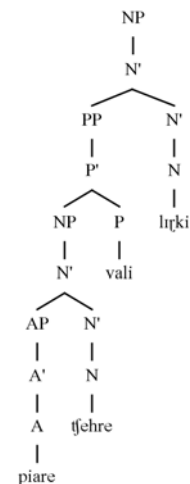


2. lombe balō vala kimia ka Talib-el-ilm  
long hair one with chemistry of student  
'the student of chemistry with long hair'

3. piari lɪɾki  
pretty girl  
'the pretty girl'



4. piare tʃehre vali lɪɾki  
pretty face one with girl  
'the girl with the pretty face'



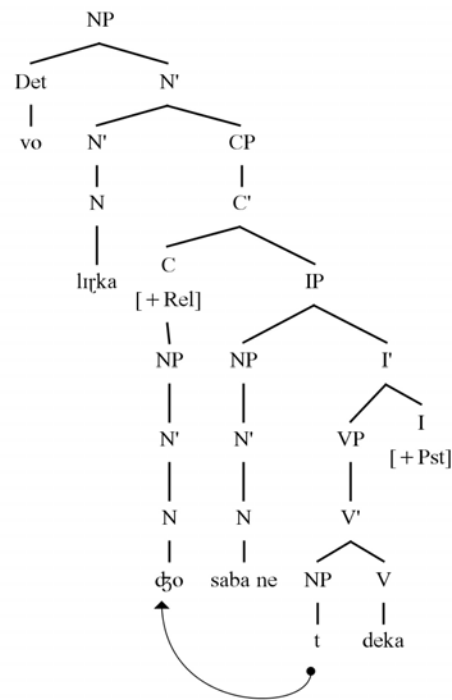
5. piare tʃehre vali  
pretty face one with  
'the one with the pretty face'

6. kanada se Taluq rakne vala Talib-el-ilm  
Canada from relation possession one with student  
'the student from Canada'

*Extra credit: relative clauses*

Urdu creates a relative clause by adding a specifier to the NP, adding a CP modifier to the right in the NP, and just like in English, moving the *wh* word into the head of the CP. Relative clauses confirm that CPs are head-initial (see Task 3). The *wh* word is declined to reflect the attributes of its antecedent but also the case. Like in other examples, Urdu's declination is subtle, and it can depend on such things as the tense of the verb to follow.

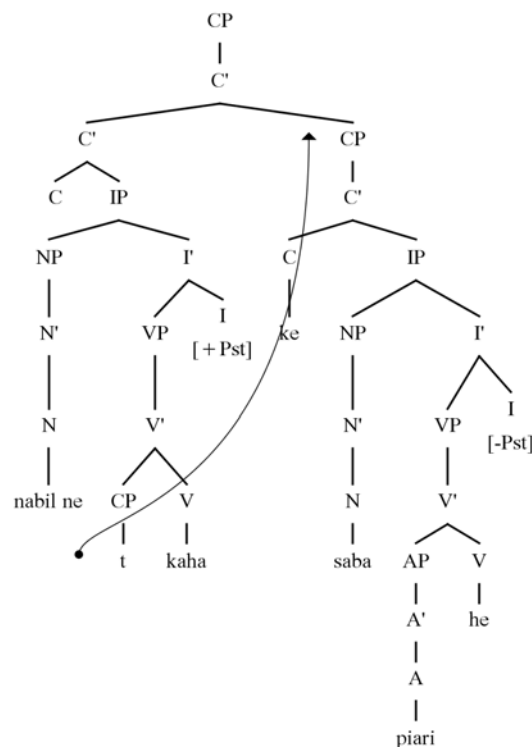
1. vo bili đ̤o ʃuhe ke piʃe b<sup>h</sup>agi  
the cat that mouse OB after ran  
'the cat that ran after the mouse'
2. vo lıʃki đ̤is ne bilal ko deka  
the girl who SU Bilal OB saw  
'the girl who saw Bilal'
3. vo lıʃka đ̤o saba ne deka  
the boy whom Saba SU saw  
'the boy whom Saba saw'
4. vo lıʃka đ̤o saba ko dekta he  
the boy who saba OB sees PR  
'the boy who sees Saba'



### Task 3: embedded declarative CPs

I explored the syntax of embedded clauses in Urdu. The construction for embedded clauses is very curious for a head-final language: the main verb comes *before* the complementizer introducing the embedded clause. In addition, if there is an auxiliary verb, it comes *in between* the main verb and the complementizer. This makes it really tricky to map the sentence into an X-bar tree, and I can only think of a resolution by postulating some movement. The most plausible theory is that CPs are always head-initial and that they move to the right modifier position of the highest CP, so that the embedded CPs are always extraposed, i.e. moved all the way to the right. Apart from this anomaly, the syntax in the embedded IP is the same as that of the main IP.

1. nabil ne kaha ke saba piari he  
Nabeel SU said that Saba pretty is  
'Nabeel said that Saba is pretty'
  
2. sana kehti he ke nabil ko saba ko batana tjahie ke no piari he  
Sana says PR that Nabeel SU Saba OB tell should that she pretty is  
'Sana says that Nabeel should tell Saba that she is pretty'





**Task 4: yes/no questions**

In Urdu, yes/no questions begin with a special complementizer, /kja/. The verb doesn't move. Like in English, the intonation rises. In short, it's straightforward to form a yes/no question: just add the special complementizer /kja/ at the beginning of any declarative sentence.

1. kja saba ne bilal ko deka  
QU Saba SU Bilal OB saw  
'Did Saba see Bilal'
  
2. kja muḡhe ḡume ko ana tʃahie  
QU I Friday on come should  
'Should I come on Friday'

### Task 5: *wh*-questions

In Urdu, a *wh*-question is formed by replacing the unknown object by the special word /kɪs/. Unlike English, there is no overt *wh*-movement.

1. saba ne kɪs ko deka  
Saba SU who OB saw  
'Who did Saba see'
2. kɪs ne bilal ko deka  
who SU Bilal OB saw  
'Who saw Bilal'